

Readers' Corner

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Work and Family

Crompton, Rosemary, Suzan Lewis, and Clare Lyonette

Women, Men, Work and Family in Europe

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007
HD 4904.25 W655

This book is a collection of stand-alone essays which focuses primarily on attitudes towards women's work and issues of gender, and how these continue to shape experiences of work and family, despite changes in attitudes on personal and societal levels. Fertility rates, postponement of childbearing, and patterns in mothers' employment are compared across several European nations, and the differences among them indicate that public policies, both national and organizational, have a significant impact upon work-family articulation. The domestic division of labour across several occupational classes is also investigated, in an effort to determine whether the rising level of paid employment amongst women is mirrored by increasing gender equity in terms of household tasks.

Voydanoff, Patricia

Work, Family, and Community: Exploring Interconnections

Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006
HD 4904.25 V69

The author introduces the concept of community into the discussion of work-family integration and argues that studying one domain without consideration of the other two does not present an accurate portrait of life. While the resources and support of the community can contribute to a more successful integration of work and family life, the demands of the community can similarly affect an individual's level of functioning in these two arenas. Structural changes such as the need to work longer hours are emerging just as many communities are obliged to cut back services to working families. Viewpoints from many fields, such as occupational health psychology, human development and family studies, management, and social work, are incorporated into a model based upon ecological systems theory.

Work and Family: An International Research Perspective

Series in Applied Psychology

Edited by Steven A.Y. Poelmans

Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005

HD 4904.25 W672

The significance of cultural, socio-economic, and geo-political contexts is emphasized in this international collection which includes case studies from all over the globe. The book is divided into sections treating the individual, organizational, and cross-cultural perspectives, with additional chapters devoted to case studies and recommendations for future research. Global inequality is taken into account, as organizations have varying abilities to build and sustain policies and services benefiting working families; this is an inevitable corollary of the global hierarchies in which they are rooted.

The Work and Family Handbook: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives, Methods, and Approaches

Edited by Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes, Ellen Ernst Kossek, and Stephen A. Sweet

Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006

HD 4904.25 W67

In this handbook, the work-family dynamic is approached through the lens of several disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, women's studies, business, and anthropology. Comparisons are made between different countries, and the degree to which changing social norms related to consumerism, technology, careers, and parenting have affected perceived levels of work-family balance in those countries. The first section is an analysis of "Families and Jobs in the 21st Century", wherein contributors look at the social and industrial processes that have led to the diversification of families. The second section is an overview of the various disciplines inherent in the study of work and families and their varying theoretical frameworks, while the third section is a compendium of methodological approaches to the research conducted in these fields. Finally, the fourth section of the book is a discussion on the various means and processes that can transform scholarly research into organizational and political change.

Work-Life Integration: International Perspectives on the Balancing of Multiple Roles

Edited by Paul Blyton

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006

HD 4904.25 W676

This is a collection of essays addressing the varying social conditions and policies which affect work-life balance in selected countries around the globe, with an emphasis on family issues. The voice of children is introduced as a perspective previously not explored in research, as well as the input of working students and stakeholders such as employers and unions. A chapter on work-life balance in Canada discusses the changes in the Canadian workforce and shifting responsibilities outside the workplace; examples include the 'sandwich generation' (those who care for both aging parents and their own children) and men with increasing child-care responsibility. These various groups are no longer served by "traditional 'one-size fits all' human resource policies" and the authors assert that public and employer policies have been slow to react to changing social and economic pressures.
