

Izabela Maria Rezende Taveira
Nuno Rebelo dos Santos
Leonor Pais
(Editors)



Decent Work Worldwide

Universal Values, Diverse Expressions



Izabela Maria Rezende Taveira
Nuno Rebelo dos Santos
Leonor Pais
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**DECENT WORK WORLDWIDE:
universal values, diverse expressions**

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THE DECENT WORK: A Work, organizational and personnel psychology approach

Tânia Ferraro

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Introduction

The theme of Decent Work (DW) is felt by many as a presupposition of their work. For many others, it is an intangible reality. The notion of what it is to have a job/work perceived as dignified can vary between professional occupations, levels of career development, and even depending on the worker's life cycle. For example, a worker who enjoys climbing as a sport in her/his personal life may, in her/his professional life as an engineer, consider the weekly climb of a wind turbine on the wide and open sea as a motivating element and a highly worthy facet of her/his work. Another worker may consider physical exertion not a worthy element in her/his professional occupation. Some will find this activity worthy if it is early in their career, but after five or ten years, it can be tiring and no longer seem like a decent thing to do. Young workers, newlyweds and those intending to have children or even single mothers and fathers with young children can greatly value the family-friendly benefit policy, such as daycare centres close to the physical location where they work, flexible hours, bank of hours or parental leave. These may make these workers feel their work is worthy, a DW. Other workers who do not intend to have children or who have already passed this stage in their life cycle, not being able to enjoy these benefits, may be indifferent to them. The examples presented help us to understand the scope that must be included in the definition of decent work. These examples can be applied to formal jobs.

If we consider informal jobs, we are talking about workers who do not have any social protection. Therefore, having no protection by labour laws, socially, they do not have guaranteed rights. The extent of the informal labour market and its negative consequences for workers in Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, 2019) is enormous: more than 50% of the working population in LAC countries is engaged in informal employment (Utzet *et al.*, 2021). Ryder (2015) even said that half of the world's active population was

working or engaged in productive activities in the informal sector. “While in the USA and the EU, informal employment is around 18% and 15% of the occupied labour force, respectively, figures are 53% for Latin America, and 88% and 77% in Africa and Asia (excluding China), respectively” (Benavides *et al.*, 2022, p. 169). Updated values can be found at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/informality/#>

Portraying the informal economy and working conditions in the informal sector has been the subject of much effort by the International Labour Organization (ILO; ILO, 2002). The informal economy seems to be growing continuously. Many factors contribute to this: difficulties complying with rules and regulations to enter the formal market, for example, due to the cost of this legalization or because the rules are not clear enough for people to comply with them. In this sense, the different realities of each country led the ILO to develop studies that led to the creation of national DW profiles (ILO, 2002). Other times, the rules involve inefficient bureaucracies or corruption that discourage compliance. Often the total costs are far beyond the capabilities of small businesses or potential entrepreneurs. On the other hand, it is precisely small and medium-sized companies and entrepreneurs that have a fundamental social role in job creation (ILO, 2009, 2015).

While the ILO persists in its efforts to gather information on informality to ensure the protection of an increasing number of workers, other initiatives focus on the gaps in formal systems, be they the government system (or the public sphere) or private organizations. We find these examples in the solidarity economy, in social entrepreneurship, business and social enterprises, companies of community interest (CIC), Low-profit Limited Liability Company (L3C, in the United States of America), B-Corporations, companies that propose to use business models and strategies aimed at long-term prosperity, serving multiple stakeholders (such as net positive organizations, Polman & Winston, 2021) and in various social responsibility initiatives (Yunus, 2011). Some of these, new “business” formats or new legal structures, try to fill the existing gap in the current system (Yunus, 2011). The typology of organizations has been enriched with these new types of organizations. There is a new ecology of organizations where each of these “types” of initiatives can be characterized as new ecosystems aimed at meeting human needs (Pinto *et al.*, 2021; Thomas & Autio, 2020). This has implied the creation of new social technologies applied to human needs and new ways of managing organizations. These initiatives add value to society in general, meeting the needs of citizens that are often not met by governments or private organizations that only seek profit. In addition to the usefulness of these initiatives to meet the human needs of citizens, they have in common the creation of work and

employment. With that, they create opportunities for people to have resources to overcome their adversities, a possibility to escape poverty, access to decent housing and access to health care, for example. Yunus (2011, p. 44) says: “When profit and human needs conflict, profit usually wins – which means people lose”. Yunus (2011) argues that, in the case of social enterprises, we are seeing the emergence of a new form of capitalism. More and more managers are becoming aware that “profits should not result from creating problems in the world, but from solving them” (Polman & Winston, 2021, p. 12).

We refer here to the Informal Economy and the creative and active approach of new business models/organizations to create shared value. In informality, there are millions of people for whom DW is still a distant aspiration. Little by little, the academic field begins to approach these contexts, and many interesting studies will emerge to promote DW for all people.

