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# The Nature of Need Structure in Nonwork

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*This study attempts to verify the appropriateness of three existing taxonomies of need fulfillment by Maslow, Alderfer and Lawler, respectively, in the area of nonwork.*

The concept of needs has influenced our thinking on several aspects of an individual's life. Originally the notion of need was understood primarily from a physiological point of view. However, with the passage of time the term "need" now is used to "refer to clusters of goals or outcomes that a person seeks" (Porter, Lawler & Hackman 1975). Since the concept of need played a crucial role in the way social scientists viewed human behavior, there have been many attempts to categorize the various needs that are worthy of investigation. Some theorists developed a long list of needs (e.g., Murray 1938) while others attempted to introduce a certain parsimony in their classification of needs (e.g., Alderfer 1972; Lawler 1973; Maslow 1954). However, the level of parsimony or magnification one prefers rests on the degree of explanatory or predictive power such a taxonomy offers. At any rate, the credibility of such a classification depends on how closely it approximates the empirical reality of how people cognize about their needs. In other words, the appropriate theoretical framework is one that enjoys a higher degree of correspondence with the cognitive map of the people whom it theorizes about.

There exist in the literature three theoretical formulations of need classification (Alderfer 1972; Lawler 1973; Maslow 1954) that continue to command considerable attention by engaging scholars in a lively debate about

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their usefulness in describing behavior patterns. A short description of the above three theoretical positions is as follows.

*Maslow.* According to Maslow (1954: 80-98) human needs are arranged in a hierarchy starting with physiological needs (hunger, thirst, sex, sleep) at the bottom and progressing step by step toward safety and security (protection of the physical and emotional well being), belongingness and love (affection), self esteem and esteem by others (self approval, approval by relevant others, prestige) and self actualization (self fulfillment, realization of one's potentials). The above needs with the exception of self actualization are said to exhibit prepotency characteristics. Maslow's need classification was subsequently modified by Porter (1961) to reflect more accurately the nature of modern society. Porter argued that since most of us in the developed world have our physiological needs adequately met it would serve no purpose to include them in operational versions of the Maslow scheme. Hence he suggested the following classification that is still widely used in empirical studies of need fulfillment: (1) Security needs; (2) Social needs; (3) Self esteem needs; (4) Autonomy needs and (5) Self actualization needs.

*Alderfer.* Alderfer's theory of needs (1972) suggested a three level hierarchy consisting of existence needs, relatedness needs and growth needs. However, Alderfer rejected the idea of prepotency and argued that the possibility existed for all the needs to be simultaneously active.

*Lawler.* Though there are other researchers who have articulated more or less the same view (e.g., Hall & Nougaim 1968; Lawler & Suttle 1972) we have isolated Lawler (1973) as having made the most unambiguous statement about the two level hierarchy of needs. He indicated that it was not safe to assume more than a two-step hierarchy with existence and security needs at the lower level and all the higher order needs at the upper level. Such a suggestion leads one to think that the lower order needs of existence and security have to be fulfilled before the higher order needs get activated. However, which one of the higher order needs comes into play after satiation of the lower need is contingent upon a variety of factors and there is no one universal pattern of prediction.

There are other nuances unique to each of the above formulations but the present study concerns itself only with the classificatory scheme. In other words, we did not attempt to test either the notion of prepotency or hierarchy. In that respect our research takes us only toward establishing a *taxonomy* of needs — supported by empirical evidence within the theoretical framework discussed above, if possible.

Most of the empirical investigations on need fulfillment were conducted in the context of work (e.g., Wahba & Bridwell 1976) while very little

