

Chapter 17

Unveiling the Disconnection Shift: Exploring Three Dimensions of Disconnective Labor in a Post- Digital Capitalist Era

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ABSTRACT

Digital integration has become a ubiquitous feature of the workplace, leading to the blurring of work-life boundaries. This paper reviews the disconnective labor model, which outlines the key components and relationships to be studied in order to understand the impact of digital integration on work-life balance, well-being, and productivity. The model posits that digital integration is positively associated with work-life boundary blurring, and that engagement in disconnective labor is associated with improved individual and organizational outcomes. The model also suggests that coping mechanisms can mediate the relationship between digital integration, work-life boundary blurring, and disconnective labor, and that disconnective labor can mediate the relationship between work-life boundary blurring and individual and organizational outcomes. The findings of this review suggest that disconnective labor is an important concept for understanding the impact of digital integration on work-life balance, well-being, and productivity.

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INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving landscape of labor and capitalism, the contemporary digital age has ushered in a profound transformation, blurring the boundaries between work and personal life, and redefining the very nature of employment. The widespread integration of digital technologies into various facets of our existence has created a complex, multifaceted environment where traditional models of work have been upended (Castells, 1996; Rifkin, 2014). In this era of post-digital capitalism, where technological innovation and the relentless pursuit of profit have become intertwined, it is imperative to examine the novel paradigms and challenges that have emerged.

One significant and underexplored facet of this post-digital capitalist era is what we refer to as the “Disconnection Shift.” This paradigm shift embodies a transformative restructuring of labor, wherein the emphasis on constant connectivity, blurred work-life boundaries, and the pervasive influence of technology have given rise to a new form of labor that is fundamentally disconnective (Vallas & Schor, 2020). This research paper delves into the concept of Disconnective Labor, unraveling its three distinct dimensions and their implications in a post-digital capitalist society.

In the pages that follow, we will embark on a comprehensive journey into the heart of Disconnective Labor, examining its impact on individuals, organizations, and the socio-economic fabric of society. As we navigate this uncharted terrain, we aim to shed light on the challenges and opportunities inherent in this shift, with the ultimate goal of contributing to a nuanced understanding of labor in the post-digital capitalist era. Our exploration will not only uncover the various aspects of Disconnective Labor but also offer insights into potential strategies for individuals and institutions to navigate and thrive in this evolving landscape (Bauman, 1997; Schor, 2019). Based on the above introduction following are the research questions:

RQ1 How has the integration of digital technologies transformed the traditional boundaries between work and personal life in the post-digital capitalist era?

RQ2 What are the key challenges individuals face in a society characterized by constant connectivity, and how do these challenges affect their well-being and work-life balance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the contemporary landscape of labor, the integration of digital technologies has brought about a fundamental shift, challenging traditional notions of work and employment. As Castells (1996) notes, the rise of the network society and the dominance of information and communication technologies have given birth to a

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