18. Integrating work and personal life

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The interconnection between people's experiences at work and in their family lives has been the topic of considerable research over the past 30 years, as well as receiving much attention from the popular press and the media, amid growing concerns about the encroachment of work demands into people's family and personal lives. There has also been much debate about the meaning of terms such as 'work-life balance' and 'work-family integration' and how these might play out for individuals, couples and families. The interface between work and other aspects of life is increasingly recognized as an important issue, and has captured the attention of researchers in organizational behaviour and industrial/organizational psychology. In this chapter we explore some critical issues that relate to this nexus. In particular, we discuss two major constructs: work-family conflict (or interference) and work-family facilitation (or enrichment), which have been the subject of numerous research endeavours. Much of this research can be traced back to the seminal work of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who offered a conceptual definition of the term 'conflict' as it applies to the work-family nexus, a definition that set the scene for over 30 years of research in this field. More recently, and in part due to the rising influence of the positive organizational behaviour and positive psychology movement, increasing research attention has also been given to the other side of the coin, referred to as either 'enrichment' or 'facilitation'.

Related to the above is another emerging focus on what is typically referred to as work-life 'balance', mostly concerning balance between work commitments and family responsibilities, rather than other areas of life. The concept of balance is somewhat controversial and multiple definitions have been proffered. However, it has become clear that work-life balance is something more than an absence of conflict between the work domain and other life domains. Although lack of conflict may be an important prerequisite for balance, it is not a sufficient condition for people to experience 'balance' in their lives. Later we reflect on some of the major contributors to work-life balance.

Stemming from research on the causes and consequences of work-family

conflict, there has also been discussion of how can conflict be managed, so that greater work–life balance will be achieved. There have been two major research directions related to this issue, the first focusing on the coping strategies that individuals (and their partners and families) use to reduce conflict and enhance the level of balance that they experience, and the second dealing with organizational responses to the apparently increasing levels of conflict that many workers are experiencing. These organizational responses come in different guises, including introducing more flexible work options (e.g., flexitime or flexiplace), the provision of organizational support for employees to juggle responsibilities in their work and family lives, and career management assistance for these employees. We also summarize research on personal coping efforts and organizational initiatives. Finally, this chapter reviews the concepts of integration versus segmentation between work and other life domains, especially in the context of modern technologies, which appear to blur the boundaries between domains.

WORK–LIFE CONFLICT

In recent years there has been an apparent increase in the amount of conflict or interference that people report between their work and other areas of their lives, especially family (Brough et al., 2007; Matthews et al., 2012). Curiously, to the best of our knowledge there has been no direct empirical confirmation of this presumption, but many interventions are founded on the notion that it is becoming harder for people to achieve a good balance between their work commitments and their non-work lives, especially their family responsibilities, and that this is due in large part to the increasing pressures and demands of work. This leads inevitably to the question: why is work becoming more demanding and taking more of people's time and energy? Several possible contributing factors have been identified.

Rapid changes in technology that have occurred over the past ten years are most often implicated (Derks et al., 2012). Before then, it was difficult for many workers to take their work home. We simply did not have the technologies that readily allowed that to happen. Today, however, a very different scenario is prevalent. Many workers utilize some form of digital (computer-based) technology in their work and many (if not most) have digital technologies at home, and increasingly carry these with them in the form of smartphones and other interactive devices that enable continuous connection to the work environment (ibid.). Hence the possibility for work to 'spill over' into family and non-working life is more evident than it was

previously, and the stresses of working life can create an overflow of psychological strain (even burnout) into personal life.

Almost 30 years ago Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) observed that conflict between one domain (e.g., work) and another (e.g., family) occurs when there are demands and expectations that are mutually incompatible. Work–family demands and resources, along with factors such as gender and having dependants at home, are relevant to levels of both work-to-family interference (WFI) and family-to-work interference (FWI). In turn, WFI and FWI contribute to several negative outcomes for individuals, which have implications for their family and employing organization. Numerous studies have demonstrated that WFI has serious negative implications for variables such as job satisfaction, family satisfaction, psychological strain, burnout, commitment to the organization and overall quality of life (see, for example, O'Driscoll et al., 2007). Typically it has been found that work demands impinge on family life (WFI) more so than the reverse direction (FWI), although, when it occurs, the latter can also have deleterious effects on people's psychological health and wellbeing.