was said about need fulfillment in nonwork (Burke 1973; Mansfield 1972). Perhaps one reason for the refracted focus reported above on need fulfillment is the exaggerated importance given to the sociotechnical systems view of the world as the "ruling paradigm" for scientific inquiry. However, words of caution have surfaced in the literature recently suggesting the limited scope of the above paradigm in our investigations (Bass & Bass 1976; Gardell 1976; Iris & Barrett 1972; London, Crandall & Seals 1977). This view suggests that work attitudes cannot be understood in isolation and underscores the need to broaden one's outlook to include aspects of nonwork in order to develop a more comprehensive equation for studying the quality of life. Dalkey, Lewis and Snyder (1972) defined quality of life in terms of the degree to which an individual or a society is able to satisfy the perceived psychological and physiological needs and assigned an important role for need fulfillment in their quality of life model. They also stressed the importance of need fulfillment in various life areas as opposed to need fulfillment in work alone. Other researchers have pointed out the importance of nonwork as a determinant of mental health, work adjustment, life satisfaction and quality of life of the individual as well (De Grazia 1962; Lofquist & Dawis 1969; London, Crandall & Seals 1977; Martin 1967; Tinsley, Barrett & Kass 1977). It has also been suggested that life satisfaction depends on the degree to which an individual is able to select nonwork activities that might fulfill his or her needs (Wolf 1970). Tinsley et al (1977) stated that individuals should be able to structure their nonwork time so as to maximize general life satisfaction, raise self esteem and facilitate increased self actualization. To do so one requires a framework to study need fulfillment in nonwork and this study attempted to verify whether our present formulations of need fulfillment (taken mostly in the context of work) are adequate to explain need fulfillment in nonwork.

It is conceivable that people might carry a different classificatory scheme of need fulfillment when it comes to nonwork. Hence, if the present theoretical formulations of Maslow, Alderfer and Lawler are found to be inadequate, any combination thereof that might shed more light on the way people conceptualize would be contemplated.

Before we discuss need fulfillment in nonwork, we must define what we mean by nonwork. Nonwork consists of a number of activities in which individuals engage of their own accord either to amuse themselves, to add to their knowledge or improve their skills without them being contingent upon any tangible short term pay offs, or to increase their voluntary participation in the life of the community. The above definition is very similar to Dumazedier's (1960) conceptualization of leisure. In other words, the above definition stresses not so much the space of time as a residual but emphasizes the activity of "state of being" (De Grazia 1962).

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it is felt that an understanding of need fulfillment in nonwork is crucial in coming to grips with an individual's work behavior. The next logical step is to extend the notion of need fulfillment to the context of nonwork. It has been argued that needs are innate, universal and inherent in human nature (Maslow 1954). The above view permits one to extend the need classificatory schemes described earlier to the realm of nonwork without serious reservations. However recent reviews on need fulfillment cast some doubts on the theoretical and empirical utility of the concept (Salancik & Pfeffer 1977; Taylor 1979; Wahba & Bridwell 1976). With regard to the issues raised by Salancik and Pfeffer (1977), the reader is referred to the response by Alderfer (1977). Taylor (1979) raised serious questions concerning the utility of precoded 'expert' made instruments for data collection and stressed the importance of democratizing the information gathering process. He also emphasized the considerable utility of action oriented research involving the respondents toward improving quality of life. An attempt was made during the pre-testing stage to involve a small segment of the respondents in voicing concerns that are relevant to them and modifying the instrument accordingly. Due to constraints imposed by the participating organizations neither a full scale democratization of the information gathering process nor the suggested action research was possible. However, the researchers communicated to the respondents both verbally and through a cover letter their intentions of making specific suggestions to employers and public policy makers toward improving their quality of life. As for the criticisms raised by Wahba and Bridwell (1976), Mitchell and Moudgill (1976) argued that the lack of "clear and consistent support from the research findings" (Wahba & Bridwell 1976, p. 233) might stem from inadequate operationalization and improper testing of the need concept rather than an incorrect formulation by the theorists. Studies by Payne (1970) and Roberts, Walter and Miles (1971) concurred with the latter view. Approaching the issue from the above position, Mitchell and Moudgill (1976, p. 348) presented a "reasonably successful operationalization" of the need classification in the context of work. Besides being the most recent work, the Mitchell and Moudgill approach offered the best solution so far, both conceptually and methodologically. Hence their scheme is used as a starting point for studying need fulfillment in nonwork. Further it has been observed that samples of non-supervisory rank and file workers were far and few among the empirical studies of need fulfillment. Most studies seemed to focus on managerial and supervisory samples. Hence the rank and file sample was chosen for the present study.