The notion of Decent Work at a macro-level of analysis

DW was a theme evoked by Juan Somavía at the 1999 International Labor Conference as a way of (re)affirming, recovering, remembering, and strengthening the main ideas and values that were and remain as the essence of the ILO’s mandate (ILO, 1999; Rodgers *et al.*, 2009). After that, on several occasions, he stated that DW, within the proposed scope, is not a concept but a notion. He used this notion to unite the efforts of ILO members: internal (those who work there) and external (national offices) around the mission for which the ILO was created. Therefore, the introduction of the DW notion was a turning point for internal reforms within the ILO itself. At the same time, he sent a clear message to the nations represented at the ILO that work fundamental aspects and its consequences had been lost over time and that it was necessary to rescue them. More than that, it was necessary to go far beyond everything already done. Therefore, at first, the DW notion was proposed at a macro-level of analysis, the level of analysis associated with the ILO’s mandate and international relations. Mainly, it was related to the world scenario approaching the turn of the millennium.

However, innovations, closely associated with the development of new technologies, have implemented many changes in the world of work (Konle-Seidl & Danesi, 2022). But not only. The labour, product, and service markets have never been as interconnected and influenced each other as they are now. There is a polarization of labour market opportunities between high-skill and low-skill jobs, unemployment, and underemployment, especially among young people, women, and professionals over 50, stagnant income or losing “purchase value” for many families, and persistent income inequality.

Migration has become a problematic political issue affecting developing and developed countries (brain drain, brain gain, and cultural shocks, among other phenomena; Manyika, 2017). Human knowledge and discoveries are increasingly accelerated and, although they make some daily tasks simpler, they create new and unexpected challenges (expressed, for example, in automation and new ways of working using digital platforms; Manyika, 2017).

Within the ILO, several work instances were set up to develop the DW notion: working groups that delved into DW indicators worldwide. These indicators had different facets: legal aspects (labour legislation around the world), economic aspects, statistical aspects that involved: the databases available throughout the world, and the most relevant topics that have been used as indicators of health and well-being at work and with that, the primary resources available to characterize DW at the country level were identified. More than that, from that time until today, attempts have been made to understand how to characterize DW transculturally, for example, in an international supply chain that passes through several countries. This is just one example that highlights some of the main DW characteristics: interdependence (at different levels), the impossibility of applying it without having an integral view of the different contributions of many elements involved (its inclusive and integral characteristic; Ferraro *et al.* 2015, 2016). The DW notion aligns with humans' yearnings and aspirations at and through work. It says a lot about what we share and have in common and unites us.

This search for indicators, mainly quantitative, based on statistics was developed through several meetings that reviewed previous proposals until the ILO started to call the main themes that represented the DW facets as substantive elements. The total number of substantive elements (SEs) has already varied until it stabilized and has remained at eleven (Anker *et al.*, 2002, 2003; ILO, 2013).

The DW notion gained strength and came to be defended by the ILO and the United Nations system as a whole. It was initially part of a subtopic of Millennium Development Goal 1 (MDG 1 – eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Maul, 2019). However, in 2015, with the final balance of the Sustainable Development Agenda, it gained the status of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG8; UN, 2015). In this process, the DW notion was progressively included in the work agendas of other agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), with the continued appreciation of workers' health; the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the importance of fair recruitment for immigrants, as well as many other initiatives by other UN agencies.

Interestingly, we encounter a paradox here. If, on the one hand, DW is a universal aspiration as defended by the ILO (ILO, 2001b) and, therefore, it is

something shared by all human beings; on the other hand, the DW experience is something individual, and we can say idiosyncratic. In this regard, the ILO is playing its role at the level of analysis at which it intends to operate and in line with its original and current mandate. However, previously, we noticed other neglected levels of analysis and, therefore, unexplored fields of study.

The concept of decent work at a micro-level of analysis

At the individual and psychological level, we identified the lack of measures regarding what the worker thinks is DW. From this gap, we began a search for the worker's perception of her/his work measurement. We interviewed people. We looked for already validated psychometric concepts and instruments to see if there were any that measured what it was intended to measure. Furthermore, finally, we opted for developing our own instrument to measure the workers' perception of what DW is, its most relevant aspects, and the level of these aspects in their work. Clearly, it is a difficult mission if we consider the immense variety of professional activities with their different characteristics. Equally tricky if we think about the individual characteristics of each worker and what (s)he may want from her/his professional activity.

Part of this story is reported in Ferraro *et al.* (2017, 2018). A psychometric instrument based on the Work, Organizational, and Personnel Psychology theoretical framework was developed. Its initial version had 72 items. After its application in Portugal ($n = 679$) and Brazil ($n = 1639$), the use of exploratory factor analysis maintained 31 items and showed an invariant factorial structure of the two countries with seven dimensions, or seven major main themes (described below):

- (1) Fundamental principles and values at work;
- (2) Adequate working time and workload;
- (3) Fulfilling and productive work;
- (4) Meaningful compensation for the exercise of citizenship;
- (5) Social Protection;
- (6) Opportunities;
- (7) Health and Safety;

Next, (a) each of the seven dimensions will be defined based on these findings, and (b) each dimension will be discussed based on its roots historically studied in Work, Organizational, and Personnel Psychology (WOPP).

