

ABSTRACT BOOK - WORK II

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# WORK2021

WORK BEYOND CRISES



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K3

## FAIR WORK IN THE GIG ECONOMY AFTER COVID-19

**Funda Ustek-Spilda**

*Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, United Kingdom*

### **Abstract**

Gig economy platforms have been widely promoted as a solution to the unemployment crisis sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic also highlighted the important divides between the gig workers; as well as the harms they are exposed to. In this talk, I will present the research we have done at Fairwork, studying the COVID-19 policies of 191 platforms in 43 countries to understand how the crisis has shifted the existing rhetoric and discourse on the gig economy. Afterwards, I will discuss what Fairwork does to build a fairer future of gig work.

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K4

## THE ROLE OF DIGITAL LABOUR PLATFORMS IN TRANSFORMING THE WORLD OF WORK

**Uma Rani**

*ILO*

### **Abstract**

Digital labour platforms are increasingly shaping the future of work and are also becoming a part of our everyday lives.

This report on the role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work provides a comprehensive picture of how digital labour platforms operate and how they are organizing work and work processes. It focuses on the platform business model and its implications on work and workers, and it also describes the different regulatory initiatives taken by governments across the globe. It draws on the findings from surveys and interviews conducted by the ILO with some 12,000 workers and representatives of 85 businesses around the world in multiple sectors.

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# HOW SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS SHAPE WORKING LIFE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON EMPLOYEES IN TRANSITION

**Fanni Moilanen, Tuomo Alasoini**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

## Abstract

Various scholars have stated that research on the interplay between climate change and work has remained a neglected research topic (see e.g. Kasvio 2014; Hoffman & Paulsen 2020). The subject has been approached from different perspectives, ranging from studies examining the relationship between hot temperatures and productivity (Levi et al. 2018) to single case studies on vulnerable employee groups (Turhan et al. 2015) and green policy cases (Hess et al. 2018). Because the research on the topic is scattered, the aim of this article-in-progress is to offer a new framework to the social scientific research on climate change and work by investigating how sustainability transition literature positions the role and agency of employees in transition.

Sustainability transition (ST) literature has become a leading theory in investigating sustainability related issues, such as climate change and urbanization. ST literature illustrates sustainability challenges as multi-level, complex and systemic problems, the solutions of which demand novel technologies, practices and governance mechanisms (Geels 2011; Loorbach 2010). ST research has mostly focused on technological niches and their success in replacing the stable regime (see e.g. Markard et al. 2012).

This article introduces a new perspective to study STs by focusing on employees. These actors are seldom addressed in ST research. However, low carbonization of socio-technical systems is becoming mainstream in companies, and the processes of climate change mitigation are expected to impact working-age population by different means, such as rising demands for new skills (ILO 2019) or alternative work practices (Hynes 2016). The multi-level perspective model of transitions by Geels (2011) has been criticized for being elitist (see e.g. SOVACOOL & Blisbois 2019) and neglecting the individual and agency (see e.g. Wittmayer et al. 2017). The motivation for this study draws from the earlier criticism and from the notion that there is a lack of working life focused research within ST literature. The aim of this article is to move the focus from the forerunner actors and companies to the employees as actors, whose operations in workplaces are of crucial importance for the success of transitions. Regarding that transitions are holistic and multi-actor processes, employee participation is inevitable. Thus, the theoretical contribution of this article is to contribute to ST literature by increasing understanding of the role of individual in working life context.

We conducted a systematic research review with the main research question being how employees and labor have been investigated within ST research. Web of Science database search resulted into 469 articles. The selection of the review articles was done by a chosen inclusion criterion. Most of the articles used words “work” or “employ” in referring to authors own research project, and these articles were excluded. The search was repeated in Scopus database, and after excluding the duplicates, the final number of the read abstracts was 762. All articles that met the inclusion criteria were read and classified by the first author.

The preliminary results are that employees have been investigated within ST research mainly from three perspectives. Employees are participants of experiments, users of novel technologies, or actors who adopt new practices. The results are well aligned with the basis of ST research as technology driven and experiment centric. However, since the number of the review articles was relatively small, and most articles do not refer to each other, it seems that employees are a blind spot of the current ST research. We propose that it is the employees, in employment relationship with occupational tasks and practices, who participate in the maintenance of the current socio-technical systems.