## METHOD

### Sample and Setting

The sample consisted of 403 rank and file workers drawn from manufacturing and advertising companies in greater Vancouver, British Columbia. The size of the companies ranged from 100 to 300 employees. These companies represent cement products, electrical equipment, wood work and advertising industry. All the rank and file employees in the six companies constituted the sampling frame. The male-female ratio of the sample was 3:1. Twenty-six percent of the sample were between the ages of 18 to 25 years; forty-two percent were between the ages of 26 to 35 years and the rest were over 35 years of age. Thirty-one percent of the sample had up to grade 10 education; forty-six percent had up to grade 11 or 12 education and the rest had some college education. Twenty-four percent were single while sixty-eight percent were married. Thirty-two percent were earning less than \$800 per month; thirty-four percent were earning between \$800 and \$1 000 per month and the rest were earning more than \$1 000 per month. Data collection was through a structured questionnaire using the field survey method for a larger study. Pretesting of the questionnaire was done in one department of one company. Based on the above information the questionnaire was modified and administered personally by the first author to the population along with a self addressed stamped envelope. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and mail them directly to the researchers. The response rate was 45%. This rate was found to be consistent with the usual response rate of 48% reported in the literature for studies of this nature with single mailing and no follow up (Heberlein & Baumgartner 1978).

### Instrument

Need fulfillment in nonwork was measured using a 10-item Likert-type scale. The scale was modeled after the Mitchell and Moudgill (1976) scale with appropriate modifications to depict need fulfillment in nonwork. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach alpha) of the scale was found to be .90. The responses for each item were obtained through a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "minimum" to "maximum". The items were appropriately reflected so that a high scale value represented higher degrees of need fulfillment in nonwork. The overall measure of sampling adequacy using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index was found to be .986 (Dziuban & Shirkey 1974). The items in nonwork scale are listed below:

- (1) The feeling of insecurity in my off-job activities (security).
- (2) The opportunity to give help to other people in my off-job activities (social).
- (3) The feeling of self esteem I get in my off-job activities (esteem).
- (4) Prestige I receive from people with whom I undertake my off-job activities (esteem).
- (5) The opportunity for participating in determining the methods and procedures of my off-job activities (autonomy).
- (6) The opportunity for participating in setting the goals of my off-job activities (autonomy).
- (7) The feelings of worthwhile accomplishment I receive from performing my off-job activities (actualization).
- (8) The feeling of self fulfillment I receive from my off-job activities (actualization).
- (9) The opportunity for conversation and exchange of ideas with people in my off-job activities (social).
- (10) The threat of change which could make my present knowledge and skills in off-job activities obsolete (security).

### **Analysis**

Factor analysis was used to test the three classificatory schemes mentioned in the previous section. It has been suggested that factor analysis is an appropriate technique for testing hypotheses about structuring of variables in terms of the expected number of significant categories based on factor loadings (Harman 1970; Rummel 1970). However most studies made use of orthogonal rotation which forces independent factors. Such a rotation is justified only in cases where the constructs being measured are conceptually independent. In the case of needs, both Maslow (1954) and Alderfer (1972) suggested that such assumptions of independence would be inappropriate as they did not take into account the overlap between categories. Further, it can be argued that fulfillment of a particular need is influenced by fulfillment of a lower order need thus indicating interdependence between need categories. This line of reasoning renders all attempts to obtain need categories through independent factors conceptually erroneous (Mitchell & Moudgill 1976). It is believed that identification of factors through oblique relation would accommodate the suggested interdependence among the various needs, and hence would be methodologically more appropriate. An examination of the correlation among scale items stressed the complex