(1) Fundamental Principles and Values at work

This DW dimension is related to trust and respect at work. Within the DW characterization for people, this is a very important dimension as it is related to the quality of social interactions at work. That is, how these relationships happen at work. Thus, from the point of view of the nomological network of WOPP concepts, this DW dimension is related to trust at work, respect at work, the way decisions are made, the human right or human value of freedom to express what worker think about her/his work and her/his acceptance without discrimination. These are multiple facets of what is perceived and felt as dignified in work relationships. For all these reasons, this dimension has strong relationships with respect for human rights at work and organizational justice, although it is broader than this. DW involves any profession, and autonomous and liberal professionals may not work in organizational structures. In these cases, we need to speak of justice applied to labour relations outside organizational contexts. As for respect for human rights at work, this area receives contributions from different disciplines, such as WOPP, sociology of work, management, and many others. Although the study of human rights at work has been growing, the role of human resource managers (HRM) in promoting respect for human rights still needs to be significantly developed (Ferraro *et al.*, 2021; Ferraro *et al.*, 2023). As well as Organizational Justice, respect for human rights at work cannot be limited to the organizational scope because much work takes place outside organizations. In this regard, we are referring not only to work done in the informal economy but to autonomous or independent work and to domestic work that remains on the edge of informality (ILO, 2021).

Another WOPP concept that can be related to this dimension is equal employment opportunities (EEO). EEO is strongly related to respect and diversity in the workplace. Although there is a large volume of studies specifically on this topic (EEO), namely in the United States of America (USA), we can consider this field of study closely related to Organizational Justice.

We would also highlight the participation and democratization of work (democracy at work, industrial democracy) or participatory democracy associated with a socio-technical approach (Cherns, 1976; Emery, 1972; Emery & Thorsrud, 1969; Pasmore *et al.*, 2019; Taylor, 1975; Trist & Bamforth, 1951). This DW dimension also addresses the perception that decision-making at work is fair and that everyone involved or implicated in decisions feels that they have the possibility of being heard. This leads us to some aspects studied in the socio-technical approach and its development: the democratization of work. We emphasize that the socio-technical approach refers to the people who work in organizations, the relationships between them, and their relationship with their work in organizational contexts. DW is a broader approach to work

as it refers to work in its most diverse circumstances, beyond that which takes place within organizations.

We can say that the essential core of this dimension is related to respect, equity, humanity, dignity, and justice.

(2) Adequate working time and workload

This DW dimension refers to the appropriate working time and workload considering the physical and mental health of the worker, the appropriate balance between work, family, and personal life (Anker *et al.*, 2002; ILO, 2013). Therefore, it is a dimension that involves two major themes: time management and the physical and mental effort/commitment dedicated by workers in their professional occupations. They were followed by the theme of work-family and personal life balance.

The workload is a theme associated with ergonomic studies, mainly concerning determining the limits of human fatigue, the interaction between man, technology and work relations and the entire professional environment (Niu, 2010; Radjiyev *et al.*, 2015). Ergonomics focuses on adapting the work environment to humans performing their professional duties. Considered a psychosocial characteristic of work, the workload can be defined as hours worked per week or month (Pearson *et al.*, 2006) or that the appropriate workload for each job at a given time (or deadline). It can also be understood as the adequate distribution of time for better work organization (work scheduling or work schedule design), considering workers' physical and mental health and respecting the work-life balance. According to Bowling *et al.* (2015), the 'perceived workload' plays a key role in general theories about stress and, specifically, in theories about occupational stress. The workload is influenced by organizational characteristics and environment (context). Stress and various aspects of well-being (such as work engagement, burnout, and job satisfaction) can be seen as themes related to this DW dimension.

Hours dedicated to work have been the subject of several ILO recommendations and conventions (ILO, 1919, 1930, 1935, 1990). These documents address not only the adequate workload per week but also the work within what is conventionally called working days and conventional hours, as well as the work shift. The connection between workload and time management is quite intuitive. The work shift study has shown the consequences of different types of shifts for human health (Baney, 2011; Sparks *et al.*, 1997; Wright Jr. *et al.*, 2013). In this sense, a time management topic complementary to work shifts is working time arrangements (WTA; Boulin *et al.*, 2006; Fagan *et al.*, 2012; Tucker & Folkard, 2012). WTAs refer "to the length and scheduling of a job's working time over various periods, such as the day, the week, the month,

and the year. [...]” (Hoffmann & Greenwood, 2001, p. 52). WTAs vary from country to country (involving national laws and cultural preferences), with some countries and regions seeming to accept non-standard work schedules more easily, such as the USA, Europe, and Australia (Martin *et al.*, 2012). There is also variation from organization to organization (involving collective bargaining and agreements) and even between the options adopted by workers within the same organization (preferences of workers and employers in each context; Hoffmann & Greenwood, 2001). There are also variations between an expected (routine) production and a more intensive one due to seasonal or specific demands for different types of business, such as chocolate production at Easter, overtime for service workers at times like Christmas, among other cases. It is also worth considering that there is no standardized terminology either from the point of view of legislation or organizations regarding the different WTAs (Hoffmann & Greenwood, 2001). Also, WTAs vary among occupations. While managers can have work schedules that focus on the format of 5 days of work per week with hours from 9 am to 5 pm – the week with standardized working days – professionals in the health, transport, civil protection, and public security areas need to fulfil shifts, often nocturnal.

