

The Kaleidoscope Model of Life: Time to Rethink Work and Life in Separate Domains for Sustainable Workforce Well-being

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Abstract

This paper intends to broaden understanding of the multifaceted nature of an individual's work and nonwork experiences and the key factors that shape life dynamics. Common work-life concepts, such as work-life conflict, balance and enrichment, are based on most accepted assumption that work and life exist in two separate domains. This perspective limits the development of creative approaches to corporate work-nonwork policies. Most current work-life literature focuses predominantly on work, particularly paid work, which has led to research deficiencies and gender inequities. There is a growing need to consider and explore the synergies and connections between different aspects of life to move beyond the traditional work and family models and consider a broader range of modern life domains. The aim of this paper is to introduce a new and holistic model of life, tailored to demonstrate individual life needs and changes to support better work-nonwork integration and sustainable workforce well-being. This paper highlights the importance of considering both paid and unpaid work within the work domain to understand the full scope of an individual's work responsibilities and to address key challenges related to equity, satisfaction, and sustainability in work-nonwork management. This paper argues that life encapsulates work, rather than existing as a separate domain. Broadening the conceptualisation of work and life is essential to meet the needs of diverse constituencies, evolving family types, workforce changes, employment trends, and societal and environmental factors.

Keywords: work-life; work-nonwork; life encapsulates work; wellbeing; gender