Three different forms of work–family conflict have been identified: time-based interference (due to conflicting time demands from different domains); strain-based interference (strain from one domain spilling into the other domain); and behaviour-based interference (when norms and expectations of behaviour in one sphere are at odds with those in the other). Most research has focused on time-based and strain-based interference, as these appear to be most prevalent and have the greatest impact on individuals. Behaviour-based interference is less often reported and may be constrained to particular kinds of jobs or occupations (Dierdorff and Ellington, 2008).

Time demands from work have consistently been demonstrated to increase work–family interference and lead to negative consequences for both the individual and their family, and in some cases the organization. Excessive time demands may be exacerbated by the very technologies that are intended to create greater flexibility and efficiency. As noted above, the availability of cell phones and similar devices has meant that people can engage in work-related activities even when they are not physically present at work. This has many advantages (for both the individual and the organization) but it can also create expectations and pressures on people to be 'available for work' outside of formal work time. This is potentially a major difficulty for professional occupations, especially where there are no fixed work hours. Time-based WFI has been observed to have substantial negative effects on individuals and, indirectly, their families (O'Driscoll et al., 2006).

Related to the above is strain-based interference between work and life

off the job. This arises primarily due to psychological strain experienced either at work or at home. Strain may be caused by many factors, including within-role conflict (such as competing demands within one's work role), interpersonal conflict (with co-workers or with family members), role overload (too much to do and insufficient resources to complete tasks), and expectations to perform at higher and higher levels. Given that work and other life domains intersect with each other, and it is not possible to fully segregate them, the psychological strain experienced at work will then transfer into off-job areas of life (Hoge, 2009). The converse can also occur, as when a parent has to deal with sick children, which not only creates time pressures but can also be stressful. Similarly, relationship problems between partners create significant levels of strain that will spill over into the work domain, interfering with the person's ability to complete job tasks and remain engaged in their work.

The extent to which people are psychologically involved in their work and other life roles has been suggested as a possible contributor to conflict between work and non-work roles (Frone et al., 1997). For instance, if a parent is highly committed to caring for and developing his or her children, this could interfere with their work engagement. It is logical to expect that role salience, the importance of a role for the person, would be a predictor of high conflict, mainly because high role salience should lead to greater investment of time and energy into the specific role performance, which may then detract from one's contribution to other roles; however, research has not always demonstrated this. Based on the 'conservation of resources' theory (Hobfoll, 1989), investment of time and energy in one role can actually enhance, rather than diminish, engagement in other roles. Hence, under some conditions, role investment can be a facilitator rather than a source of conflict.

Several other constructs have also been researched as moderators of the relationships between work-family conflict and various outcomes. One important consideration is gender (Brough and O'Driscoll, 2005). Some researchers (e.g., Major, 1993) have suggested that, due to different work and family role demands, men and women have different experiences of the work-family interface. As women generally (still) have greater responsibility for home and family tasks and are typically relied upon more heavily when family problems occur, they are more likely to experience work-to-family interference than their male counterparts. Conversely, men are typically more highly involved in their work and career than in the family, and hence are more likely to experience family-to-work interference. A few studies have obtained evidence that women experience more WFI than men, although these differences are often quite small (Higgins et al., 2010). Gender has also been examined as a moderator variable. In

these analyses it might be expected that the impact of work demands on WFI would be stronger for women than for men, whereas the impact of family demands on FWI would be felt more strongly by men. Evidence for these effects is far from consistent, however, and several studies have found few if any gender differences (see Brough and O'Driscoll, 2005).