Health professionals (doctors and nurses) who respond to emergencies (firefighters and various security systems such as police and military) and other professionals who serve customers and users 24 hours a day (such as transport, some administrative services, and specific types of factories) always need to have someone from the team on call (Harris *et al.*, 2015; Martin *et al.*, 2012). With the changes in work relations and the transformations that organizations have been going through, even professions that previously did not use the shift work resource have been using it, or at least a variation of this system. Some projects are developed continuously (24 hours a day) in different geographic regions of the globe, with different time zones with remote teams (the “follow the Sun model” delivering 24/7 Global Support, or “remote/mobile workforce” such as International Business Machines Corporation, IBM, n.d.). In this case, the project is developed in shifts, but the workers of each geographical region are only in their jobs within their working hours, which are usually conventional (between 7 am and 6 pm).

Blau & Lunz (1999) summarized the investigations on shift schedules in three areas: “[...] (1) physical health variables, (2) family and social variables, and (3) organizational variables” (p. 933). Several studies are devoted to better understanding the relationship between work schedules and/or shift work with different consequences for workers’ lives. Among the different shift systems, one of the most studied and that seems to have the most health implications is night shifts (ILO, 1988, 1990, 1993). Mullins *et al.* (2014) highlight the importance of further studies on the interaction between work and sleep to

understand various workplace behaviours, including performance. The study of sleep disorders associated with professional occupation reports that this type of dysfunction can even characterize shift work disorder (SWD; Baney, 2011; Wright Jr. *et al.*, 2013). In this sense, this theme is related to health and safety in the workplace (Johnson & Lipscomb, 2006), one of the DW dimensions we will discuss later.

Time management at work is related to managing working time and time for personal and family life. This dimension is represented in the WOPP nomological network by some concepts, such as work-life balance (Allen, 2013; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), and its developments, such as work-life conflict and the phenomenon of spillover between these areas: work, family, and personal life. Greenhaus *et al.* (2003) define work-family balance as “the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and equally satisfied with – his or her work role and family role” (p. 513). In this sense, we propose an understanding of work-life balance that follows the update that the concept suggests, in this way, we would have: the extent to which a worker is equally involved in – and equally satisfied with – her/his work activity and all the other aspects of her/his life. That is the balance in the interplay between her/his work, family, and personal lives. In summary, the theme addresses the work-nonwork relationship. The expression brings together several aspects of different roles that one has in life (Allen, 2013).

The interdependence between work and family was initially addressed by the work-family conflict (WFC; Allen, 2013). When it is not possible to achieve work-life balance, work-life conflicts arise, involving different types of interference by work on the family (Work interference with Family, WIF) or by the family on work (Family interference with Work, FIW; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Investigations have shown the relationship of both WIF and FIW with various aspects of people’s lives, such as: “[...] job satisfaction, life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, burnout, and both physical and psychological strains” (Allen, 2013, p. 700). With the Positive Psychology movement, from 2000 onwards (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), a new approach to work-family interdependence was developed (Allen, 2013). An approach that values the positive interaction between work and family and addresses some topics, such as positive spillover, work-family facilitation, and work-family enrichment (Allen, 2013). More recent investigations have been devoted to improving the differentiation (which still needs to be clarified) between these three concepts (Allen, 2013).

This DW dimension involves the proper interface between time and workload management. According to Dembe (2009), finding this balance for each professional occupation is also an exercise in balancing between the

employer's rights to determine working conditions and the worker's rights and interests in "[...] maximizing income, gaining better job opportunities, retaining employment, and arranging for an optimal personal and family life outside of work [...]" (p. 196).

Time management at work as a whole is closely related to adequate compensation; the balance between work and family/personal life; health and safety in the workplace; and, concerning the people who receive the results of what is produced in the organizations (clients and the local community), the quality of what is produced and the organizational results. It can have serious individual consequences, considering the balance that can be favoured with proper management or the human exhaustion associated with work (loss of health and impairment of personal, family, and social well-being in general); organizational consequences, considering that proper time management can make or break productivity (of individuals and teams). It can increase worker satisfaction or have negative impacts such as increased absenteeism, presenteeism, sick leave, compensation costs for occupational diseases and accidents in the workplace, consequences for public health, and social protection and security systems. There is a breadth of developments for WOPP research associated with this DW dimension. Essentially, considering the formal work within organizations, the search for an adequate workload that considers the DW approach, that is, reconciles the worker quality of life in the short, medium, and long term with organizational results.

We can say that the essential core of this dimension is related to balance. It is a dimension closely related to wisdom, good management of resources and life.

