

DECENT WORK

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES



EDITED BY FIONA CHRISTIE, MARILENA ANTONIADOU,
KEVIN ALBERTSON AND MARK CROWDER

Decent Work

This page intentionally left blank

Decent Work: Opportunities and Challenges

EDITED BY

FIONA CHRISTIE

Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

MARILENA ANTONIADOU

Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

KEVIN ALBERTSON

Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

And

MARK CROWDER

Manchester Metropolitan University, UK



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2021

Copyright © 2021 by Emerald Publishing Limited

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80117-587-6 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-586-9 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-588-3 (Epub)



ISOQAR
REGISTERED

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

ISOQAR certified
Management System,
awarded to Emerald
for adherence to
Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*We dedicate this book to:
Colleagues in the Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre at Manchester
Metropolitan University who have enabled its creation.
All those in Society who are campaigning to secure Decent Work as a key building
block for the post-pandemic recovery.*

This page intentionally left blank

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables	ix
About the Contributors	xi
List of Contributors	xv

Part 1 Setting the Scene: Decent Work

Chapter 1 Prologue – In Search of Decent Work	3
<i>Marilena Antoniadou, Mark Crowder, Fiona Christie and Kevin Albertson</i>	
Chapter 2 What Is Decent Work? A Review of the Literature	11
<i>Lucy Brill</i>	
Chapter 3 The History and Future of Work	27
<i>Kevin Albertson, Christina Purcell and Richard Whittle</i>	
Chapter 4 The Development of the Decent Work Scale as a Cross-cultural Measure of Decent Work	41
<i>Vanessa Dodd and Ciaran Burke</i>	

Part 2 Organizational and Policy Drivers: Opportunities for Decent Work

Chapter 5 Decent Work: Gender and Equal Opportunity Policies and Outcomes	53
<i>Maria Allen</i>	

Chapter 6 The Role of International and Integrated Sustainability Frameworks in Enhancing Decent Work and Employee Value	69
<i>Janet Haddock-Fraser</i>	

Chapter 7 Entrepreneurship Skills Needs and Policies: Contribution to Decent Work	83
<i>Sumona Mukhuty and Steve Johnson</i>	

Part 3 Atypical Jobs: A Challenge to Decent Work

Chapter 8 Indecent Work? The Rise of Digital Platform Work in France and the United Kingdom	99
<i>Christina Purcell and Reece Garcia</i>	

Chapter 9 Musicians' Work: Creativity, Community and Insecurity	113
<i>Jason Woolley and Fiona Christie</i>	

Chapter 10 Structural Barriers to Achieving Decent Work in the Greek Hospitality Industry: A Critical Employment Relations Approach	129
<i>Orestis Papadopoulos</i>	

Chapter 11 Epilogue – Preparing for the ‘New Normal’	141
<i>Mark Crowder, Marilena Antoniadou, Kevin Albertson and Fiona Christie</i>	

Index	147
-------	-----

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 6.1.	The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).	71
Figure 6.2.	Integrated Reporting Framework (I<IR>F).	77
Table 6.1.	Sustainable Development Goal 8 Targets and Decent Work for All.	72
Table 8.1.	Platform Workers in Selected European Countries.	102

This page intentionally left blank

About the Contributors

Kevin Albertson is Professor of Economics at Manchester Metropolitan University with a background in statistics and political economics. He is co-author/editor of five books, including the Haynes Guide 'How to Run the Country'. Kevin's recent work considers the impact of globalized liberal markets on the political-economic prospects of the UK; the ways, means and implications of privatization and marketization in the public sector; and the development of social, and responsible, innovation.

Dr Maria Allen is a Principal Lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University. Maria's research interests lie in the areas of employee voice, gender, equal opportunity and diversity management policies, comparative capitalisms and institutions. She has published in leading journals such as *British Journal of Management*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management* and *Socio-Economic Review*. Within the Faculty of Business and Law she has held a number of management posts and is currently the Faculty Lead for Employability, having responsibility for the employability strategy of the Faculty and enabling her to implement interventions to enhance student employability.

Dr Marilena Antoniadou is a Reader at the Department of People and Performance of Manchester Metropolitan University. She specializes in the role of emotions and emotional (self-)management in the workplace. She is the holder of the Newer Researchers Award for 2015 by the Society of Research into Higher Education. She is also a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Chartered Academic member of the CIPD, a member of the CMI, a Certified Management and Business Educator and a committee member of North-West committee of the Association for Business Psychology. She has published within the fields of educational management and organizational psychology.