Having dependants at home is another potential moderator variable. People who are responsible for either children or adults (e.g., parents or grandparents) are likely to feel the effects of work–family conflict more severely, perhaps in both directions. Some studies (e.g., Noor, 2002) have suggested that this is especially the case for women. Other studies have illustrated the impact of having dependants on psychological strain and overall wellbeing (Brough and Kelling, 2002). However, these effects can themselves be buffered by having social support (both at work and at home), as well as by effective coping strategies (for example, time management). In addition, feeling control over both the work and family environments can make a substantial contribution to enhanced wellbeing and satisfaction. Perceptions of control are critical to enhanced wellbeing and reduced strain, especially when a person is confronted with significant work and family demands (Kelly and Moen, 2007).

Social support is a well-known buffering variable in job stress research and has been demonstrated to alleviate the negative effects of stressors like work–family conflict (Ayman and Antani, 2008). Numerous studies have shown beneficial effects of social support (from one's supervisor and work colleagues, family members, and the organization as a whole), although sometimes these effects have been 'direct' rather than 'buffering'. Overall, however, it is clear that social support generally leads to beneficial results, although the mechanism (e.g., direct versus moderating) is not always clear-cut.

In summary, there has been a wealth of research on work–family conflict and its negative implications for personal health and wellbeing, and the evidence is very consistent that both WFI and FWI can have substantial negative effects on people. Later we also discuss mechanisms for alleviating work–family conflict, especially via organizational policies and practices (such as flexitime).

WORK–LIFE FACILITATION

The opposite side of the work–life interface coin is what is often referred to as 'enrichment' or 'facilitation'. Less research attention has been given to this aspect, although there has been mounting research on the positive (facilitative) effects that work and non-work roles (especially family

roles) can have on each other (Brough et al., 2007). While there has been debate about the most appropriate term for these positive effects, here we will refer to facilitation, as this reflects a process rather than an outcome (enrichment). Work–family facilitation research has been based predominantly on the positive psychology movement within organizational behaviour.

Marks (1977) suggested that engagement in work and family roles can actually benefit each other, rather than being a source of energy depletion and psychological strain, as is suggested by the work–family conflict literature. However, research on facilitation has been less extensive. One possible reason is that in the 1980s there was a tendency to see work and life (especially family) as being in competition with each other, and that people's time and energy are limited resources. In contrast, more recent discussions (e.g., Gareis et al., 2009) have focused on complementarity and the potential for mutually beneficial contributions from different life domains. Work and other aspects of life can provide sources of strength (resources) to enhance involvement and performance in each domain.

As with research on work–family conflict, much of the attention in facilitation research has been on factors that contribute to work–family facilitation. Grzywacz (2002) suggested that these can be grouped into four categories: (1) dispositional characteristics, (2) exploitable work and family resources, (3) the selective permeability of work and family boundaries, and (4) demands at work and in family life. At the dispositional level, personality factors such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to new experiences, and optimism have been found to relate positively with facilitation. Generally, individuals who score highly on each of these characteristics experience greater work–family facilitation. Having resources that can be transferred across domains may also contribute to greater facilitation. An obvious example is pay – a higher salary is likely to create more opportunities to balance demands from work and family life.

Finally, work and family demands have an impact on work–family facilitation. A good illustration is gender role expectations. For example, if a woman is expected (by her family) to take primary responsibility for household and family tasks, this may impede the work facilitation that she experiences, as she may have to scale back on her work hours and her career in order to meet family role expectations. On the other hand, receiving support from one's partner/spouse and family members in addressing family responsibilities can lead to greater facilitation, for both men and women. Similar considerations apply to work demands and expectations.

Work–family facilitation typically has been found to create positive outcomes, especially for individuals but also (perhaps more indirectly) for workers' families and their organizations. Satisfaction with both work and

family is greater when people experience facilitation, and there are higher levels of psychological wellbeing, reduced strain, and better mental health for both men and women (Aryee et al., 2005). Additionally, although the main focus of organizational policies and practices has typically been on the reduction of conflict between work and family lives, these policies and practices may also serve to enhance positive spillover between domains.