The discussion part presents how employees might be included in ST frameworks such as multi-level perspective. We propose that employees can be investigated in multi-level societal change by conceptualizing labor market as a regime, which is maintained by a semi-coherent set of rules in socio-technical systems (Geels 2004). We argue that the role of labor in transition is more diverse than being studied merely as a producer of technology (Geels 2004, p.900).

## UNION MEMBERSHIP AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

**Josef Ringqvist**

*Working life science, Karlstad, Sweden*

### Abstract

Trade unions are often portrayed as conservative forces on environmental issues, defending jobs with little or no concern for their effects on the natural environment (see e.g. Barca 2012:61; Thomas 2021; Thomas and Doerflinger 2020:394). Although this view is brought some nuance in recent scholarly debates, such portrayals remain prevalent particularly in relation to approaches in which the roots of environmental degradation are located in economic growth (Foster and Clark 2020; Hickel and Kallis 2020; Hornborg 2003). Given that many core union agendas tend to build upon continuing growth, unions are held to oppose particularly those environmental efforts which aside from jobs also threaten growth (Barca 2019; Felli 2014:378, 386; Gould, Pellow, and Schnaiberg 2004; Offe 1985:822). The present paper addresses an aspect of these debates by studying the extent to which such arguments are reflected at the individual level, analyzing the attitudes of union members. Contrary to assumptions inferred from higher-level debates regarding union policy, the paper argues that there are strong reasons to expect individual members to be more willing than non-members to prioritize environmental protection, even when set explicitly against economic growth and jobs. The main argument laid out in support for this proposition relates to individual political orientation, as members tend to be more left-leaning, a disposition which is associated strongly with environmental concern (McCright et al. 2016).

While there is a steadily growing interest, studies on unions and the environment remain relatively scarce (Chen 2017:766; Rätzzel and Uzzell 2011:1215). Existing research tends to be case-studies based on official policy documents or interviews with union officials (e.g., Lundström 2017; Stevis, Uzzell, and Rätzzel 2018:441; Tomassetti 2020). There is a need to add to these debates with analyses based on broader representative samples of union members. For example, it is reported that union leaders at national and international levels argue that they cannot engage more strongly on environmental issues because their members would not approve (Rätzzel and Uzzell 2019:133). While being sensitive to potential differences between survey answers and an actual willingness to engage practically, this highlights an urgent need for representative studies covering members' attitudes towards environmental efforts – particularly when set against core union goals such as growth and jobs. Such analyses are of clear relevance for ongoing policy debates within unions, including environmentally informed debates on union renewal (Farnhill 2018). Furthermore, as alluded to above, studies of this kind are important also in order to address potentially erroneous deductions regarding members' attitudes on the basis of critical environmental debates focusing on the higher level of union policy.

Based on European Values Study (EVS) data from 2017, the analyses cover 22 European countries in a multi-level framework. The study employs two levels of analysis, utilizing the possibilities of the multi-level design, distinguishing between individual and contextual level effects. The study aims to assess whether union members are more willing than non-members to prioritize environmental protection above growth and jobs (H1<sub>a</sub>), and whether there are sectoral differences in this regard. The aim is further to evaluate the potentially mediating effect of political orientation (H1<sub>b</sub>), and the moderating role of confidence in environmental organizations (H2). Lastly, paper aims to explore comparatively whether members are more supportive of environmental protection in countries with higher degrees of institutionalization (H3<sub>a</sub>), in which employment security and skills development tends to be more prevalent (H3<sub>b</sub>).

The results of the empirical analyses support the core arguments: members tend to be more willing than non-members to prioritize environmental protection above growth and jobs, and this is mediated significantly by individual political orientation. Also, importantly, while workers in manufacturing and transport tend generally to be among those least willing to prioritize environmental protection, union membership has the most pronounced positive effect in this group. Thus, while environmental concern follows the expected pattern along sectoral lines, union membership does not amplify this effect, but tends instead to counteract it. This may suggest an important role for unions in transcending more short-term interests. Regarding the second level of analysis, country-level variation pertaining to the membership effect appears smaller than expected – the key contextual variables instead have effects which apply equally to members and non-members: individuals in countries with higher degrees of institutionalization are more likely to support environmental protection at the cost of growth. Relating back to the institutional level and debates on union policy, the findings may indicate potential support among union members for unions to engage more strongly in environmental issues. Indeed, based on the results, environmental advocacy can be argued to constitute a fruitful path towards union renewal, reflecting members' core concerns (Farnhill 2018).

