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## Introduction: Overview of the Book and Book Chapters

### Introduction

The history of the interactions among work, family, and life domains is as old as the history of humankind. Still, for long portions of this history, emphasis has been placed on only the work and family domains. Terms such as “segmentation,” “spillover,” “compensation,” and “accommodation” have been used at various times to describe the nature of the interactions. Nevertheless, there has always been the potential for stressful situations in the environment. There was a time in this history when a clear-cut distinction existed between work and other life domains (especially the family). This period appears to be the origin of the term “segmentation.” Here, there were two jobs and two people to do them. The man being the stronger was naturally assigned to work while the woman was solely responsible for family roles. This is in line with the gender role theory (Shimanoff 2009), which stipulates that individuals assume different roles in society and are judged based on the society’s expectation of them as male or female. Though women sometimes helped men, their part was distinct, and their contributions were limited to what could be done within the vicinity of the family. Although

potentially stressful situations existed in each domain, a clear division of labor helped to manage stressful situations with little adverse effects. In case of conflict, the decision as to what would give way to the other was easily made. Work varied slightly during the late pre-industrial era, but the man and woman's distinct roles were maintained. This was because work was done as a family business, and the boundary between work and family remained blurred due to physical closeness. Thus, the traditional gender role distinction was practiced in these periods.

The early industrial revolution era produced significant changes in the organization of work, especially after the emergence of the factory system (Wren 1994; Miller 2002). Under the domestic system, families owned the raw materials and processing equipment, and the work was done in the home. Later, when the demand for raw materials outstripped the family's provisional ability, merchants stepped in, although processing continued at the family dwelling. When the merchants decided to start providing equipment and raw materials at their chosen locations, the factory system emerged, which effectively separated work from family (Wren 1994). The factory owners wanted to control, reduce, or eliminate cheating and stealing to ensure high quality and make as much profit as possible. So, they paid less attention to the problems of workers unless the challenges were real threats to production. The factory system thus created two antagonistic groups of capital owners and workers. Besides, the family and the work domains created three roles—or jobs—two for men and women, and one essentially for women but which could be shared with men in some cultures. This period saw the emergence of the egalitarian gender role distinction where work became a means to an end rather than an end in itself. This change in orientation led to the predisposition of individuals to think and act in particular ways with regard to work. The capitalist system of work organization as a consequence of the factory system, alienated and estranged individuals in four main ways: first from others as the relationship became merely calculative, self-interested, and untrusting; second, from the product of their labor since someone else appropriated what they produced and they had no contribution to its usage or sharing; third, from their labor and work satisfaction since necessity forced them to offer their labor power, work, therefore, became alien and oppressive (Watson 2000, p. 116).

One of the outcomes of this new form of work organization was work–family conflict, which resulted from the interaction of the work and family domains and “... occurs when efforts to fulfill work role demands interfere with one’s ability to fulfill family demands and vice versa” Greenhaus and Bentell (1985, p. 180). When there was a clear distinction between the work and family roles, stressors in each domain could be managed. However, with the interaction of both domains, stressors from both domains began to affect performance in each domain. For instance, since the time available to the individual is fixed and scarce, heavy involvement in work makes it challenging to perform the expected role in the family. The demographic and economic variables which aggravated the work–family conflict include the increased participation of married woman and single parents with children in the labor force, frequent redundancy, and globalization (Aryee et al. 1999).

The twenty-first century is characterized by the increased involvement of males and females in the work and family domains (Amah 2019a; Annor 2014; Aryee 2005; Casel and Posel 2002; Mapedzahama 2014). Consequently, there is an increased level of work interfering with family (WFC), and family interfering with work (FWC) since the interface between work and life is porous, with activities in one domain affecting those in the other domain. Christensen and Gomory (1999, p. 1) observed that “...adults in many dual-earner families genuinely do feel stressed and pulled in too many directions,” for “... the traditional family operated with two jobs and two adults.” But “... in today’s two-carrier family, there are three jobs, two paid and one unpaid, but still only two people to do them....” The division of unpaid jobs is possible in an egalitarian culture, but not in a traditional culture of gender role allocation. This is because, according to the Social Role Theory, role expectations of men and women in the traditional society arise from the socialization of men and women as breadwinner and home keeper, respectively (Eagly and Wood 2017).