WORK–LIFE BALANCE

Another concept that has captured attention over recent years is the notion of ‘balance’ between work responsibilities and other life commitments. Although this is usually referred to as work–life balance, in practice it often refers to work–*family* balance, as the main focus has been on balancing work and family commitments. Developing greater work–life balance and better quality of life has been touted as important by politicians, the media and health specialists. As we discussed earlier, the demands of modern workplaces may place substantial strain on individuals, leading to greater work–family conflict and a reduction in the degree of ‘balance’ between important life components. One difficulty, however, is that the notion of balance itself is somewhat nebulous and has been defined in various ways.

Several approaches have been proposed for the conceptualization and measurement of balance. Greenhaus and Powell (2006), for instance, referred to the proportion of one’s day that is devoted to work activities compared with other aspects of life. Excluding time for sleep, their schema refers to three states that an individual might find themselves in – neutral (where there is an equal distribution of work hours and non-work hours), positive balance (where the number of hours spent on non-work activities is greater than those devoted to work), and negative balance (where work hours exceed non-work hours). The last state is considered to have negative consequences, including greater psychological strain, less satisfaction (with both work and family life), and overall lower wellbeing.

An alternative approach to conceptualizing and assessing work–life balance has been developed by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007). Their view, based on a role theory perspective, is that both work and family life are concerned with role negotiations between significant people in one’s life. In the work context, an individual must reach a common understanding with their manager or employer about time and energy commitments to their job. At home, similar negotiations occur between a person and their partner/spouse and family members. Balance arises when there is some concordance in these negotiations, such that the person and important

others in their lives (e.g., employer, partner/spouse) have a common understanding of the commitment of the target person to both their work and their off-the-job responsibilities. This approach highlights the dynamic and interactive nature of balance, rather than it being a fixed state.

Yet other approaches have examined subjective perceptions of the degree of balance in a person's life. Brough et al. (2014b) posited that balance exists when the person feels that the important elements in their life are in harmony with each other and that they are devoting the ideal amount of time to each area. From this perspective, work–life balance is a phenomenological concept embedded within the person's subjective perceptions and interpretations of their current commitments at work and other areas of their life.

Whatever schema is adopted, there is some consensus about factors that contribute (either positively or negatively) to enhancing work–life balance. Excessive work time is clearly a major contributor to reduced balance, and numerous studies have illustrated the negative consequences of working long hours, particularly if the person feels that they have little control over the amount of time devoted to work. When organizational expectations and demands take precedence over family responsibilities and personal goals, this can produce very deleterious effects for individuals and their families. The challenge for both researchers and practitioners is to formulate effective strategies, for both individuals and their organizations, to ensure that people can both perform optimally at work and achieve fulfilment in their non-work (e.g., family) roles.

COPING WITH WORK–LIFE CONFLICT

It is surprising that the coping strategies commonly adopted by individual workers to best manage their levels of work–family conflict have to date received sparse research attention. Early investigations focused on identifying the 'standard' coping behaviours commonly adopted by employees to manage both their work and non-work stressors. Not surprisingly, active problem-focused coping such as time management, rather than emotion-focused coping behaviours, were found to be strongly associated with improved psychological health outcomes (strain) for these employees (Hall, 1972; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Jex and Elacqua, 1999).

Following the work of Hall (1972), Amatea and Fong-Beyette (1987) elicited 17 coping responses commonly employed by female academics to specifically manage their experiences of role conflict. Amatea and Fong-Beyette categorized these coping behaviours into four groups defined by active and passive coping responses and by problem-focused and

emotional-focused coping. Active problem-focused coping strategies were employed when role demands were perceived to be changeable; specific examples included time management, organizing behaviours, prioritizing demands, and negotiating changes in role demands. Passive problem-focused coping strategies were adopted when the role demands were perceived to be rigid and not easy to change, including, for example, working harder, trying to please everyone, and limiting involvement in their roles.