Dr Lucy Brill is the Director of the international gender and labour rights NGO, Homeworkers Worldwide (HWW). She joined HWW in 2017, initially leading a study of working conditions in UK garment manufacturing, and completing gender reviews for two corporate members of the UK's Ethical Trading Initiative. Lucy's doctoral thesis (Bradford, 2004) explored gender and precarious work within a globalizing world, based on fieldwork in the UK and Chile. Prior to re-joining HWW in 2017 she worked for Oxfam on poverty in the UK (2007–2014), and as a researcher at universities in Bradford (2003–2007) and Manchester (2015–2017).

Dr Ciaran Burke is an Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of the West of England. His research focuses on access to higher education and graduate employment. Adopting a Bourdieusian theoretical lens, he has published extensively on issues including graduate employment, social justice and social theory.

Dr Fiona Christie is a Careers Professional who has moved into a research career. She is a Researcher in the Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her professional life included advice and guidance, teaching and management in higher education. Her research areas include career studies, higher education, employability, graduate careers, and young people's working lives. She is the director of Research and Knowledge for the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and is a Fellow of the National Institute of Careers and Educational Counselling.

Dr Mark Crowder is Education Lead for the Department of Strategy, Enterprise and Sustainability at Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK. He is also a Senior Lecturer in Strategy and Business Psychology. He has more than 20 years' management experience, and studied at Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Liverpool before gaining his PhD in cognitive psychology at the University of Chester. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. Mark's research interests are split between educational management and cognitive psychology.

Vanessa Dodd is a Principal Lecturer within the School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University. Her research interests are survey design, the HE student experience, school to work transitions and working lives. She received her degrees from Clemson University where she trained as an Applied Sociologist. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Dr Reece Garcia is a Senior Lecturer of Employment Relations and HRM at Manchester Metropolitan University. His research focuses primarily on the effects of redundancy, both in terms of identity and behavioural responses, particularly through the lens of gender and class. Situated in the People and Performance department, Reece is also interested in what constitutes 'decent work' in the contemporary labour market.

Professor Janet Haddock-Fraser is Professor of Sustainability and Leadership at Manchester Metropolitan University and a Board member for the (1) Land Trust and (2) Peak District National Park Authority, in both of which she focuses on human resources and social-environmental sustainability. Between 2016 and 2020 she was Chair of Trustees for the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC), a role which included judging Green Gown awards for sustainability reporting using the SDGs and Integrated Reporting. Her research spans leadership and decision-making for sustainability in its widest sense, with outputs including *Leadership for Sustainability in Higher Education*, 2018 (Bloomsbury), and *WTO and Environmental Related International Trade Disputes*, 2019 (World Scientific).

Professor Steve Johnson is Professor of Entrepreneurship at Sheffield Hallam University. His research focuses on the role of entrepreneurship and SMEs in job creation and economic development and the impact of policies to promote entrepreneurship and skills development at local and regional levels. He has published widely in journals including *Work, Employment and Society* and *Human Relations*, and he has undertaken applied research, evaluation and consultancy projects for several UK government departments and agencies, the European Union and OECD. His recent work explores the impact of research on policy and practice, with a particular focus on the role of business schools.

Dr Sumona Mukhuty is a Principal Lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her research interests include SME growth, leadership, humanitarian issues, workplace emotions and health care. She has worked on projects funded by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, UK and the European Fund. She is a member of the Research Centre for Decent Work and Productivity, and has worked as the Work in Small Enterprise platform lead. She is currently, Chair of the Organisational Psychology, special interest group at the British Academy of Management (BAM). She has also received awards for her research, from the Northern Leadership Academy and BAM.

Dr Orestis Papadopoulos is a Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management and Employment Relations at Manchester Metropolitan University. His research includes comparative employment relations, trade unions, political ideologies, youth employment, precarious work and violation of employment rights. His research has featured in academic journals including *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, *Economic and Industrial Democracy* and *Industrial Relations Journal*.

Dr Christina Purcell is Lecturer in the Department of People and Performance at Manchester Metropolitan University and a member of the Work and Working Lives platform of the university's Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre. She has researched and published papers on agency labour in France and more recently had work published on the platform economy. Her interests lie in the changing forms of work under neoliberalism and how precarious work in experienced and responded to across variegated national forms of capitalism.

Dr Richard Whittle is a Principal Lecturer in the Faculty of Business and Law at Manchester Metropolitan University. He is an economist who teaches economics at all levels as well as on various professional and industry qualifications. Following a research career in industry where his consultancy reports were used to develop firms' strategy in negotiating with local government throughout the UK, he entered academia and completed a PhD in Economics and Econometrics at the University of Keele.