The changing nature of the work domain has led to the review of the effectiveness of gender role allocations in many cultures. However, despite the challenges associated with the traditional concept of gender role separation, the African culture has been resistant to change (Amah 2019b; Epie and Ituma 2014; Okonkwo 2014). Another realization of

the twenty-first century is seeing humans as social beings with activities beyond the work and family domains. This idea arose from the introduction of life satisfaction and well-being into work research. What constitutes success in life was expanded to include satisfaction in the work, family, and life domains. This situation has made it mandatory for organizations and individuals to invent ways of effectively integrating work, family, and life roles to achieve organizational and individual effectiveness. This is the origin of the terms “work-life balance” and “work-life integration.” In the realization of this, organizations have improved in the number of family-friendly policies they offer. Three issues are, however, associated with these family-friendly organizational policies. The first is that organizations are not up to speed on the family-friendly policies required in the changing work demographics (Amah 2019a). The second is that the effectiveness of these policies is questionable; and the third is the general realization that the use of work–family policies is not the only way of achieving effectiveness in work-life integration (Foucreault et al. 2018).

Despite the realization of the third issue, past studies have only emphasized some issues that can enhance WLI instead of considering multiple approaches to balancing work and life responsibilities to achieve effectiveness in both domains (see Bloom et al. 2009; Bloom and Reenan 2006; Blyton et al. 2006; Kaiser et al. 2011; Mokomane 2014; Powell et al. 2019; Poelmans and Caligiuri 2008; Sjöberg 2008). However, this book considers WLI from three perspectives namely, organizational perspectives (production process, technology, leadership, organizational climate, and work–life friendly policies), individual perspectives (understanding self and defining what success means), and family and cultural perspectives (the meaning of family and cultural gender role definition). Each of these affects the ability of individuals to manage WLI and must be considered in any recommendation on managing WLI. For instance, if an individual does not understand and define success properly, he/she will place great emphasis on one domain, thus making it difficult to achieve the required integration. The three studies which came close to discussing a multidimensional aspect of handling WLI are Hirsch et al. (2019), Lewis and Cooper (2005), and Greenhaus and Powell (2017). Hirsch et al. (2019) developed the “action regulation model” with the

engagement and disengagement strategies, which describe the activation and allocation of resources, as well as prioritization of goals. Lewis and Cooper (2005) reviewed the effects of work–life conflict (WLC) and life–work conflict (LWC) singly and collectively on organizational and individual outcomes. Greenhaus and Powell (2017) addressed choices that society, employers, employees, and families should make to achieve WLI. Although the need for WLI is popularly recognized, none of these studies discuss the multidimensional solution to achieving it. Hence, some gaps need to be filled to enable a better understanding of the concept of WLI and to understand the mutual role that the organization, the society, and the individual play in achieving it.

The uniqueness of this book is that it considers all possible contributors to the effectiveness and achievement of WLI, and it is undertaken in the African context where studies on WLI are scarce. The book thus advocates that achieving WLI is the joint responsibility of the society, the individual, the organization, and the workplace leadership. It develops the joint responsibility that organizations, leaders, and individuals have in achieving WLI to minimize the identified negative effects of WLC and LWC. This is necessary since organizations are not up to speed in establishing policies that can help employees manage work–life demands, and the ill effects of such mismanagement affect the individual more than the organization. The second contribution of this book is that it considers the failure in WLI achievement as arising from the non-implementation or inadequate implementation of these components, thus, identifying the sources and remedies of these failures. The book, therefore, is a handbook/reference book that students, practitioners, and consultants can consult to find ways of managing WLI from a multidimensional perspective.

## Overview of the Chapters

The book is divided into five sections containing a total of thirteen chapters. The sections are introductory chapters, organizational perspectives, individual perspectives, family and cultural perspectives, and chapters containing the summary. The chapters cover various aspects of the sections.

