Work/Non-Work Process and Outcome for Alternative Lifestyles

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Background and aim
Recognizing the richness of the current knowledge in the work-life research, it becomes legitimate to
discuss its relevancy for every individual. Indeed, it is observable that most of this research in the
work-life field is based on a knowledge accumulated for heterosexual individuals in couple with
children that represent the “accepted lifestyle” in most societies. Diversity in terms of alternative
lifestyles among those single-life by choice, no children by choice, bohemian lifestyle as well as gay-
lesbian-bi-trans lifestyle (GLBT) are largely less represented. I argue that practitioners but also
researchers shall pay attention to every individual including “alternative lifestyles” including LGBT
lifestyle. The aim of this paper is to problematize and potentially hypothesise work/non-work
experiences alternative lifestyles from a boundary management perspective.

Method and Material
This paper is based on several years of experience in the “gay world”

Main results
The paper shows the importance of the “person- enviroment” fit for boundary management. It
reveals when the chosen “alternative lifestyle” is accepted in the context the work/non-work
decisions experienced are similar to the ones from the “general lifestyle” but when the “alternative
lifestyle” is not accepted the work/non-work decisions are becoming the individuals’ burden and that
individuals must thus develop their own work/non-work strategy to avoid social tensions. Based
on literature on work-life, this paper thus discusses how the “process” or boundary management for
individuals with alternative lifestyle is different or similar to normative lifestyle. It also builds on how
the outcomes of the process in terms of life domains constellation for individuals with alternative
lifestyle is different or similar to normative lifestyle

Theoretical/Practical/Methodological Implications
The first implications are for individuals who may understand their difficulties in the life puzzle. The
second is for organisation that should reflect on their “inclusive” or “exclusive” culture towards
people who have alternatives lifestyles. The third implication is the suggestion of model and
hypothesis that should be tested for different alternative lifestyles

Contribution to the conference
The paper touches upon what is “normative” today especially in terms of family. It underlines that
societal changes for alternative lifestyles can have implications for individual’s well-being via a better
work-life balance. It also underlines that societies that are not accepting alternative lifestyles may
have responsibility towards the work-life conflict of their citizens and by extension may jeopardise
social sustainability.