Dr Jason Woolley is a part-time Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology at Glyndŵr University. His PhD was sponsored through competitive bursary by MYRIAD (Manchester) and awarded by Manchester Met in 2011. Research interests include employability in the Creative Industries and beyond.

xiv About the Contributors

Jason is also a practising professional musician and works freelance composing and producing music and sound from his own professional studio called Wanderlust Sound (www.wanderlustsound.co.uk). His music and sound productions have been published and broadcast by the BBC, ITV, RSL Awards, Trinity College London, Music Sales Ltd, Fortuna Pop and more.

List of Contributors

Kevin Albertson	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Maria Allen	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Marilena Antoniadou	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Lucy Brill	Director, Homeworkers Worldwide
Ciaran Burke	University of the West of England, UK
Fiona Christie	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Mark Crowder	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Vanessa Dodd	Nottingham Trent University, UK
Reece Garcia	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Janet Haddock-Fraser	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Steve Johnson	Sheffield Hallam University, UK
Sumona Mukhuty	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Orestis Papadopoulos	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Christina Purcell	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Richard Whittle	Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
Jason Woolley	Glyndŵr University, United Kingdom

This page intentionally left blank

Part 1

Setting the Scene: Decent Work

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter 1

Prologue – In Search of Decent Work

*By the Editors – Marilena Antoniadou, Mark Crowder,
Fiona Christie and Kevin Albertson*

Abstract

‘Decent work’. The very phrase conjures up a range of images and interpretations. But what does it mean for practitioners? What does it mean for academics? Much has been spoken, and even more has been written, but there is still little consensus as to how these questions can be answered. This book aims to offer some answers by exploring the increasingly relevant topic of Decent Work from a range of perspectives. This initial chapter introduces readers to the purpose, rationale and structure of the book. It offers a description of the concept of Decent Work and introduces readers to the work of the Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre of Manchester Metropolitan University.

Keywords: Decent Work; working lives; productivity; gig economy; equality; atypical work; employment

An Introduction to Decent Work

By the term ‘work’, we mean an individual’s offering of their time to undertake paid employment or self-employment. These offers of ‘time for money’ or ‘time for resources’ take place in the ‘labour market’, a theoretical construct in which suppliers of time are matched with those who have a demand for labour services holders and means of compensation such as finance or other resources.

At the time of writing, the labour market is undergoing radical transformations, with the global economy in a four-decade long synchronized slow-down (Dorling, 2020; Lea, 2019) and with the number of ‘good jobs’ (jobs that give a measure of security of income to allow workers to plan for the future) being sufficient for only one-third of the adult population around the world (Gallup, 2019). Moreover, the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic are threatening to exacerbate a crisis in employment, potentially

reducing wages and salaries, decreasing the safety of working conditions, impacting on the treatment workers can expect and impinging on employee mental health.

As in any market, in the labour market the gains from trade are more easily realized by those who hold market power. The consequences of the pandemic on the labour market, reduce the demand for labour impacts on relative power imbalances in the market. This heightens the risks of employers misusing the power; power that arises from controlling a scarce resource (access to the means of production). As a consequence, there is the potential for employers to shift the costs and burdens of the pandemic onto workers. The current crisis also alters the routine of employees, for example, the need of carers of the vulnerable to engage in physical distancing and/or parents to engage in homeschooling. Yet employees risk disciplinary action or dismissal if they fail to turn up to their place of work even where government guidelines recommend they are to stay at home in order to avoid serious and imminent danger. In contrast, others are required to work in environments where adequate protective equipment is not provided and physical distancing rules are not strictly adhered to. Clearly, individual employees cannot reasonably be expected to avert the danger posed by Covid-19; nonetheless, the crisis should also not deprive them of their basic right to safe working conditions.

Amidst such radical changes in the world of work, international organizations, global leaders and scholars have provided much needed guidelines about the quality of work that people should be able to access in contemporary society (ILO, 1999, 2013, 2017; Yoshida & Torihara, 1977). Their guidance has yielded an aspirational statement about the kind of work that ought to define the lives of all individuals who work and who wish to work: *Decent Work*.

The concept of Decent Work conveys the broad and varied dimensions associated with work today and encapsulates them in an expression that everyone can appreciate. But what does the concept of Decent Work really cover? And what might be the current issues and future progress of Decent Work globally? As a means of answering these questions and creating a knowledge base that will help to foster relevant research, we have instigated this book, which has been written to help academics, managers and those aspiring to a career in management, and workers themselves to understand and deal with the issues and opportunities they face in offering or achieving Decent Work in contemporary contexts.