### 3.05

## OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND? (IN)VISIBILITY OF/IN PLATFORM-MEDIATED WORK.

**Katarzyna Gruszka<sup>1</sup>, Madeleine Böhm<sup>2</sup>**

*1WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Vienna, Austria. 2University of Erfurt, Erfurt, Germany*

### Abstract

With platforms accounting for 1–3% of paid work in advanced economies, discussions on their impact on labor are proliferating. Focusing on commercial platforms providing intermediation to a workforce available on-demand, we further systematize the field by approaching platform-mediated work through the lens of (in)visibility.

We map four basic forms of platform-mediated work against three variations of (in)visibility: (1) perceptible, (2) institutional, and (3) individual, and discuss the implications through the stories of three protagonists of platform workers. Ankita, our first protagonist, is one among many crowd workers using Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) to take on small jobs, such as image labeling and transcriptions, to improve the family's income on the side. Sami, the second protagonist, lives in Paris and worked as an UberPop driver between 2015 and early 2018. He quit his job due to protests against Uber and the ruling of the European Court of Justice against the company, which changed the legal requirements for Uber drivers in France. Finally, Martyna, a student and US citizen with Polish roots, uses Care.com to find (off-the-books) babysitter jobs to cover her university fees. As argued in the discussion, all protagonists deal with particular shades of (in)visibility captured in the analytical framework offered.

The suggested (in)visibility framework functions as a meta-analysis tool for understanding the mechanism of rendering platform workers obscure. It exposes who is recognized as a worker, what is recognized as work, and how these questions are negotiated in a platform-mediated digital space. As such, the framework provides a joint space for the discussions of the core issues of the field—from regulation and uncertainties of platform employment, through exacerbating vulnerabilities of workers, to surveillance and self-governance.

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### 3.06

## CONNECTING FEATURES OF EVENT DATA TO THE FEATURES OF PROCESS AND PRACTICE THEORIES: WHAT KIND OF BEHAVIORAL VISIBILITY IS THIS?

**Tiina Kalliomäki-Levanto**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

### Abstract

ICT systems are increasingly used in organizations. In use, data as digital traces accumulate in the log data of systems. We had the opportunity to get log data of Moodle (virtual platform) from 440 teachers in one University of Applied Science over 63 weeks. There were almost 2,8 million data rows (Kalliomäki-Levanto et al. 2019). This kind of log data represents a new source of data as Big Data of work. One Moodle event has four dimensions as unique ID-code signifying individual, time stamp, action, and target.

Currently, there is hope and doubt about the use of big data in organizational research. It accumulates without any theory, so what are features of the event data and who needs it.

Research on organizational process and practices may need that kind of data. Bridging element is timestamp for process and content of an event for practice theories (Table 1). This presentation is part of wider theoretical work at FIOH. I begin showing

how features of event data can be connected to features of those two theories. After connection it is also possible to discuss behavioral visibility using proposals from Leonardi & Treem (2020, pp. 1618-1619). They ask for example: What behaviors are encoded in digital form? How are digital representations of behaviors captured, collected, or combined across organizations? What are the conditions, where third parties have access to digital representations of behaviors? What does the presence of digital representations of behaviors signal about activities of actors? We can further discuss, what is the role of theory in the paradigm of behavioral visibility?