Active emotion-focused coping strategies focused on changing the availability of personal resources and personal attitudes. Specific examples included seeking social support, modifying (reappraising) the meaning of events, and behaviours aimed at personally managing stress symptoms such as alternating periods of heavy demands with periods of lighter demands. Finally, passive emotion-focused responses focused on indirect attempts to reduce stress, including, for example, suppression of feelings, wishful thinking (for longer days, or ending their employment), and displacement (blaming others). Similar to earlier research, Amatea and Fong-Beyette (1987) found that problem-focused coping strategies were more often employed as compared to emotion-focused coping strategies. Subsequent research has produced similar results.

Muller (1999) sampled employed Australian women with at least one dependent child and identified five key work–family coping strategies they employed. First, the respondents identified that a realistic view of the difficulties of the situation and opportunities to continually negotiate work and family demands was beneficial. Obtaining support was a highly beneficial coping strategy and this included direct support from spouse, family members, hired help (e.g., cleaners), and good-quality childcare facilities. Third, planning was also a highly rated coping strategy, including, for example, preparing meals in advance and effective time management of daily routines. Fourth, a more general coping strategy was choosing a flexible job/career, and finally, having personal confidence in their abilities and value was also perceived to be beneficial in coping with work and family demands.

Behson (2002) developed a measure of 16 specific work–family coping strategies that included items such as using sick days and time off to attend to family demands, arranging for a co-worker to switch duties, completing work tasks at night, and bringing children to work. While this measure consists only of problem-focused coping strategies (and excludes emotion-focused strategies), Behson successfully demonstrated the validity and reliability of this measure in a sample of male and female US telecommunications workers.

More recently, work by Neal and Hammer (2007, 2009) has produced another taxonomy of work–family coping strategies based on the

individual's abilities to either increase resources and/or decrease demands and characterized by behavioural-, cognitive-, or emotional-based strategies. The specific coping items in these six categories are similar to those described previously and include, for example, taking time off work to manage family responsibilities, hiring domestic helpers, seeking support, time management, decreasing social involvements, and prioritizing important activities. Neal and Hammer demonstrated empirical support for these work–family coping strategies in samples of dual earner couples caring for both children and elderly parents (i.e., the ‘sandwiched generation’). The authors also assessed the associations between these work–family coping strategies and several key psychological outcomes. Most noticeably, coping strategies that increased emotional resources (seeking support) and involved prioritizing were associated with reduced levels of depression and higher levels of positive work–family spillover for females. For both males and females, decreasing social involvements was associated with reduced levels of wellbeing.

Finally, research by Major and colleagues is also influential in this field (see Major et al., 2012). Major and Morganson (2011) raised the pertinent issue of including proactive or preventive coping in work–family coping research. Thus, coping describes both retrospective behaviours (the coping behaviours that were employed to reduce a past stressor) and prospective behaviours (the coping behaviours planned to be employed to reduce a known future stressor; see Brough et al., 2009b for a review). The effective use of preventive coping strategies is likely to reduce the occurrence of (future) work–family conflict, and is, therefore, a highly pertinent aspect for this field of research. Major and Morganson (2011) described a four-fold taxonomy defined by problem-focused and emotion-focused coping and by preventive and past (episodic) coping behaviours. The authors suggested that preventive problem-focused coping is the most effective form of work–family coping, followed by episodic problem-focused coping, preventive emotion-focused coping, and finally episodic emotion-focused coping. While this taxonomy is yet to be empirically tested, it does have intuitive value in that managing work–family conflict certainly involves both addressing known future demands (e.g., organizing a baby-sitter or a day off work in advance, booking additional childcare days, juggling future recreational leave with spouses to cover school holiday care) and coping with current demands (e.g., taking time off work to take a sick dependant to the doctors, working at home in the evening to complete a current work deadline, seeking alternative more ‘family-friendly’ employment). We shift our focus next to a discussion of common practices used by employers to enhance work–life balance among their employees.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORTS TO REDUCE WORK–LIFE CONFLICT

Most employers recognize the value of adopting organizational work–life balance policies to both attract and retain employees who have a variety of non-work commitments. Employers also recognize that high a level of work–life balance is important for worker job performance and organizational productivity. Specific positive organizational outcomes associated with work–life balance include, for example, high levels of employee job commitment and job satisfaction (Brough et al., 2009b). The benefits of informal organizational support provisions are also recognized, most commonly displayed via the support and attitudes of co-workers and supervisors (Thompson et al., 2006).