(3) Fulfilling and productive work

This DW dimension combines two relevant concepts studied in different conceptual frameworks in WOPP: achievement at work or through work and productivity. The connection of this DW dimension with WOPP research and, in particular, with HRM policies and practices, from an organizational point of view, refers to the availability of economic, material, human resources, knowledge, coordination (management) and leadership, among others, all kinds of resources that enable workers to contribute significantly to the production of wealth and/or value. The organization must create, develop, and maintain a context where workers can produce and commit efforts and skills to producing wealth, whether products or services. Productive work can be understood as engaging and putting yourself to serve an organization's purpose and also to ensure future generations' achievements. The organization (or

employer) is expected to offer an internal structure that provides a guideline for adequate worker performance. Therefore, the worker is expected to present an adequate performance contributing to this wealth production. In an ideal condition, it is expected to have an individual commitment to her/his own results, consequently, with the purpose and purposes of the organization. This can work as described, especially when the worker likes her/his job and feels aligned with the organization.

The concept of realization or self-actualization comes from a Humanistic tradition. Maslow (1970) considered self-actualization the apex of his pyramid of human needs related to human motivations. Productive and fulfilling work is related to the integration of an organization's objectives with the worker's personal objectives. Thus, a job/work evaluated as productive is achieved with a job/work perceived as fulfilling.

When we reflect on the compensation-contribution relationship and the allocation of organizational resources, it becomes unavoidable to address Job Performance. The goals of every organization converge on it. That is why Job performance is a relevant theme at WOPP (Motowidlo, 2003; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Despite the results achieved with the worker's and team's performance, being one of the essential reasons for the existence of an organization, defining it is not simple. Job performance is understood as the result, expected by the organization, of several behavioural episodes that workers perform, within an expected period of time, in favour of organizational objectives (Motowidlo, 2003; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000), in short: it is the summary of individual contributions to organizational goals. Understanding what is considered adequate job performance in an organization allows the proposition of several strategies and interventions in order to improve it. The concept is essential for defining recruitment and selection, training and development strategies, or even motivational proposals for teams (Motowidlo, 2003) and, in the end, is related to maximizing the organization productivity and effectiveness. Borman and Motowidlo (1997) define job performance as the combination of task and contextual performance. For these authors, task performance refers to the performance of the activities described for a specific function or position, mainly more technical characteristics. In contrast, contextual performance concerns the other helping behaviours and behaviours that contribute to organizational goals.

From a WOPP perspective, the concept of productive work relates to job performance. Organizational goals differ for each organization, but every organization seeks results. The ideal compensation systems consider what is defined as job performance for the organization and are regulated by distributive justice. Greenberg (2001) argues that the perception of justice differs

in different cultures. Deutsch (1985) states that in more individualistic cultures (such as the American one), the principle of equity is more valued than equality or necessity. Culture can affect the understanding and importance of justice in a society and within an organization. In Japan, there is no word for 'fair'. Moreover, while Americans grow up learning to evaluate fairness by the size of the reward they receive, the Japanese do not emphasize this. They value respect, politeness, and social harmony. Distributive justice, as known in the West, is not strong in Japan (Greenberg, 2001). Even when a group of people from different cultures recognize that justice is important, they may, in practice, define it differently (Greenberg, 2001). People from different cultures use different principles for distributing resources as they see as fair. "[...] Americans generally favour the equity norm, people from India favour distributions based on need [...], and people from the Netherlands favour equality [...]" (Greenberg, 2001, p. 370). In this way, national and organizational cultures can determine the perception of fairness and how workers experience and understand distributive justice in many ways.

This is a DW dimension related to the highest human needs, needs associated with the feeling of being autonomous, competent, and self-efficacious in what you do (Dos Santos, 2019). The perception that your work can provide fulfilment for us (worker) and, at the same time, be constructive for society. We can say that the essential core of this dimension is related to integration. It concerns combining individual and social elements that allow the best possible use of resources towards organizational and individual effectiveness – culminating with the perception of fulfilment. This may involve Gratitude.

(4) Meaningful compensation for the exercise of citizenship

This DW dimension is related to the worker's compensation for the effort invested in her/his work. Therefore, primarily, it is related to the rewards the worker achieves through her/his work and, from the organizational point of view to the organizational compensation systems.

Compensation systems translate an organization's policies and strategies on how to compensate its workers for their efforts in support of the organization's goals. This exchange relationship may involve an implicit or explicit contract that specifies the rights and duties of both parties (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1992), although it is often focused on mutual obligations. In organizations, the compensation system is a central part of the relationship between workers and the organization (Dulebohn & Werling, 2007; Gerhart & Milkovich, 1992). This is one of the means of establishing reciprocity, recognition, and compensation in various ways (monetary and non-monetary)

for the contributions and efforts made by people to produce wealth in the organization. It is a way to encourage productive work and provides workers with basic living conditions.

Many studies on the importance of income to life satisfaction have been carried out regarding the adequacy of compensation (Judge *et al.*, 2010). The findings, however, are contradictory, sometimes suggesting “that income is unimportant to happiness” (Judge *et al.*, 2010, p. 157), sometimes indicating significant relationships between average *per capita* income and average well-being. Several factors seem to intervene in this relationship between income and life satisfaction: time (or the duration of satisfaction), and culture (sample nationality), among others. Judge *et al.* (2010) point out that despite the contradictory findings, there is much evidence of the relationship between income and happiness. For these authors, little attention has been given to the relationship between pay level and job (or pay) satisfaction in Organizational Psychology. Therefore, they conducted a meta-analysis, finding that pay level correlates positively but modestly with job (and pay) satisfaction. This suggests that “pay is not as important as other facets such as work satisfaction” (Judge *et al.*, 2010, p. 162). Earnings are an important part of the quality of work life but not the only one.

