

Reconciling Work and Family Responsibilities: A Global Perspective

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Abstract. The issue of reconciling work and family responsibilities is a major concern for working men and women whether they live in industrialized and developed nations or developing nations. Increasingly working adults in developing countries are struggling to reconcile work and family responsibilities. Although they will vary depending on the cultural context, effective family friendly policies require managers to be cognizant of a number of local factors that influence employees' work and personal lives. These factors include culture and traditions, the role of key stakeholders, public policies, community resources and infrastructure, and workplace practices and demographics.

Key words: work, family, responsibility, reconcile, policy

Abstrak. Isu memadukan pekerjaan dan tugas keluarga merupakan masalah utama bagi pria dan perempuan yang bekerja baik mereka hidup di negara industri dan maju atau di negara berkembang. Makin banyak pekerja dewasa di negara berkembang berusaha dengan keras memadukan pekerjaannya dengan kewajiban keluarga. Sekalipun hal tersebut bervariasi tergantung konteks budayanya, kebijakan ramah keluarga yang efektif menuntut para manajer untuk bertanggung jawab terhadap sejumlah faktor lokal yang memengaruhi kerja para pekerja dan kehidupan pribadinya. Faktor-faktor ini meliputi budaya dan tradisi, peran kunci mereka yang terkait, kebijakan umum, sumber daya dan infrastruktur masyarakat, dan praktik-praktik di tempat kerja dan demografi.

Kata kunci: pekerjaan, keluarga, tanggung jawab, paduan, kebijakan

With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers....an aim of national policy is to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities. (Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (no.156, Article 3, para 1).

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The word family comes from the Latin word *familia* and consists of four important interrelated but separate concepts: kin (those related by blood or legal ties), non-kin (those not related by blood or legal ties, but perhaps by dependency, obligation,

affection, or cooperation), household (those who live together, whether kin or non-kin) and the notion of the householder or "head of household" (Rothausen-Vange, 2005). The definition of what comprises "family" varies from country to country but the issue of reconciling work and family responsibilities is a major concern for working men and women whether they live in developed or developing countries.

There have been a number of major global demographic changes for families. Collectively, these globally occurring transformations in labor, industry and urbanization make it important to understand the experiences of work-family conflict faced by working men and women in different countries in widely varying contexts (Hein, 2005). A number of linking mechanisms have been proposed that explain the nature of the relationship between work and family roles (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), and one of the most prominent is conflict (or interference) (Greenhaus & Singh, 2003). Work-family conflict refers to simultaneous pressures from the

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