

IO COLLOQUIUM SPEAKER SERIES

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Navigating Work alongside Fertility Challenges: New Horizons in Work-Family Research



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Existing work-family research typically focuses on how individuals simultaneously manage their current work demands and family responsibilities (e.g., childcare, eldercare). Yet, for many workers their journeys to grow their families are not straightforward due to fertility challenges. Moreover, these experiences are likely to intersect with the work domain because employees may pursue treatment options via benefits provided by their employer, the timing of many treatments are inflexible and occur during traditional work hours, or due to the psychological strains that often accompany a protracted as well as emotionally or physically draining process. Based on in-depth interviews with 33 women in the United States and Canada, we develop a novel typology of how women approach disclosure regarding their fertility challenges in the workplace and explore their differential experiences. Additionally, we offer recommendations for workplace policies and practices to better support this population.