Gerhart and Milkovich (1992) add that, in addition to reward systems impacting performance, they can influence the composition of an organization’s workforce itself through a self-selection mechanism, through which prior knowledge about an organization’s compensation system that is considered adequate would attract and allow the retention of the best professionals in the market, while reward systems considered ‘bad’ could repel potential workers.

Dulebohn and Werling (2007) present that academic research on remuneration reflects organizational aspects and Human Resources practices with an internal focus on the organization itself. Due to the transformations in the organizations’ environments (and in themselves), they defend the need for research on compensation to include an external focus on the organization, starting to consider the external labour market (in addition to the local and regional) and the multiplicity of stakeholders. These authors argue that not only are organizations more exposed to the markets competitiveness where they sell products and services, but also workers are more exposed to the labour market, which is no longer just local or regional, but international and global. With this, Dulebohn and Werling (2007) seek to highlight a mismatch between the way organizations use job evaluation methods and design their compensation systems in practice, increasingly concerned with accompanying external and internal changes, and the focus of the academic investigation, which focuses on the interior of the organization. The authors highlight the

dynamism of the products, services and job markets and the importance of studying the applied ‘decision-making models’ considering the organizational need to promote constant changes to remain active in the market. This idea also makes us think about how each organization determines job performance. In practice, organizations consider the organization’s internal and external aspects, products and services, and job markets. In academic research, Dulebohn and Werling (2007) suggest that attention is focused only on organizations’ internal boundaries.

Among the organizational theories studied in WOPP, systemic and contingency theories help to understand this scenario (Caetano *et al.*, 2020; Cunha *et al.*, 2019). Decision-making processes have become more complex as they involve local and global, individual, and collective aspects, with multiple stakeholders simultaneously. It is necessary to consider the organizational, workers, and other stakeholder’s needs. The compensation systems subject cannot only consider the organization’s internal perspective. The transformations that have been taking place all over the world suggest an increase in the importance of factors external to the organization in decision-making involving remuneration systems and the organizational practices involved in them (job description, job design, job evaluation, job analysis, job performance, performance appraisal, recruiting and retention, among others). This signalling also suggests a need to include a macro-level approach. With that, it is clear how much the previous approach focused on the micro-level approach concerning research in compensation systems. Dulebohn and Werling (2007) suggest that this change may explain the different decisions taken by organizations and their impact on individuals, groups, organizational units and their results. Among the factors to include in a more contingent model would be: “[...] business strategy, human resource strategy, product market, technology, and size as well as external factors such as competition, economic conditions, regulation, and globalization. [...]” (Dulebohn & Werling, 2007, p. 200). Gerhart and Milkovich (1992, p. 485) propose to add: “[...], location, organization of work, interdependence, decentralization, work force diversity, unions, public opinion [...]”, among others.

The essential core of this DW dimension is related to another type of integration, different from the previous DW dimension. It concerns the conjugation of diligent effort and what is received for it. This reward is not just monetary. Currently, there is talk about emotional salary, which translates to the countless individual and social compensations that one receives through a professional bond. Once again, attention is drawn to the differences in the “meaningful compensation” received through work carried out within organizations, autonomous and independent work and even through work in the

Informal Economy. This DW dimension highlights that “meaningful compensation” has a direction or meaning that is the common good: it becomes “meaningful” or full of meaning when it allows the worker to be a citizen in her/his fullness.

It is also a DW dimension related to social exchanges, mainly the equity of these exchanges and, once again, organizational justice (in formal Economy).

(5) Social Protection

This DW dimension relates to social security from the worker’s perspective. That is her/his perception about the social compensation (s)he receives for her/his diligence to work. If (s)he identifies that (s)he will be entitled to retirement without financial worries after years of service to society. If (s)he feels (s)he is protected in case of unemployment or illness. Whether the social protection system in which (s)he is inserted extends protection to those, who depend on the worker. This DW dimension is related to the security that workers perceive to have access through the employment bond. That they are health subsidies (public or private) for the worker and her/his family; the existence of social programs that come to support her/him (and those who depend on her/him) in case of need and, thinking about the life cycle of every worker.

This DW dimension also has an immense range of WOPP conceptual possibilities to be referred to. From a broader and social perspective, it is a dimension related to social exchanges, equity, and social and organizational justice. There is a wide selection of topics related to this dimension: temporary or contingent employment and each nation’s different social security systems (Ghai, 2003). From an organizational perspective, it is also related to the perception of social and organizational support, job security/insecurity, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability related to social cohesion. From an individual perspective and considering life cycles: the protean and boundaryless career, and studies on retirement.