**TABLE 1**  
**Factor Analysis of Need Fulfillment in Nonwork: Modified Maslow Classification**  
**(N = 403)**

<i>Need Fulfillment Items</i>	<i>Factor 1</i> <i>Self Actualization</i>	<i>Factor 2</i> <i>Autonomy</i>	<i>Factor 3</i> <i>Esteem</i>	<i>Factor 4</i> <i>Social</i>	<i>Factor 5</i> <i>Security</i>
7.* The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment in off-job activities (Self actualization)	64	18	18	-04	15
8. The feeling of self fulfillment in off-job activities (Self actualization)	55	16	10	21	06
5. The opportunity for participation in determining the methods and procedures in off-job activities (Autonomy)	02	74	04	17	04
6. The opportunity for participation in the setting of goals in off-job activities (Autonomy)	14	72	07	-03	08
3. The feeling of self esteem in off-job activities (Esteem)	24	04	62	12	-01
4. Prestige received from others in off-job activities (Esteem)	10	18	30	43	01
2. The opportunity to give help to other people in off-job activities (Social)	60	07	51	11	14
9. The opportunity for conversation and exchange of ideas with people in off-job activities (Social)	15	12	33	35	03
10. The threat of change which could make present knowledge and skills in off-job activities obsolete (Security)	-02	09	11	-02	49
1. The feeling of insecurity in my off-job activities (Security)	11	-00	-01	08	59

\* The numbers correspond to the instrument items.  
 Decimals are omitted.



nature of the data. Hence the direct oblimin criterion with  $\delta = -0.5$  was found to be appropriate if the data were to be factor analyzed. (See Harman 1970 for greater elaboration). Consistent with the nature of the data the above criterion was selected for rotation to obtain a terminal solution yielding five, three and two factors respectively. It is believed the procedure is an adequate test of the three formulations toward identifying the appropriate need classification scheme for nonwork situations.

## RESULTS

The ten items depicting need fulfillment in nonwork were factor analyzed to give five, three and two factors respectively. Table 1 shows the structure obtained for a five factor solution testing Maslow's modified need classification scheme (1954).

The results indicate a close correspondence between the modified Maslow's five need categories and the way rank and file workers perceive their needs in the context of nonwork. The only deviant items are in the social and esteem categories. Item 2 from the social need category loaded under the "esteem" factor, while item 4 from the esteem need category loaded under the "social" factor. However the above results in general could be construed as adequate empirical support for modified Maslow's theoretical formulation with respect to the taxonomy.

Table 2 presents the structure for a three factor solution along the lines of Alderfer's need category (1972).

The Alderfer labels assigned to the items correspond to similar matchings reported in the literature (Chung 1977). The deviation of results from the theoretical formulation is much more marked in this case than in the previous one. Several items from the Growth Need Category (Growth 5, Growth 4 and Growth 1) loaded under the "relatedness" factor. Also another item from the relatedness category (Relatedness 1) exhibited ambiguous loading under the "existence" factor. The above results portray only a weak correspondence with Alderfer's theoretical formulation.

Table 3 reports the structure for a two factor solution suggested by Lawler (1973). In this table also, the Lawler labels attached to the items correspond with the literature (Lawler 1973). It was observed that both higher and lower order needs clustered together in the higher order need category. In other words the two lower order need items showed significantly high loadings under the "higher order need" factor. The above finding does not correspond with Lawler's distinction of higher and lower order needs.

**TABLE 2**  
**Factor Analysis of Need Fulfillment in Nonwork: Alderfer Classification**  
**(N = 403)**

<i>Need Fulfillment Items</i>	<i>Factor 1 Growth</i>	<i>Factor 2 Relatedness</i>	<i>Factor 3 Existence</i>
7.* The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment in off-job activities (Growth 5)	30	49	20
8. The feeling of self fulfillment on off-job activities (Growth 4)	30	53	16
5. The opportunity for participation in determining the methods and procedures in off-job activities (Growth 3)	75	13	07
6. The opportunity for participation in the setting of goals in off-job activities (Growth 2)	77	07	08
3. The feeling of self esteem in off-job activities (Growth 1)	-00	88	-02
4. Prestige received from others in off-job activities (Relatedness 3)	20	62	07
2. The opportunity to give help to other people in off-job activities (Relatedness 2)	01	57	12
9. The opportunity for conversation and exchange of ideas with people in off-job activities (Relatedness 1)	18	31	39
10. The threat of change which could make present knowledge and skills in off-job activities obsolete (Existence 2)	07	04	49
1. The feeling of insecurity in my off-job activities (Existence 1)	01	04	66

\* The numbers correspond to the instrument items.  
 Decimals are omitted.

