

Family Obligations Or Cultural Constraints? Obstacles In The Path Of Professional Women

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Abstract

This paper provides an account of our research on balancing private life and work among highly qualified information technology (IT) professionals. The authors basically present the findings of an empirical research on balancing private life and work among highly qualified information technology (IT) professionals (mostly engineers and few managers), comparing small loosely structured high-tech firms and big bureaucracies. Authors here build on theories regarding gender and commitment, appraisal and promotions and link these to work time behavior to show up consequences of gendered work time patterns on engineers' careers.

Briefly, to sum up the rationale, women and men behave differently regarding working hours, which are remarkably long in IT. As well, management is reluctant to reduce the workweek, and authors analyze why this is so. More, working hours are, more than ever, regarded as an important asset as well as an indicator of employee commitment. Finally, commitment is an important factor in promotions, which puts those who ask for reduced hours at a disadvantage. So much for women and for balancing working and private life.

Key Words: *Gender, Information technology, Appraisal Others : Career, commitment, promotions, work time pattern, engineers*

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