Many organizations have developed policies and practices to assist their workers to reduce the amount of work–family conflict they experience and to enhance their work–life balance. These organizational efforts are diverse, but most can be classified as initiatives to address working time and/or working hours, attempts to improve the quality of work life, or changes in organizational cultures, including the provision of more organizational support for individuals so that they can reduce their conflict levels and achieve better balance in their lives. Brough and O’Driscoll (2010) reviewed the effectiveness of evidence-based work–life balance organizational initiatives. The management of work time was addressed most successfully by organizational policies that enabled employees to control their own work hours to some degree. Practices such as flexitime (flexible daily start and finish times), flexiplace (options to work away from the workplace; see, for example, Maruyama et al., 2009; Morganson et al., 2010), compressed working weeks (work hours compressed into fewer days), and the self-management of shift-work and rota schedules, have been implemented and found to improve both individual and organizational work performance outcomes (Brough and O’Driscoll, 2010).

The ability for workers to also reduce their work hours to manage acute family demands such as caring for a new baby or an ill spouse is also highly pertinent for both short-term and longer-term outcomes. In an investigation of employed new parents in New Zealand and Australia, Brough et al. (2009a) noted that inflexibility in work hours was strongly associated with high turnover intentions for individual workers. Fitting work hours around high levels of family demands (rather than vice versa) was certainly a priority for these workers.

The disparity between formally listing human resource policies and supporting employees to access these policies is an acknowledged difficulty for organizational work–life balance policies (Brough et al., 2008).

The necessity for employees to be made aware of, and supported in their accessing of work–life balance policies, may require an organizational culture change to overcome any ‘backlash’ from colleagues and supervisors (Brough et al., 2014b). To assess this issue in depth, Harrington and James (2006) developed a Standard of Excellence Index in Work/Life Integration (SEI) measure, which evaluates seven criteria assessing an organization’s culture of work–life balance: leadership, strategy, infrastructure, accountability, relationships, communication, and measurement. The SEI benchmarks organizations against each other to provide rankings of organizational work–life culture and to identify specific criteria requiring improvement.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORK AND LIFE INTEGRATION

In this final section we briefly discuss some pertinent future issues for work and life integration. First, we examine technology, which brings both advantages and disadvantages to work–life balance. We have previously discussed the associations between information technology and increasing level of occupational stress (O’Driscoll et al., 2010) and a number of these points also relate to work–life balance. Technological innovations have clearly increased the flexibility with which work can be performed, reducing both time and place constraints as we noted earlier. However, a disadvantage of this increased flexibility is the increasing encroachment of work upon employees’ private lives. For instance, telework may reduce demands associated with time, commuting, and juggling work and family commitments, but it also has been found to induce other stressors that can offset the advantages of this form of working. Research findings on the positive versus negative outcomes of telework are, however, quite inconsistent, largely because of the difficulties of conducting a randomized trial of teleworkers. Employees who choose to work outside of their workplace may be inherently different from workers who choose not to. Recent research identifies no clear differences in job attitudes and performance levels between teleworkers and non-teleworkers, although this research rarely controls for any inherent individual differences (Brough et al., 2007; Maruyama et al., 2009; Morganson et al., 2010; Grant et al., 2013).

