

Rethinking Work and Wellbeing

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Abstract

It is now two decades since Sumantra Ghoshal's provocative polemic against the proliferation of amoral epistemologies and methodologies. Our research contributes to the ongoing endeavour of rejuvenating management research with a sense of purpose by interrogating the wellbeing discourse from the perspective of indigenous communities and cultures. In so we question the primacy of productivity in wellbeing intervention and discourse within management research and present a case for alter-agency at work. Our investigation asks how Yogic, Vedic, and Buddhist systems might help orient contemporary capitalism's bearers to think and act to pursue wellbeing of self and others, as an end. A growing volume of research has sought to apply the wisdom of the East to work done in the West. However, this scholarship has consistently excluded Eastern voices, frameworks and experiences. This paper will endeavour to right these wrongs by basing its claims upon decolonial principles and practices. Drawing upon the exegetical analysis of selected ancient and modern scripts, the diarised outputs of several months of participant observation, and the empirical detail of 23 depth interviews, the paper will indicate how the quotidian habits, the ethical values, the spiritual beliefs, and the intellectual frameworks of these traditions both suggest and propose a systematic alternative to the now much maligned hegemony of principal-agency theory.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Yoga, Buddhism, Ethics, Values