Secure bonds reduce uncertainty and, with it, often, stress. They can favour the workers’ adaptation and productivity. Although, in some contexts, stability can also be associated with accommodation, conformism and obsolescence of workers’ knowledge and skills. In other contexts, it allows for investment in continuous development because workers seek to update themselves when feeling safe and realizing that updating knowledge and skills are valued and will be applied to work. Stability impacts the worker’s personal life as it avoids family changes and readaptations. Allows the development of more stable bonds in teams. In HR management, it is related to the

career management, job positions and salary plans aligned with performance appraisal and, often, adequate compensation systems.

The essential core of this DW dimension is related to a sustainable professional life. This DW dimension is related to attention and care for individuals and the community, whether from the point of view of health and safety or from the point of view of planning and attention to the workers' quality of life in the present moment and the future. It expresses the possible individual, family, community, and social consequences of DW. A society promoting DW must protect its workers even beyond the moment of their professional performance. This seems more understandable if we consider workers in the formal economy involved in organizational work contracts. However, it is still necessary to expand this reflection and all the social security mechanisms for workers on the edge of informality, such as domestic workers.

(6) Opportunities

Creating employment opportunities is central to all other aspects of the DW approach. No work, no DW. It is necessary to have work, which needs to be in quantity and quality (Ryder, 2015). In WOPP, 'Employment opportunities' relate to a set of actions by individuals and organizations that facilitate, generate, or promote present or future job opportunities. This includes the opportunities for personal and professional growth and development created at work and through work.

This DW dimension includes actions that promote job creation, employability, and the development of knowledge and skills (ILO, 2002). Within the organizational context, this dimension includes concepts such as opportunities for personal and professional growth and development, employability, and entrepreneurship in various forms. From an individual perspective, it includes career management and development.

According to Frese *et al.* (2000, p. 3), "[...] entrepreneurship research is at the boundary of organizational and work psychology. [...]". Entrepreneurship can be considered the origin of job creation. It is from this that a new organization is created (Rauch & Frese, 2012). The results of entrepreneurs' actions are new organizations and ventures; new jobs; new products and services; innovations of the most diverse types, including the potential creation of new markets (Baron & Henry, 2011). Therefore, it can be seen as a central concept for generating more DW.

Employability is at the interface between current work and countless opportunities for personal and professional growth and development that can be found or developed in the job market. Employability refers to the ability

to get a job (Rothwell, 2015). Fugate *et al.* (2004) define employability as active and specific adaptability at work that enables workers to perceive and become aware of career opportunities.

Transformations in labour relations and changes in the labour market have made ‘lifetime employment’ disappear. There has been an expansion of ‘lifetime employability’ (Forrier & Sels, 2003) or even the need for workers to become ‘entrepreneurs of their own career’ (Grip *et al.*, 2004, p. 211). Progressively, there has been a transfer of responsibility for job creation, becoming more and more an individual initiative, which increases the importance of entrepreneurship or employability itself as a way of maintaining the sustainability of professional development. Employability has become the new form of job security or the alternative to it. Thus, for individuals, in addition to seeking to keep up to date to enter the job market, it became necessary to keep constantly updated to ensure new and constant career opportunities, whether inside or outside the organization (Forrier & Sels, 2003). These authors also point out that the definition of employability cannot consider only the individual. Despite defining it as “an individual’s chance of a job in the internal and/or external labour market” (p. 106), they also point out that it is not an individual characteristic that can be solely related to ability or will of the individual. Employability must be considered within the personal, labour market, community, local, regional, and even national contexts.

In a WOPP perspective, it is possible to understand the DW dimension, firstly, on the part of the individual, as the set of actions in the sense of developing their performance potential and their capacity to respond to opportunities, as well as their capacity to create opportunities, that is, your initiative and proactivity. At the same time, it is also the set of actions by the organization that generate new jobs and/or opportunities for professional development for workers. In this sense, this dimension is associated with Human Resources (HR) good practices of investing in people’s growth and development.

According to Clarke and Patrickson (2008, p. 130), “Employability is an antecedent to employment”. From this point of view, ‘Employment opportunities’ can be understood as consequences of the intervention of entrepreneurs, of employability as a proactive initiative or as a development of modern boundaryless career development and management. In different ways, all these themes are related to the opportunity for employment or work, to be employed, to develop (professionally and humanly) and to fulfil oneself through professional activity.

The essential core of this DW dimension is related to creativity, growth and development, and personal evolution that spreads and generates positive consequences for everyone who depends on the worker, for her/his community,

her/his local society and beyond. There is an association with optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience.

(7) Health and Safety

The issue of health and safety at work was confirmed as one of the DW facets for workers. This is one of the most studied aspects and, among the other DW dimensions, probably the one with the most protective legislation. It could be because it was one of the DW facets whose importance managed to create an international consensus for a long time. In 1976, the ILO launched several initiatives in parallel, such as the “humanization of labour”. This initiative was triggered in 1975 in the ILO’s Director-General Blanchard annual report referring to the issue under the title “Making work more Human” (ILO, 1975; Maul, 2019). On this issue, the ILO began to navigate, on the one hand, between encouraging the creation of productive employment and, on the other hand, improving its quality. This contributed to turning attention to occupational safety and health at work, a theme shared between North and South, between industrialized and developing countries, at the time.