Similarly, emerging research has also specifically examined the impact of the intrusion of work emails into employees’ non-work time, and we suggest this is another pertinent issue for work–life balance researchers to assess in more detail. We previously identified how, because of constant connectivity, emails traverse traditional boundaries between work and

home, and hence employees may be denied important 'down-time' from their work (O'Driscoll et al., 2010). An interesting perspective is the ability of workers to choose if/when they access email and other work via technology in their non-work time. One way of managing this work intrusion via technology is, for example, the deliberate segmentation of work from employees' private lives. Some employees may choose if and when they access emails and other work demands in their private time. The factors that influence this ability for workers to segment their work and private time have not been fully explored and we identify this as another pertinent issue for work-life balance research. We suggest that factors including the job level/position, work motivation levels, and family demands of an employee would have a significant impact upon their ability to segment their work and private lives, although to our knowledge this supposition has not been tested to date by any empirical evidence. For recent discussions of the integration and segmentation of employee's work and private lives see Chen et al. (2009), Liu et al. (2013), Park et al. (2011), and Peng et al. (2011).

Finally, we suggest that generational differences/expectations and national culture differences are both also increasingly pertinent issues for work-life balance researchers to consider. Research has started to explore national cultural differences and this research generally adopts two approaches. First, the importance of empirically testing theoretical research and models developed in Western contexts with non-Western employee samples is increasingly being recognized as important. The main argument here is that a sound theory should be applicable to workers regardless of their (cultural) individual differences. For example, recent work by Brough et al. (2013) discussed the pertinence of theory testing in both non-European and non-USA employee samples; see also discussions of the importance of cross-national theory testing by Spector et al. (2007), Lapierre et al. (2008) and Yang et al. (2012).

Second, specific cultural differences that may influence work-life balance outcomes are also being increasingly assessed. The key arguments here are that some cultural differences impact workers' job attitudes, family responsibilities, and their availability of social resources (see, for example, Siu et al., 2010, 2013; Chandra, 2012; Xiao and Cooke, 2012; Brough et al., 2013). Interestingly, there are suggestions that the infiltration of Western-style working practices may be changing the traditional (collectivist) values and attitudes of workers employed in some non-Western countries, such as China (Brough et al., 2013, 2014a).

Finally, the impact of age, generation and/or life stage upon work-life balance is also a pertinent emerging area for work-life balance researchers. Research has started to assess the specific demands of both

younger workers (e.g., new babies, changing careers, insecure employment) and older workers (e.g., managing teenage children, caring for sick spouses, retirement transitions; Gardiner et al., 2007; Brough et al., 2009a; Schroeder et al., 2012). One result of this is the widening of work–family research into work–life balance research, in recognition of the multiple non-work activities employees may seek balance for, including voluntary work, sporting activities, study time, as well as time caring for family members (Brough et al., 2014b).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has reviewed key points and recent evidence relating to the integration of work and non-work lives. We discussed the positive and negative processes of integration including work–life conflict, work–life enhancement, and work–life balance, and also some of the main causes and consequences of these processes. It is apparent that employees generally feel more pressurized and ‘time poor’ now, compared to a few decades ago, and we suggest this is partly caused by technological advances. The ability for many workers to now be accessible to deal with their work demands at any time and in any place has increased the encroachment of work into non-work lives. It is pertinent that a method of managing this spillover of work includes a return to segmenting one’s work and non-work lives. For workers who can choose not to work in their non-work time, their health and performance levels tend to be high. Finally, we also reviewed the emerging research area of specific coping methods employed to reduce work–life conflict experiences. It is apparent that proactive problem-focused coping methods such as planning, organizing, and seeking additional help (support) are considered to be the most effective methods for integrating work and life demands.

Integrating one’s work and family demands is difficult and requires constant tweaking of arrangements as demands change. It is reassuring that some governments and employers are increasingly recognizing this ‘double bind’ of modern working life and in the interests of attracting and retaining happy, healthy and productive employees, offer policies to assist workers to balance their work and non-work (beyond just ‘family’) responsibilities. The presence of these work–life balance policies assists workers along the path to find a happy balance in their multiple roles.

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