**Table 1.** Connecting event to process and practice theories.

<b>Features of single events Crowston (2017).</b>	<b>Features of practice theory to which event may fit (no, may, yes) Burgelman et al. (2018)</b>	<b>Features of process theory to which event may fit (no, may, yes) Langley (1999)</b>
<b>REALITY - ontology</b>		
<b>REALITY of an event</b> Event is an occurrence in log data based on usage of ICT	<b>REALITY of an organization</b> Every aspect of the organization is constantly and simultaneously a product of activity. Any single set of activities is inextricably part of a larger, moving whole. <b>Attention to microscopic phenomena</b> in their relationship to context and strategy making, is possible.	
<b>PURPOSE</b> of an event is not any as such but as part of ICT-usage is to accomplish an organization's goals. Event is as a by-product	<b>PURPOSE</b> of research on practices and processes is to find origins of different strategies.	
<b>ACTIVITY</b> Event is as an occurrence in activity	<b>ACTIVITY</b> forms the basis for practices and processes	
<b>TIME in SINGLE DIGITAL EVENT</b>		
<b>TIMESTAMP</b> Single event has an exact timestamp	<b>NO</b> Exact timestamp is not needed, but a <b>time window</b> wider than a single point in time	
<b>REAL TIME</b> Event is generated in real time	<b>MAY</b> Gathered data may be <b>real time</b> or data is collected afterwards	
<b>CONTENT in SINGLE DIGITAL EVENT</b>		
<b>Target and action</b> are information which event trace contains as words or pair of words. An act is focused to a target	<b>YES</b> Single target and action words are a part of <b>praxis</b> important in generating practice	<b>NO</b> Single target and action word are not needed
<b>NOT a variable</b> Target-action is not a variable, but an occurrence represented by words	<b>YES</b> <b>Praxis</b> , which may contain target and action, is not a variable	<b>YES</b> <b>Issue</b> important in process, wider than a single target and action, is not a variable
<b>SEQUENCE</b>		
<b>Period of events</b> with starting and ending time (time-window)	<b>YES</b> enable an <b>episode</b>	
<b>Sequences located anywhere</b> on the timeline	<b>YES</b> enable <b>phases</b>	
<b>Chronologically sequence after sequence in the timeline</b>	<b>MAY</b> <b>Chronology</b> and timeline may be important	<b>YES, VERY IMPORTANT</b> <b>Chronology</b> is creating the process in timeline
<b>CONTENT in a SEQUENCE as a document</b>		
<b>Textual target-action words in a sequence is as a document</b>	<b>YES</b> <b>Textual documents</b> as source of data is needed	
<b>Knowledge discovered from documents by topic modeling are topics i.e. practices</b>		

When we'll reveal and visualize process of practices over weeks, we can ask: Do the visualizations embody some realized strategy? And what kind of visibility is this?



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### 3.07

## ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE IN LABOR PLATFORM BUSINESSES

**Marja Känsälä**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

### **Abstract**

It has been suggested that platform-based businesses reflect the future of working life (Kenney & Zysman, 2016; Smedlund 2012), in which work takes place in changing organizations, networks, and eco-systems – often detached from a fixed place, time, and space (Langley & Leyshon 2017). It has also been argued that platform workers face special kinds of demands in work (e.g. Leighton, 2016), whether they are knowledge-intensive online freelancers or food delivering gig workers, for example. As it has been forecasted that features of platform-based work are expanding to work that is conducted within employment relationships, by studying fairness in platform-based work, we can learn about fairness in future working life. Furthermore, perceptions of fairness are related to well-being at work (Fieseler 2014; Gluschkoff 2013). Platform work can be regarded as a socio-economic system, in which individual, organizational, and technological issues are present (cf. Fieseler 2014).

This theoretical presentation is based on a literature review on organizational justice and fairness in dynamically developing platform economy: What kind of issues related to fairness will platform businesses, those working through the platforms, and those buying from the platforms face and solve, specifically in work-mediating platforms? We still know little about subjective and personal perceptions of fairness of platform workers, especially online-freelancers (Berástegui 2020; Fieseler 2014; Fortin et al. 2020). It is also important to understand fairness from the point of view of platform business entrepreneurs, owners and managers, and designers and developers of the platform; as well as the buyer of platform work. Do these actors, and under which constraints, have possibilities, to apply principles of fairness and justice within platforms?

Questions of fairness are often examined through the concept of organizational justice. This concept refers to the extent to which the employees regard the outcomes, processes, and interaction of the workplace as fair; Thus, the dimensions of organizational justice are distributive, procedural, and interactive justice (Berástegui 2020; Fieseler 2014; Fortin et al. 2020). The realization of these dimensions and their relevance in e.g. gig work has also been questioned (Berástegui 2020; Fortin 2014). A fine-tuned contextual examination is, indeed, called for. Previous empirical studies have focused more on gig work than online work, and more on problems in fairness than practices supporting fairness. Positive practices producing fairness still need to be studied further.