**TABLE 3**  
**Factor Analysis of Need Fulfillment in Nonwork: Lawler Classification**

<i>Need Fulfillment Items</i>	<i>Higher Order Needs</i>	<i>Lower Order Needs</i>
7.* The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment in off-job activities (Higher order 8)	86	-01
8. The feeling of self fulfillment in off-job activities (Higher order 7)	86	01
5. The opportunity for participation in determining the methods and procedures in off-job activities (Higher order 6)	76	-34
6. The opportunity for participation in the setting of goals in off-job activities (Higher order 5)	73	-37
3. The feeling of self esteem in off-job activities (Higher order 4)	82	27
4. Prestige received from others in off-job activities (Higher order 3)	81	10
2. The opportunity to give help to other people in off-job activities (Higher order 2)	65	19
9. The opportunity for conversation and exchange of ideas with people in off-job activities (Higher order 1)	73	-01
10. The threat of change which could make present knowledge and skills in off-job activities obsolete (Lower order 2)	46	-04
1. The feeling of insecurity in my off-job activities (Lower order 1)	53	-03

\* The numbers correspond to the instrument items.  
 Decimals are omitted.

Though the modified Maslow scheme was found to have a better fit with the empirical findings compared to the other two, it was observed that the items in the social need category showed high loadings under the "esteem" factor and item 4 from the esteem need category showed high loading under the "social" factor. Hence, it was decided to try for a four factor solution that might point toward a modification of the theoretical framework as mentioned earlier. However, this attempt was not successful and the resulting factor structure was more ambiguous than the one shown in Table 1. Since the compromise solution attempted above did not provide us with either a logically sounder or an empirically cleaner structure, this line of investigation was not pursued any further. It was decided to opt for the solution that has some theoretical support.

Based on the above findings, it is suggested that the modified Maslow's need classification scheme (Porter 1961) comes close to capturing the reality about need conceptualization in nonwork. The two other competing frameworks (Alderfer 1972; Lawler 1973) offer little help in that direction. However the above observation is limited to need fulfillment in nonwork.

## DISCUSSION

The present results have enhanced the credibility of the modified Maslow scheme and offered empirical support toward extending it to study need fulfillment in nonwork. The Alderfer and Lawler theories were found inadequate in the nonwork domain. A possible reason for the better fit of the Maslow scheme could be that when it was originally derived, it was not confined to need fulfillment in work alone. It was a general taxonomy conceived in a larger framework so as to include needs in both work and nonwork. It was later applied to study work behavior (Porter 1961). On the other hand, both the Alderfer and Lawler conceptualizations were guided primarily by their observations of work behavior and in that sense more narrowly conceived compared to Maslow scheme. This might perhaps explain the latter frameworks' weak correspondence with the empirical findings in the nonwork area. However, in the modified Maslow framework, the social need fulfillment items showed high loadings under the "esteem" factor and one esteem need item loaded under the "social" factor (Table 1). Specifically, the item dealing with the opportunity to give help to other people in the nonwork context (social) exhibited a loading of .51 under "esteem" and the item dealing with prestige received from other people (esteem) loaded .43 under "social". It can perhaps be argued that in the nonwork situation the prestige one receives from associates and the self

esteem one gets are derived from the extent to which one socializes with them and the nature of that socialization. This scenario is likely to be more prevalent in the nonwork context than the work context. In the work context, the social aspects of the job may depend on the design of the job and the organization. In that sense, the constraints imposed by the design factors may influence the relationship between social and esteem needs. This is less probable in the case of nonwork as individuals have more freedom in choosing the structure and context for their nonwork activities and as one depends on others for fulfillment of both social and esteem needs, the empirical separation of the concepts in one's mind may be more difficult, given the social nature of most of the off-job activities.

