



Blurred Boundaries of Work and the Impacts on Mental Health

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In my master thesis which I have written at a University in Germany in 2016, I have made a literature review about this topic.

The Blurred boundaries of work and mental health are relevant fields which are discussed frequently in the media and other areas. We have different developments at the workplace. The digitization and the flexibilization of work are two of them only. The blurred boundaries of work is one consequence of these processes.

The work is not fixed on the nine to five job anymore. The employees could work from anywhere and every time. One impact is that the boundaries are fluent between private and work life, now. The managers and the employees can or have to make their own boundaries for themselves. The mental health and the work can be affected by this freedom of choice.

In the literature review I focused on the flexible working schedules and the constant availability on the side of blurred boundaries of work. On the side of mental health I have focused on stress and prevention.

The short summary is that companies have many possibilities and benefits to work on the blurred boundaries of work.

The challenge can be to work on organizational and personnel areas at the same time. Mental health is affected by the flexibilization and the availability at workplaces. In the organizational field, the rules of reachability and the flexible working schedules are two main challenges which come from the blurred boundaries of work. In the individual field, the personality and the scope of action are the two main parts.

Stress can be one consequence of false or not fixed boundaries. Stress is subjective and can be interpreted positively or negatively by the people. Mental health problems can be related to negative and long-term stress. This is one reason why it is important to initiate prevention training at the workplace.

One preventional method is to reduce performance - and time pressure. Another is to clearly communicate the rules of flexible working and the availability.

The goal should be to create a healthy, human and productive work environment. In this work environment where challenges like the blurred boundaries of work seem like a possibility to grow and develop strategies, structures and methods of prevention to handle the impacts on mental health.