Distributive justice focuses especially on the outcomes of fairness (Fortin et al. 2020). Previous studies have identified following problems in distributive justice especially in the gig work context: If the platform provider is greatly in charge of working conditions, the power relations on the platform are asymmetrical: The negotiation setting and process is unfair, which opens the possibility of taking advantage of workers' vulnerability (Berástegui 2020; Fieseler 2014). If the contract is "take it or leave it" type workers are not able to have an impact on its content. Problems identified also include low earnings and a situation in which experienced workers do not get higher earnings (Colquitt's 2001; Fieseler 2014; Berástegui 2020). Practices supporting fair pay, contracts, and conditions advance the realization of distributive fairness in platform work.

Procedural justice is related to decision-making. In platform work, challenges related to procedural fairness are, for example, lack of openness and transparency of management, e.g. in dividing work, and decision-making automatized to algorithms (Fortin et

al. 2020, Fieseler 2014). Sometimes workers may have limited possibilities to seek justice if they feel they are treated unfairly, buyers are more represented in the platforms than workers, and the workers' representation, networking, and communication are restricted. Workers can face issues related to digital surveillance, unfair evaluations, rejection of work, and unrealistic time estimations of the time that takes to perform a task, especially in gig work. (Berástegui 2020; Fieseler 2014.) Fair management and representation and increasing transparency advance procedural justice in platform work. Procedural justice is also related to how the principles of fairness can be coded and to algorithmic management (Faraj, Pachidi & Sayegh 2018; Berástegui 2020). For example, can software developers of platforms apply principles of fairness and justice when coding algorithms, e.g. when dividing gigs for food deliverers? Their possibilities depend on what is ordered from them through requirement specifications and whether those giving the specifications consider ethical questions.

Interactive justice is related to interaction and refers e.g. to communicating the decisions (Berástegui 2020). Interactive justice is two-fold: firstly, it refers to interpersonal justice that means dignity and respect and secondly, to informational justice that is related to communication and receiving information. If workers and buyers are anonymous and platforms restrict interaction among them, the possibility of ethical relations weakens (Berástegui 2020; Fieseler 2014, Fortin et al. 2020). Thus, practices strengthening e.g. virtual trust advance interactive justice in platform work.

All in all, there is a variety of issues related professional ethics, attitudes, and possibilities to consider ethical questions for platform actors.

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#### 4.01

## REMOTE WORK IN TAIWAN: ITS PROS AND CONS

**Li Chuan Liu Huang, Yun Ting Luo, An Hsiang Wang**

*Department of Labour Relations, Chia Yi County, Taiwan*

### **Abstract**

After the stormy year 2020, people have been forced to change their lifestyle in response to the pandemic, and remote has rapidly become the new norm in the workplace. When traditional subordination changed from physical entity to virtuality, the concept of workplace was redefined, and the boundary between space and time became blurred. Digital technology can penetrate national boundaries, which leads to endless migration and flow of talents. Taiwan, for example, used to be considered a country with serious brain drain. Since the spread of COVID-19 has been relatively mild in Taiwan, it has still welcomed the return of nearly 250,000 Taiwanese talents during this turmoil and with the new opportunities and challenges, it is expected to become an Asian Silicon Valley. In contrast, in Silicon Valley, the core city of global science and technology, layoffs, pay cuts and bankruptcies were seen everywhere during the lockdown. Although Taiwan has attracted many talents to return, it is still limited by the traditional manufacturing mindset under the current labor law. There are still several obstacles and imperfect aspects in terms of salary and working conditions, social security, worker solidarity and organization, etc. Therefore, this study holds that it is necessary to conduct further investigation based on the current situation and subsequent development trends of teleworking in Taiwan.

The purpose of this study is to explore the current labor situation, trends, and challenges of remote working mode in Taiwan. In this paper, remote workers are defined as those who can provide labor or services through digital tools or the network without being limited to the workplace designated by the employer and who derive at least half of their monthly income from remote working mode. In terms of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted as appropriate. The qualitative research methods include literature analysis, in-depth interviews, and focus group analysis.