A unique aspect of this book is the integration of empirical real-life cases from experienced professionals and leading academics that offer readers a greater understanding of Decent Work issues and opportunities. We explore issues surrounding Decent Work for individuals, organizations and society as a whole and what can be done to shape a decent future for workers and work.

Decent Work is paid employment where the return will at least sustain a person's life and provide sufficient additional resources to allow them to take part in society and achieve reasonable human aspirations. However, the concept is more holistic than mere subsistence. Decent Work is not just about employment and social and income security in the formal economy but is also relevant in

framing questions and discussions about unregulated wage workers and the self-employed.

It cannot be assumed, of course, that the labour market will naturally deliver work of a quality or quantity that is decent. Since the 1980s, increasing global competition has resulted in pressure being applied to working conditions generally. The workers' democratic means to resist has been weakened by legislation undermining trade unions and privatization and marketization combining to make even public sector jobs increasingly precarious. Such pressure is systemic, as employers struggle to survive in the face of downward pressure on prices from global competition.

There is special emphasis in the book on the changing nature of the current workplace with a focus on the gig economy, precarious work and the informal economy. In particular, the book explores the growing interest in critically appraising claims of a growing so-called 'gig economy' of informal employment, looking at who this affects most and how, and critical reviews of the productivity of this way of using labour. At the time of writing, the Covid-19 pandemic was underway, a situation that has disproportionately affected people in lower-paid jobs and those working in 'essential' sectors. Indeed, it has highlighted that often those who carry out the most essential jobs are also amongst the less well paid. Challenges for such workers are addressed in the chapters on atypical and gig economy workers.

Moreover, the book includes chapters that examine contemporary human resource practices and evaluate their impact on productivity and the quality of working life; it also highlights the extent to which current employment relationships enable workers to influence the quality of their work experience and their productivity. It further investigates the extent to which the rewards available from work are both fair and equitable and drive worker productivity. Finally, it includes research that portrays how sustainability thinking and reporting has evolved in recent years to include staff/employees and discusses how this enables the co-evolution of wider sustainability action alongside enhanced Decent Work practices.

Centre for Decent Work and Productivity

This book is informed by the research of the members of the Centre for Decent Work and Productivity of the Manchester Metropolitan University Business School. The Centre was established in 2018, bringing together researchers in human resource management, organizational behaviour, economics, business strategy, entrepreneurship, career development and equality and diversity to think across disciplines about the future of work. The book has grown from material originally prepared to promote the work of the Centre. Its motivation is to address, at this time of global change, the shortfall in academic literature adequately to cover the Decent Work and productivity agenda. The Centre comprised four knowledge platforms considering different aspects of employment with respect to:

- (1) Work and working lives;
- (2) Work capabilities, innovation and productivity;
- (3) The Sylvia Pankhurst Gender and Diversity Research Centre; and
- (4) Work in small enterprises.

From each of the above areas, members of the Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre acted as contributors to this book and consider the application of ideas and practices on stakeholder and identity groupings (e.g. in relation to gender, class, ethnicity, disability, age, occupation) and in different settings (e.g. small and medium-sized enterprises [SMEs], industries, countries). Additional contributors are co-authors with Research Centre members. In sum, the book discusses the concept of Decent Work, which conveys components of employment, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue. Specifically, it integrates research from the four knowledge platforms of the Centre and contains chapters that cover a range of challenges, which Decent Work and productivity face.

Collectively, the knowledge platforms also address the seven challenges, which we believe Decent Work faces, and relate to areas of specialism within the Centre. These are:

- (1) The Changing Nature of Work;
- (2) Workplace Well-being;
- (3) Vulnerable Workers in Employment and Self-Employment;
- (4) Creating Greater Diversity and Social Mobility in the Workplace;
- (5) Generating Decent and Productive Work in Small Enterprises;
- (6) Designing Decent and Productive Work in Health and Social Care;
- (7) Using Knowledge to Generate Decent Work and Productivity for All.

The above challenges are integral to the chapters from multiple authors who are experienced and well-recognized in this field.

The aim of this book is to highlight a collection of key challenges and suggest ways to tackle these challenges, with the main intention to promote and raise awareness on Decent Work. The book combines chapters from authors who see the concept of Decent Work from different angles, but with the same aspiration to see both the concept and the realization of Decent Work flourish in the formal and informal economic arena. There are implications for senior management and policymakers who might facilitate new approaches for operationalizing Decent Work.

Book Structure

Following on from this first introductory Chapter, *Part 1* of the book sets the scene of Decent Work; an overview of debates about the concept is provided in Chapter 2; the history and future of work from a social, economic and political perspective is explored in Chapter 3; and Chapter 4 looks at the concept of Decent Work from a psychological perspective.

