

## FEATURED SCHOLAR

Each month the Work and Family Researchers Network spotlights the contributions of a scholar who is making significant advances in understanding work-family concerns. We are delighted to present the following interview with Professor Nilanjan Raghunath.



### **Nilanjan Raghunath, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Singapore University of Technology and Design  
Singapore

<https://hass.sutd.edu.sg/faculty/nilanjan-raghunath/>

Book: **Shaping the Futures of Work: Proactive Governance and Millennials**

[https://www.mqup.ca/shaping-the-futures-of-work-products-9780228008804.php?page\\_id=120716&](https://www.mqup.ca/shaping-the-futures-of-work-products-9780228008804.php?page_id=120716&)

Experts Panel Link: <https://wfrn.org/expert/nilanjan-raghunath/>

**WFRN - How did you first get introduced to work-family issues and become a researcher in this field?**

**Nilanjan -** *I got interested in the future of work and its impact on millennial livelihoods. The interest began when I heard hundreds of stories from graduating students and working professionals about their career anxieties and ambitions. I also went to numerous recruitment events and to understand the stereotypes that employers and employees have of each other. I started to research work policies, re-skilling, and the impact of automation on work cultures. I also started to theorize the impact of technological disruptions or flux on credibility capital. About two years ago, I got interested in WFRN conferences and the network and decided to join. I value being part of such a large network of scholars with similar research interests.*

**WFRN - Tell us about your current research, what are you studying and what are your big findings?**

**Nilanjan -** *I am currently researching the future of work and the importance of collaboration and proactive governance to mitigate unemployment of skilled labor. I argue that skilled labor is vulnerable to technological flux caused by automation and therefore workers need to constantly upgrade their skills. I also look at how credentials are being reshaped by automation in the fourth industrial revolution. In terms of findings, I find that tech savvy millennials are just as, or if not more, vulnerable to job insecurities as older generations because automation is changing so fast. Secondly, I find that the impact of automation is affecting credential capital of individuals, as external organizations' moderate ratings and feedback mechanisms.*

**WFRN - How does your research inform policy, workplace practice, and other real-world applications?**

**Nilanjan -** *First, my research suggests that governments should have more conversations with citizens from diverse backgrounds and firms to create sustainable work opportunities. Furthermore, work related policies should have built in mechanisms for all employees to keep up with technological innovation.*

*Second, my research suggest that workplaces should not stereotype generations but rather look at individual performance and team performance in a holistic manner. They should allow and provide all employees with skills upgrading opportunities to be empowered by automation.*

*Lastly, my research suggests that individuals of all ages need to upgrade their skills whenever possible, so that they can easily find jobs and ride the wave of automation.*

**WFRN - *How do you integrate work-family topics in your teaching and/or training? Do you have an assignment or approach that is especially effective?***

**Nilanjan - *I teach sociology courses where I also train students to research the job market and the organizations they wish to work for with a focus on work life balance and sustainability. I also motivate them to be constant and self-motivated learners. I frequently connect them to managers and organize workplace visits for experiential learning opportunities.***

**WFRN - *What advice would you give to graduate students or those early in their professional careers?***

**Nilanjan - *I suggest they build their social networks, professionalize their presentations, research, and reading skills. They should research their profession and the employer they wish to work for with an aim to match work life balance and passion with relevant work opportunities. I urge them to think about sustainability and bring that into their working lives and constantly upgrade their skills.***

## **ABOUT THE WFRN**

The Work and Family Researchers Network's mission is to facilitate virtual and face-to-face interaction among academic work and family researchers from a broad range of fields as well as engage the next generation of work and family scholars. The WFRN welcomes the participation of policy makers and workplace practitioners as it seeks to promote knowledge and understanding of work and family issues among the community of global stakeholders.

During 2021, the WFRN will host a series of virtual conference events. We look forward to our next in-person conference June 23-25, 2022 in New York City.

To learn more about the WFRN, please visit our website [WFRN.ORG](https://wfrn.org). To become a member, please click on this link <https://wfrn.org/become-a-member/>.