First, through literature review, it was found that teleworking helps to reduce commuting time, increase workers' work flexibility, contribute to work-life balance, save employers' space, equipment, and other costs, and expand the global talent pool. In this study, through in-depth interviews with 18 people who had relevant experience in remote work and a focus group, it was found that: (1) Compared with the physical working environment, virtual work places greater emphasis on autonomy and ability orientation, which will displace the seniority-oriented old office culture; (2) At present, the labor law still stays in the field of substantive work and cannot provide complete protection for transnational distance teleworkers, e.g. labor contracts, wages, labor disputes and other problems; (3) In response to the problems related to labor rights and interests of remote workers mentioned in the preceding item, the virtual hiring platforms combine the functions of cross-border salary settlement and Employer of Record, which causes it to waver between the roles of "hiring entity" and "employer" in labor law.

The quantitative part of this study involves convenience sampling with small-scale quantitative questionnaires, which were distributed to remote workers in Taiwan through online questionnaires. The questionnaires investigated their working status, working conditions, welfare, labor rights and interests, and other aspects. A total of 110 valid questionnaires were collected and then the data were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The results are as follows: (1) Among the respondents, 54.5% were women and 45.5% were men; (2) those aged between 21 and 30 accounted for the largest proportion—67.3%; (3) those with university or college education accounted for the largest proportion—68.2%; (4) the median salary of all respondents fell between USD 1,230 to 1,580; (5) The science and technology service industry had the largest number of people, accounting for 33.6%, and the median monthly salary was USD 1,580 to 1,930; (6) The median number of years of work experience fell between 1 and 3 years, and 48.2% of all respondents had less than 1 year of work experience; (7) The main reason for engaging in remote working was “pursuing the flexibility of personal working hours” (73.6%), followed by “conducive to mobility in life” (53%[A4] ); (8) Characteristics of low-paid groups (with monthly salary less than USD 877): the working hours were less than 20 hours, most of them were engaged in art, entertainment and leisure service industries, and most of them were women (77%). It was further found that women’s wages and working hours were far less than men’s; (9) The majority of remote workers reported impaired labor rights and interests, primarily due to problems such as working hours or wages, while other reports on impaired rights and interests largely involved problems such as racial discrimination, harassment, and workplace bullying.

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## 4.02

# DIGITALIZATION CREATES NEW ROUTES FOR WOMEN TO ICT AT WORK

**Hilde G. Corneliussen, Gilda Seddighi**

*Western Norway Research Institute, Sogndal, Norway*

### Abstract

Diversity in the development of digital products and services is recognized as vital for the benefit of a diverse society (Losh & Wernimont, 2019) and a goal across Europe (Barbieri et al., 2020). A continuously low proportion of women in ICT challenges this goal, where only one in five ICT experts are women (EUROSTAT, 2019; Simonsen & Corneliussen, 2020). Research has documented that gender stereotypes produce images of ICT as a male field (Master et al., 2016). Recent studies from Norway suggest that girls need external influence in order to choose an education that is at odds with gender stereotypes (Corneliussen, 2021). The result is that most girls leave high school with no intention of pursuing a career in ICT. Some of these, however, find their way to ICT education and work at a later point, and it is these women’s narratives we analyze here, as we ask: **what motivates women’s alternative and late entries into fields of ICT?**

The analysis builds on qualitative interviews with 17 women working with ICT-driven research and innovation in Norway. None of these women had chosen ICT when leaving high school. Thus, pursuing a career in ICT represented a career change into ICT that they had not had in mind when entering higher education. The analysis illustrates three unconventional routes departing from formal education that has led these women to ICT work. The first route illustrates a “delayed” entry to higher ICT, reflecting how many women do not consider ICT as a relevant education at first, thus a change of direction makes ICT their *second education*. The second route involves ICT training as well but as a form of competence development growing out of a discipline traditionally *not* recognized as technological, however, where digitalization invites or requires the women to develop their ICT competence. Examples of this includes eHealth and women starting out as nurses who return to university for a higher education in health informatics. The third route is illustrated by women with a non-technological education who pursue opportunities in digitalization where their particular non-tech competence is needed. While these women remain in their original profession, changing work field to digitalization requires them to develop their ICT competence through workplace-based, formal and informal ICT training, and as a result they achieve a tech-profile in working life.