Several psychological and organizational aspects interact for a safe and secure work environment. This DW dimension focuses on safe and healthy working conditions that promote and preserve the worker’s physical and psychological integrity (Anker *et al.*, 2002, 2003). Many ILO conventions and recommendations have already been turned into labour legislation, particularly concerning health and safety in the workplace (ILO, 2001a, 2003, 2014). In organizational environments, these concerns are part of HR policies and practices that promote healthy organizational cultures and positive climates of safety and protection for the worker. These initiatives provide adequate equipment and safety conditions to promote awareness training and updating knowledge on good practices in the most diverse topics related to health and safety at work.

Considering the WOPP perspective, topics such as ergonomics, job/work design, the study of psychosocial factors, and the prevention of psychosocial risks in the workplace are associated with this DW dimension. Ensuring working conditions and promoting improvements often starts with the perception of safety (physical and psychological), preventing accidents and occupational diseases, and promoting workers’ health. The prominence of these themes in the work environment is the result of a great movement of humanization at work (ILO, 1975) that grew associated with Quality of Working Life initiatives (Delamotte & Walker, 1976; Grote & Guest, 2017; Guest *et al.*, 2022; Walton, 1973).

The first WOPP theories on this topic focused on individuals both as causes and as a focus of attention for the prevention of accidents and diseases in the workplace. Then, the focus expanded also to involve the individual's work environment, starting to be associated with the causes and the focus of interventions to prevent accidents and occupational diseases. Then, environmental, and individual characteristics were considered in a dynamic perspective of mutual influence between the worker's behaviour and the context in which decisions involving work are taken (Zanko & Dawson, 2012).

Considering the DW approach, much can be developed to better understand the traditional (and formal) safe work environment by constructing multilevel models that consider predictors, mediators, moderators, and outcomes of the interaction of individual, organizational, and societal variables. At the same time, focusing on a more specific view of Work Psychology, beyond the work environments created in the formal economy, there is unlimited research to be developed concerning the safe work environment in the informal economy or domestic work, where there is no legal protection, nor supervision that guarantees healthy and safe working conditions.

Final remarks

The research development on DW has transformed that initial notion presented by Juan Somavía (from the point of view of macroanalysis) into a concept (from the point of view of microanalysis). This one was brought to the academy. WOPP's academic area, in its Work Psychology area, has served as an interface between the macro-level of analysis and the worker's daily life. In terms of Organizational Psychology, an interface can be made between the macro-level of analysis and the meso-level where organizations and businesses are located. As part of Personnel Psychology, it helps HR professionals to translate good policies and practices that promote DW into daily lives in organizations. Considering organizational effectiveness, Hodgkinson and Herriot (2002) said that WOP psychologists could contribute to it if to unite theory and practice. The same applies to promoting DW. WOP psychologists hold job positions in organizations and develop fundamental activities for DW defence and promotion. However, they need to start from their solid humanistic formation for action.

DW has been studied in different areas of knowledge and different levels of analysis – all are important and portray some facet of the theme, as observed in the other chapters of this book. In general, to a greater or lesser extent, the notion of interdependence and sustainability, represented by continuity over time and intergenerational sustainability and equity (fairness between generations; Spijkers, 2018), are present in the DW dimensions. Concerning

leadership for DW, empowerment and issues related to virtuous leadership are also present. The interactions between virtuous leadership and DW should be further studied in the future.

Among DW's numerous roots and connections with the WOPP area, the following stand out. At the individual level, the importance of developing self-awareness about one's own work within an organizational and societal mechanism. At the organizational level, organizational change and development are essential to promoting and defending DW and the entire agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Society can be involved with this whole movement to promote DW by watching and promoting efforts to defend human rights at work.

Much still needs to be done to get people out of the informal economy so they can count on protecting their rights. In the formal economy, from a perspective of socially responsible management and the commitment to Sustainable Development Goals, it means committed to the human future, the level of development of organizations varies enormously. Some are totally devoid of a sense of reality, that is, they continue with a predatory management style (completely disconnected from the notion of sustainability or the future). These organizations do nothing to protect the environment or people and continue to aim solely for personal/particular profit. Others seek net zero, that is, to eliminate their carbon footprint and not leave a negative trace of their activities in the world. In other words, by paying attention to everything happening in the world, they try, at least, not to leave a negative footprint.

Furthermore, still, others are beginning to emerge ahead of the others, who have started to work to leave a positive net (Polman & Winston, 2021). In addition to erasing the carbon footprint, they aim to leave their positive fingerprints for the future, make a positive difference, and give more than they take from society, people, and nature. Many organizations are starting to take steps in this direction. These organizations create the space and environment to talk openly about DW. They reflect on DW and have begun to develop strategies for its promotion and implementation. We need to have more and more organizations that defend and promote DW. The movement has many names: conscious capitalism, regenerative capitalism, among others, and it begins with the courage to do things differently because although a lot has been done to get here, there is still much more to do. This movement starts with each one of us (Ferraro *et al.*, 2015).

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