Taking the results of this study in conjunction with those of Mitchell and Moudgill (1976) it is felt that both studies are in agreement with respect to the five factor solution. In other words, the modified Maslow scheme found empirical support in the realms of both work and nonwork. However the departure between the two studies occurs in the case of the two factor solution proposed by Lawler (1973). While Mitchell and Moudgill (1976) reported support for the two factor solution as well for need fulfillment in work, the present study found the two factor solution untenable in the area of nonwork. One reason for this discrepancy could be that the suggested cleavage between higher and lower order needs in the area of work may not be as important to the respondents in the area of nonwork. However the reader is cautioned that the above reasoning is at best speculative since the inference is based on "is now" scores. In order to be more definitive on this point, one needs to examine the "is now" scores along with the "importance" scores which are not available for this sample. Another plausible explanation for the failure of the suggested dichotomy between higher and lower order needs in nonwork to emerge empirically lies perhaps in the methodology. Taylor (1979) pointed out in order to be meaningful, measurements should reveal the values of those being measured. It is perhaps the insufficient dialogue between the researcher and respondents at the instrument development stage rendered the items measuring security needs in nonwork somewhat vague. This might have resulted in the respondents not being able to relate to those questions and providing "casual" answers instead (Taylor 1979).

The fundamental problem facing social scientists is one of understanding how individuals relate themselves to the social context which for them is the world of social reality (Parker & Smith 1976). In order to grasp this issue in its entirety, a holistic notion embracing both work and nonwork is needed. It is suggested that attempts focusing on the realm of work alone, to the neglect of nonwork are likely to yield only partial solutions to our problems

concerning quality of life. We must enlarge our frames of reference and see the connections between what happens in the job world and the rest of society so that the two sides compliment and enhance each other (Gardell 1976). The increasing free time released due to flextime, short work weeks and the like have set people paying more attention to nonwork in recent times (Brail & Chapin 1973; Glickman & Brown 1974). The above observation implies that jobs will have to be accommodated more and more to the demands of nonwork activities in contrast to the past when nonwork activities were often subordinated to work (Gardell 1976). It also underscores the futility of stressing one life area (work) at the expense of the other (nonwork) if overall quality of life is the goal.

One practical implication of this research is that it offers a framework for companies to study the need fulfillment pattern of their employees so as to facilitate their nonwork activities. If organizations provide facilities for its members in the nonwork area which could impart a meaningful content to their quality of life, they may compensate for some of the failures of work to satisfy important human needs (Gardell 1976). This in turn may encourage the employees to expand their "sidebets" (Becker 1960) which leads to increased commitment in their organizations. The above step has positive payoffs through decreased turnover. It has been successfully put into practice in Japan and the literature dealing with Japanese management bears testimony to that fact. Another area where the present study might be useful is leisure counseling and guidance.

It has been suggested that there are three aspects to any study of human behavior namely the identification mode where variables of interest are identified; the second is the association mode where relationships among the variables are posited and tested; and finally the application mode where one tests and verifies the applicability of the variables in predicting certain criteria (Mitchell & Moudgill 1976). The present study is conducted in the identification mode where an attempt has been made to identify the appropriate classificatory scheme to study need fulfillment in nonwork. In other words, isolating the viable taxonomy is the sole purpose of this study. The theories have not been tested for the notion of hierarchy nor for the relationships between work and nonwork which fall in the realm of the association mode. To that extent the present research is only a partial test of the theories mentioned earlier. However, the theoretical implications are to explore the relationship between need fulfillment in work and nonwork in the association mode and to establish predictive equations linking need fulfillment in nonwork with certain criterion variables such as life satisfaction, mental health and organizational commitment. The customary plea for future research along that direction is made through this paper.

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## La nature des besoins chez les gens en dehors des heures de travail

La notion de besoin est un sujet populaire de recherche parmi les employeurs depuis une vingtaine d'années. On dénombre trois formulations différentes de la classification des besoins (Alderfer, 1972; Lawler, 1973; Maslow, 1956) qui continuent à retenir l'attention des chercheurs et qui ont soulevé un débat animé au sujet de la description des modèles de comportement. Une grande partie de la recherche empirique concernant la satisfaction des besoins s'est effectuée en milieu de travail (Wahba et Bridwell, 1976), alors que l'on a bien peu traité de la satisfaction des besoins en dehors du travail (Burke, 1973; Mansfield, 1972). Récemment, on a exprimé l'avis que les attitudes du salarié au travail ne peuvent être bien comprises, si on les isole de ce qui se passe en dehors du travail (Bass et Bass, 1976; Gardell, 1976).