Initiatives to recruit girls to ICT education often assume that the optimal way is to make girls copy features associated with masculine relations to ICT, for instance by sparking girls’ interest for tinkering and playing with technology, assumed to be important gateways to ICT education (McKinsey & Company and Pivotal Ventures, 2018). Most studies of women’s recruitment to ICT focus on women following a conventional route where the decision to pursue ICT happens before or upon shifting from high school to higher education. Our analysis of women’s unconventional routes expands and adds to this literature by identifying how other interests and motivations work as door openers for women to choose ICT also at later stages than the beginning of their time at university.

With a theoretical framework from Feminist Technology Studies (FTS) and theories about predictors of academic choices, the analysis illustrates how the women's narratives draw pictures of alternative and unconventional routes leading them through a gendered landscape of ICT disciplines and professions. This study suggests that ICT has become a more visible, relevant, even necessary field to engage with, as disciplines and professions are changed through processes of digitalization. Furthermore, when facing such processes, women adjust their education and career path to include ICT, thus they also contribute to new ways of co-constructing gender and ICT.

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## 4.03

# DIGITALIZATION IN LOCATION-BOUND BLUE-COLLAR WORK – CASE CONSTRUCTION SITE

**Taina Eriksson, Anni Paalumäki, Eeli Saarinen**

*University of Turku, Turku, Finland*

## Abstract

Construction is a textbook example of an industry that is a laggard in digitalization (e.g. Calvino et al 2018). The industry has been quite slow in adopting new technologies to use and particularly in organization-wide implementation. There are a variety of reasons behind the slow adoption of digital technologies in the construction industry; strong established traditions, highly networked project structure, high share of manual labour, strong hierarchies to mention a few of them.

When new technologies have been adopted in the industry, it has mainly been in the planning and design phases of construction projects (Gancia de Soto et al. 2019). The actual building phase of the process and the work taking place at the construction site are left to lesser attention. However, the most advanced construction companies are implementing digital systems to track how work in the projects is proceeding to enable situational awareness and real time information of what is being done on site. There are also some applications for quality assurance and ensuring worker safety.

Utilization of digital tools for e.g. in managing projects and documenting progress has implications on the work of the site manager and the workers. Nevertheless, it remains unclear to what extent construction companies are renewing processes alongside implementing new technologies and how this influences the work on-site. This study examines the relatively new territory of digital tools in construction project management and addresses the following research question:

How does the use of digital technologies in tracking project progress influence the work of construction workers on-site?

The study contributes to the field of (construction) management by adding to our understanding of the challenges in managing construction work as digital tools that are novel to the sector are being implemented. Despite the topic having been studied in other fields, the peculiar nature of the construction industry calls for in-depth examination of the theme in the construction

context. Moreover, the study focuses on the human-side of digital transformation, which has been left to considerably lesser attention in the construction context. Thus far research has been very technology and process oriented.

For example Garcia de Soto et al. (2019) have identified that automation of construction created new roles to the construction site, but also moves decision making earlier in the process. The decisions concerning the actual execution of the project are made increasingly in the planning phase. In addition, implementing digital solutions needs to be paired with at least updating existing processes (cf. Whyte & Hartman, 2017). Automation as one specific area of digitalization, introduces new roles into construction work and the status of existing roles changes (Garcia de Soto et al., 2019). Similar to automation, also other digitalization initiatives can be expected to have the same kind of effect.

The study builds on empirical data that is collected with semi-structured interviews (n=25) in about seven SMEs, operating in various sub-sectors in the construction industry. The research team has interviewed both the construction workers and the site managers on their experiences of the use of digital technologies on-site. The interviews are conducted between December 2020-April 2021. All the interviews are recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data is analyzed with qualitative content analysis.

Initial analyses of the data indicate that there is no or only moderate adaptation of work processes when the examined technologies have been implemented in the companies. The new system that the workers use via mobile devices has merely replaced the use of paper versions. The analyses are continued to understand the implications of this initial finding.

In addition, the first analyses point to the significance of user motivation to operate with the digital systems. In several occasions it was noticed that the construction workers relatively easily stop using the new system when they face challenges and have a simpler option available. Also here, the analyses are continued to discover the potential connections between these aforementioned initial findings and deepen the understanding of the workers' experiences.