### Chapter 2: Work–Life Integration: Overview and Trends

The chapter begins by stating the meaning of the concepts: work–life conflict, life–work conflict, and work–life integration, and presents some research on their negative effects on individual and organizational productivity. It traces the research journey on WLI, bringing out the movement from the scarcity model which leads to conflicts, to the positive psychology model which identifies mutual beneficial effects of involvement in multiple roles. It presents work–life integration as a way of ameliorating the negative effects of involvement in multiple roles and highlights sources of integration. The chapter contributes to the debate of difference/similarity in work–life balance and work–life integration which remains unresolved (Alton 2018; Dresdale 2016; Harrington and Ladge 2009). It reviews the research on WLI with the view of identifying the gap which the book fills. It justifies the multidimensional approach advocated and shows that past books and studies have neglected this.

### Chapter 3: Organizational Production Process and Work–Life Integration

Structural and production process issues have not been given much attention in past analyses of WLI (Lambert et al. 2002; Ogah 2018). Hence, this chapter focuses on the concept of productivity process as an integral aspect of work–life integration, and what constitutes the elements of productivity at the individual and organizational levels. Inter

alia, the relationship subsisting between productivity process and work–life integration was explored as a basis for a creative and integrated process flow both for individuals and organizations as units for building a healthy society. Discussions include the role of productivity procedure, elements of inputs, and optimal output flow. The components of an ideal and practical productivity procedure and productivity quotient at individual and organizational levels were explored, as well as the identification of the value-add component of work–life integration and its relationship with productivity. Thus, the major issues addressed in this chapter include:

- The concept of productivity vis-à-vis work–life integration and the relationship inherently subsumed between work–life integration (WLI) and productivity at the individual and organizational levels. Thus, the contents of this chapter include the operational definition of WLI, productivity, factors affecting WLI, and productivity value streamflow.
- The process flow perspective of productivity, work–life integration, and factors impacting on work–life integration.
- What determines an optimal productivity procedure?
- The critical inputs for an optimal productivity flow within an ideal work–life integration continuum.
- Outputs constituting value-add at individual and organizational levels vis-à-vis an ideal work–life integration.
- Importance of prioritization hinged on work–life integration toward eliciting optimal productivity.
- Time management and discipline as integral factors for productivity: Time wasters impacting on work–life integration and productivity at individual and organizational levels.
- Scheduling and planning tactics.
- Productivity improvement strategies within the continuum of work–life integration for employees and employers.

## **Chapter 4: Technology and Its Impact on Work–Life Integration**

In this chapter, discussions revolve around the impact of technology on work–life integration. Some authors have stated that technology has negative effects on WLI (Nam 2014), while others believe that the effects are positive (Dicken 2015; Hickman and Robison 2020; Valcour and Hunter 2005; Vlacic 2013; Yanus et al. 2018). This chapter reviews existing reports to discover why the same variables have conflicting effects. It reviews behaviors that influence the effect of technology on WLI with the view to itemizing what organizations and individuals must do to leverage technology and still achieve WLI. Since technology has engendered a technology-enabled work ecosystem and the seamless integration of other life components, the discussion included how work–life integration, considered from a multidimensional perspective, is impacted by the evolving nature of technology in the twenty-first century. It reviewed the outcomes of such impact as self-esteem and the competing demands of family and society.

## **Chapter 5: Family–Friendly Policies: Trends and Expectations in Africa**

Employees can burn out from the consequences of work–family conflict if nothing is done, thus affecting productivity. Hence, organizations have instituted family-friendly policies aimed at helping employees manage the demands from the work and family domains. This chapter chronicles the various policies that organizations have implemented over time and their effectiveness. It reviews several such policies across nations and identifies why some nations are more advanced in implementing policies than others. Issues discussed include:

- Review of the meaning of “family” across cultures and why it is important in the study of family-friendly policies.
- Why family policies are necessary for organizations.
- Identification and explanation of each policy and its effectiveness.



- Identification of nation-specific policies.

## **Chapter 6: Evaluation of the Contributions of Work–Life Friendly Policies in Managing Work–Life Integration in Africa**

This chapter presents the results of an unpublished study on the effectiveness of family-friendly policies across organizations in Nigeria, highlighting the variables that prevent the effective realization of family-friendly policies. It concluded with recommendations on the changes required in leadership style and organizational structure to get maximum benefits from the policies.