Ce point de vue revêt plus de signification encore quand on le considère en fonction de l'idée que l'individu se fait de la qualité de la vie. Pour Dalkey, Lewis et Snyder (1972), la qualité de la vie est la mesure de la capacité pour un individu ou une société de satisfaire aux besoins psychologiques et physiologiques qu'ils ressentent, et ces auteurs assignent à ces besoins un rôle important dans leur modèle de la qualité de la vie. Ils ont aussi appuyé sur l'importance de la satisfaction des besoins dans les



divers champs d'activité de l'existence en les opposant à la satisfaction des besoins en milieu de travail. D'autres chercheurs ont souligné la valeur de l'état d'inactivité pour l'individu comme élément déterminant de la santé mentale, de l'adaptation au travail, de la joie de vivre et de la qualité de la vie (de Grazia, 1962; Lofquist et Dawis, 1969; London, Crandall et Seals, 1977; Tinsley, Barrett et Kass, 1977). Dans cette étude, ne pas travailler ne signifie pas rester oisif; c'est, au contraire, exercer un ensemble d'activités dans lesquelles des personnes s'amuse, acquièrent des connaissances nouvelles, améliorent la pratique de leur profession ou participent davantage à la vie de la communauté. Récemment, Mitchell et Moudgill (1976) ont présenté une analyse assez bien réussie de la classification des besoins en milieu de travail. De plus, ces deux auteurs en donnaient la meilleure solution tant au point de vue conceptuel que méthodologique. C'est pourquoi leur exposé a été utilisé comme base pour l'étude de la satisfaction des besoins en dehors du travail.

L'étude regroupait un échantillon de 403 salariés appartenant à des entreprises de fabrication et de publicité du Vancouver métropolitain en Colombie Britannique dont le nombre d'employés varie entre 100 et 300 personnes. Les données furent recueillies au moyen d'un questionnaire conçu pour la méthode d'enquête sur le terrain en vue d'une analyse plus approfondie et le taux des réponses s'est établi à 45 pour cent, ce qui est normal pour une enquête de ce genre.

La satisfaction des besoins en dehors du travail fut mesurée au moyen d'une échelle de type Likert comprenant dix questions en prenant comme modèle l'échelle établie par Mitchell et Moudgill modifiée de façon à représenter la satisfaction des besoins en dehors du travail.

Les auteurs ont vérifié les réponses obtenues en regard de la triple formulation énoncée ci-dessus. Il en ressort que ces réponses correspondent d'assez près aux cinq catégories établies par Maslow. Les formulations d'Alderfer et de Lawler, qui comportent respectivement trois et deux catégories, ne tiennent pas si on les applique aux résultats de la présente enquête. Donc, en se fondant sur ces constatations, on peut dire que le plan de classification mis au point par Maslow et retouché par Porter (1961) rend compte de la réalité relativement au concept des besoins en dehors du milieu de travail. Les deux autres formulations, celles d'Alderfer et de Lawler sont, au contraire, de peu de recours. Toutefois, l'observation précédente se limite essentiellement à la satisfaction des besoins en dehors du milieu de travail.

Une des conséquences pratiques de la présente enquête, c'est qu'elle offre aux entreprises un cadre pour l'étude de la satisfaction des besoins de leurs salariés tout en favorisant leur activité en dehors du milieu de travail. Si celles-ci facilitent à ceux qui y oeuvrent la possibilité d'avoir, hors du travail, des activités valorisantes, ces activités peuvent compenser les insuffisances du milieu de travail à satisfaire des besoins humains fondamentaux et, ainsi, encourager les salariés à s'impliquer davantage dans l'entreprise, ce qui pourrait avoir pour effet d'atténuer le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre comme on en a fait l'heureuse expérience au Japon. De même, la présente étude peut être un guide pour ceux qui s'intéressent à l'organisation des loisirs.