

# Restructuring the Employment Relationship

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## Abstract

This masterly new study presents the first large-scale empirical analysis of the changes in British work experiences and employment relationships between the 1980s and 1990s. Drawing on the Employment in Britain survey a national survey providing the richest source of evidence to date about individuals' experience of employment it examines the impact of new technologies, the emergence of new management policies, the changing forms of employment contract, and the growth of job insecurity on people's experience of employment. The authors focus on the implications these developments have for the ways in which skills and work tasks have been

changing, the nature of control at work, the degree of participation in decision-making, and the flexibility demanded at work. They assess whether there has been a tendency towards either a polarization or convergence of employment experiences between men and women, and between occupational classes. They offer fresh insight into how the changing quality of work in recent years has affected employee's involvement in their jobs and organizations, the stress they experience at work, and the propensity for absenteeism and staff turnover. While the study provides strong evidence of a marked trend towards upskilling, the authors take issue with the argument that a new type of employment relationship is emerging, arguing instead that the restructuring of the employment relationship has, in fact, reinforced traditional lines of division in the workforce.

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