Enhancing sustainable careers in the digital era

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has reshaped the landscape of work, presenting both opportunities and challenges for employees across various sectors. As evidenced by recent research, the adoption of digital tools significantly impacts the nature of work, workforce well-being, and job satisfaction. To ensure sustainable careers in the face of these changes, it is imperative to address the multifaceted implications of digitalization on employment.

Key findings

Our study underscores the intricate interplay between technologies and users, emphasizing the contextual factors that influence individuals' responses to technological advancements. We identify coping strategies employed by professionals to safeguard their professions amidst digital evolution and emphasize the socio-material perspective that shapes interactions between technologies and employees (Stanko et al., 2022). Furthermore, we highlight the importance of stable jobs that foster creativity, productivity, and well-being, aligning with the concept of sustainable careers (De Vos et al., 2020). Surprisingly, training efforts often remain underdeveloped and there is little social dialogue to support the changes underway.

Challenges and opportunities

While digitalization enriches cognitive tasks and enhances organizational efficiency, it also introduces risks such as techno-dependency, job obsoleteness, and intergenerational disparities in technological adoption. Employees' reliance on technology may lead to stress and anxiety, necessitating attention to workforce well-being. Moreover, the introduction of digital tools raises concerns about the erosion of human components in work, particularly in roles involving direct interactions with customers and job candidates.

Policy recommendations

1. **Tailored training programs:** To bridge the gap between expected and effective use of technologies, companies must offer tailored training programs that address employees' diverse needs and tasks. Regional policymakers should prioritize investments in upskilling and reskilling to prepare the workforce for technological advancements in various sectors.

2. **Promoting social dialogue:** Policymakers should facilitate inclusive social dialogue involving labor market intermediaries, trade unions, training institutions and other stakeholders to address the main concerns regarding working conditions, job security, and well-being in the digital age (Meijerink & Keegan, 2019). Trade unions should play a proactive role in advocating for policies that protect employees' interests while embracing technological advancements.

3. **Enhancing work-life balance:** Companies should prioritize employee well-being by providing support systems to mitigate the negative impacts of digitalization on mental and physical health. Regular consultations with occupational psychologists can help ensure a balanced approach to work management and technology utilization.

4. **Preserving human components in work:** While embracing digitalization, companies should recognize the importance of maintaining a human touch in work interactions, especially in customer-facing roles. Managers should be supported by HR departments to play a coaching role to guide employees in leveraging digital tools effectively while preserving job satisfaction and meaningful work experiences.

Conclusion

Policymakers, employers, trade unions and other stakeholders must collaborate to navigate the challenges and opportunities linked to the growing importance of technology in the future of work. By prioritizing tailored training, fostering social dialogue, promoting work-life balance, and preserving human components in work interactions, policy makers can create a conducive environment for employees to thrive in the digital era while guaranteeing the sustainability of their jobs.

References

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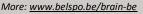
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Information

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