Part 2 includes chapters on several opportunities for stimulating Decent Work, namely: equal opportunity policies and outcomes in Chapter 5; the role of employee value and sustainability thinking in Chapter 6; and the ways that entrepreneurship skills can be developed to facilitate Decent Work in Chapter 7.

Part 3 emphasizes the widespread prevalence of atypical jobs as one of the main challenges of Decent Work. The employment regulation of gig work is discussed in Chapter 8, by comparing two distinct geographic contexts. In Chapter 9, we explore work patterns for self-employed contemporary musicians in the United Kingdom, and in Chapter 10, we utilize a critical employment relations approach to evaluate precarious work in the tourism and hospitality industry in Greece.

Ultimately, Chapter 11, our Epilogue, summarizes key issues covered in the book and considers how research may continue to influence the Decent Work agenda so that it can clearly and forcefully set standards for work that is safe, secure, meaningful, dignified and consistent with the best aspects of the human spirit. There follows an outline of the chapters with a brief description of each.

Part 1 – Setting the Scene: Decent Work

Chapter 1: Introduction

By Marilena Antoniadou, Mark Crowder, Fiona Christie, Kevin Albertson.

We begin by introducing the readers to the purpose, structure and style of the book. Specifically, Chapter 1 offers a description of the concept of Decent Work and introduces the work of the Decent Work and Productivity Research Centre of the Manchester Metropolitan University. These elements enable readers to gain a comprehensive introduction to the emerging field of Decent Work and appreciate its growth and influence in the contemporary workplace.

Chapter 2: What Is Decent Work? A Review of the Literature

By Lucy Brill.

The literature surrounding the concept of Decent Work is reviewed in this chapter, beginning with its adoption by the International Labour Organization as its primary objective in 1999 within the context of neoliberal globalization and the increasing precariatization of work. The analysis examines the concept from its historical perspective and then moves onto explaining how varied scholars and policymakers have sought to define and extend the concept of Decent Work. It concludes with a brief review of attempts to operationalize the concept and remove barriers to Decent Work; also drawing upon policy documents and grey literature focused on related terms such as good work and job quality.

Chapter 3: The History and Future of Work

By Kevin Albertson, Christina Purcell and Richard Whittle.

The historical background of work from a social, economic and political perspective forms the narrative of this chapter. In the beginning of the supply of and demand for work and of industrial relations is considered on a macro-temporal

scale. Taking an historical perspective, the authors review the beginning of work and industrial relations from stone-age economics until today, when the pandemic has caused disruption and loss of jobs. Lessons from the past encourage the authors to draw conclusions about the future of (Decent) work.

Chapter 4: The Development of the Decent Work Scale as a Cross-cultural Measure of Decent Work

By Vanessa Dodd and Ciaran Burke.

The chapter explores the development of an individual-level measure of Decent Work. It further discusses the importance of a psychological perspective on Decent Work to better understand working lives and outline the findings from the validation studies of a Decent Work Scale in eight countries. The potential uses and limitations of the Decent Work Scale are considered, together with the challenges to conceptualizing Decent Work more generally.

Part 2 – Organizational and Policy Drivers: Opportunities for Decent Work

Chapter 5: Decent Work: Gender and Equal Opportunity Policies and Outcomes

By Maria Allen.

The potential causes of inequality for different genders in employment are reviewed in this chapter. It particularly highlights how the persistence of the gender pay gap in the United Kingdom and in other countries suggests that there is no simple explanation for the disparities in pay between men and women. The author suggests that theories and empirical analyses need to be extended to identify other potential causes of pay discrimination.

Chapter 6: The Role of International and Integrated Sustainability Frameworks in Enhancing Decent Work and Employee Value

By Janet Haddock-Fraser.

The chapter shares an appreciation of the interdependencies between human and physical systems to drive forward positive change. It emphasizes on how employees interact with the wider sustainability agenda for the benefit of themselves and their welfare and well-being, as well as that of their employers, the planet and wider society.

Chapter 7: Entrepreneurship Skills Needs and Policies: Contribution to Decent Work

By Sumona Mukhuty and Steve Johnson.

The relationship between entrepreneurship skills and Decent Work, and how policy can help achieve this is explored in this chapter. The authors review the entrepreneurship skills literature in the context of Decent Work, highlighting the key entrepreneurship skills needed in small enterprises. They extract lessons from selected policy initiatives in countries with broad similarities and draw on peer-reviewed journals and key United Nations and global entrepreneurship platform publications. The analysis concludes that, to develop and retain even a