## **Chapter 7: Leadership and Organizational Climate: Effects on Work–Life Integration**

The chapter begins with a formal definition of leadership, and from this definition stated the necessary factors for effective organizational leadership. It reviewed the hidden drivers of leadership style and how they affect behavior (Dweck 2008; The Arbinger Institute 2016). Included in the chapter is the role of the climate created by the leader in enhancing WLI management. It discussed the determinants of created climate and made a special case for the role of emotional intelligence in leadership effectiveness and team dynamics. The chapter makes a case for situational leadership as a way of helping individuals manage work–family demands and prescribed exercises that can aid the development of EI components. Pattern analysis as a major step was discussed with examples given. Issues addressed include:

- Leadership effectiveness resulting from three key factors.
- Leadership style considered from the leader's emphasis on people and production/results.
- Leadership mindset and its role in leadership style.
- The climate created by the leader and the role of emotional intelligence in creating such.

- Ways of enhancing leaders' emotional intelligence.

## **Chapter 8: Understanding and Evaluation of Self: Role in Work–Life Integration**

The chapter begins with the understanding of certain personality traits that play a major role in work–life conflict, as well as evaluating self as the foundation of achieving work–life integration. The chapter considers intrapersonal/interpersonal relationships and communication as a basis for understanding self. It discusses the key aspects of core self-evaluation and how they affect intrapersonal/interpersonal relationships and communication. It considers tools that can help individuals manage themselves to avoid actions that aggravate work–life conflict and make WLI difficult. Issues addressed include:

- Personality traits that affect work–life conflict.
- Intrapersonal, interpersonal communication, and core-self-evaluation.
- Description and explanation of the wheel of life as a tool for setting life goals which can aid WLI.

## **Chapter 9: Meaning of Life and Successful Life: Work–Life Integration**

Life has various components; work and family are simply aspects of it. How an individual defines success, therefore, affects how the individual distributes available resources. Using the concept of the wheel of life, the chapter establishes how to define success in each component and to achieve overall success in life. How the individual defines life will also affect how he develops the process of managing WLI. The chapter reviews various ways of defining success and the consequences of each. It utilized the wheel of life concept to help individuals establish how success should be defined to achieve balanced life success. It discussed why tradeoffs are necessary since individuals cannot have all they want and expect in the various components of life.

## **Chapter 10: Understanding the Family Structure in Africa: Role in Work–Life Integration**

What constitutes the family has never been universally established (Kuschel 2017; Miller 2002; Rothausen 1999). Based on this, Rothausen (1999) advocated the importance of recognizing and capturing the diversity in the definition of the family. Family provides individuals with resources that can help in the achievement of WLI. To accurately identify the resources available to employees in Africa, there is a need to identify what constitutes the family in the African context. Aryee (2005) identified extended family resources as a possible coping mechanism in managing the conflict between work and family in sub-Saharan Africa and even made research proposals to guide future studies. The chapter reviews the various definitions of families in past studies and established what family means in Africa and established the level of resources available according to the African context.

## **Chapter 11: Revisiting the Gender Ideology: Traditional and Egalitarian Family Role Definition in Africa**

In pre-colonial and post-colonial Africa, the traditional family role is adopted, where men are involved in the work domain and women in the family domain. Work and family have transformed in recent times and are characterized by the increased number of dual-income families, single parenting, and workplace diversity (Ajala 2017; International Labor Office Report 2009). These changes demand that the issue of traditional role definition should be revisited. However, in Africa, the traditional role definition has been decisively resistant despite the obvious need for men and women to share responsibilities in work and family domains. The chapter reviews changes in work in the nineteenth to the twenty-first century and establishes the need to adopt the egalitarian role definition in WLI achievement.

## **Chapter 12: Understanding the Multidimensional and Multifunctional Approach in Managing Work–Life Integration**

This chapter brings together the salient points from all the chapters and how they combine to make WLI achievement possible. It described the role of each perspective and established that WLI is better managed when all the perspectives are considered and optimized to help individuals' function effectively. The chapter highlights tradeoffs that must be made to harmonize the requirements of individuals, organizations, society, and productivity.

## **Chapter 13: Future Directions of Work–Life Integration Research in Africa**

The chapter develops a future expectation of research on WLI based on the contributions of the chapters in the book. The chapter suggests a conceptual framework that should guide future attempts of WLI achievement considering the joint actions recommended in the book. A major recommendation of the chapter is the need to pursue the development of the measures for the variables in the expanded WLI model.

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