In addition to the contributions to the construction management literature, the study has also managerial contributions. It provides the decision-makers in the industry with more research-based knowledge on adopting digital tools in the construction context so that the workers are taken into consideration. The study also provides knowledge for the site managers on their role and importance in the adoption of the new digital systems.

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#### **4.04**

## **ADDING PRECARIOUSNESS TO PRECARIOUS WORK? PAID DOMESTIC WORK THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN ARGENTINA**

**Francisca Pereyra<sup>1</sup>, Lorena Poblete<sup>2</sup>, Ania Tizziani<sup>1</sup>, Cecilia Poggi<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires, Argentina. <sup>2</sup>Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Buenos Aires, Argentina. <sup>3</sup>Agence Française de Développement, Paris, France

#### **Abstract**

Paid domestic work constitutes a significant portion of female work in Argentina: 15,5% of all working women and 20,5% of all female wage earners are domestic workers. It is a type of work that tends to be both precarious and informal, two interrelated features. Most domestic workers are not enrolled in the social security system, have no labor contract, and their working conditions are precarious, particularly with regard to working hours and wages. Although informality has decreased in the last two decades thanks to a battery of policies applied, it remains the norm. While in 2003 only 5% of paid domestic workers were formally employed; in 2019 this number had risen to 24%.

In 2014, the first (and only) digital platform for domestic service was established in the country and it has currently expanded to Mexico, Colombia, and Chile—constituting itself in the leading digital company of domestic work in the region. The platform offers two different services: matching and administration. On the one hand, it provides an intermediation service in the matching between the offer and the demand for domestic service. The cost of the intermediation is entirely paid by the employer. According to its founders, the digital platform currently has 40,000 active workers, all of them women, for whom it facilitates the search for employment in positions close to their homes, for occasional, weekly, or monthly hiring in cleaning and care services for households (although positions of short working hours tend to prevail). On the other hand, it also provides the service of managing the labor relationship. When the employer decides to use this service, the company is trusted to manage the payment of monthly wages and—if employers wish so—the mandatory monthly contributions to the social security system. According to its founding partners, the platform seeks “to change the reality of domestic employment in Latin America.”

Based on 20 in-depth interviews with domestic workers using the platform and first-hand data from a survey among 300 of these workers conducted in 2020, the paper questions the generalized argument on the literature concerning the “uberization” of the labor market. Although, undoubtedly, digital platforms contribute to adding precariousness into most labor activities, they can also contribute to produce certain improvements—especially in already precarious activities, such as the one analyzed here.

In this particular case, the data shows tensions between these two directions. Firstly, while the platform facilitates formalization, it does not promote it as an employer obligation. Secondly, the fact that the platform displays a vast offer of positions of short working hours can be read as a positive aspect since it helps to optimize labor time, allowing to adapt it to other responsibilities (care or studies), to improve earnings and to reduce the level of dependency on each household. However, an increased number of employers also produces extremely fragmented workdays and multiplies the number of individual negotiations that workers need to face in order to determine their labor conditions. Finally, while the platform fixes the wage according to the legal hourly wage established by collective agreements, it is important to note that the “market price” has been traditionally higher in the country. Therefore, working through the platform often implies benefiting from a significant job offer but also adapting to lower wages. Looking at all these apparent contradictions and using context-specific analysis tools (Di Stefano, 2016; Ticona et al., 2018), the paper seeks to understand the changes that digital platforms introduce in Argentina’s domestic work sector.

The paper is organized in four sections. The first discusses the argument concerning “uberization” of the labor market. The second section presents the paid domestic work sector in Argentina. The third describes the characteristics of this particular household services platform. Finally, the fourth section focuses on the analysis of tensions between mechanisms adding and removing precariousness to platform domestic work.

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## 4.05

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF DIGITALISATION FOR GENDER INEQUALITY ON THE LABOUR MARKET - SUBSTITUTION POTENTIALS AND THE EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND MEN

**Carola Burkert, Britta Matthes, Katharina Dengler**

*Institute of Employment Research, Nuremberg, Germany*

## Abstract

The digital transformation has an impact on the labour market and thus also on existing gender inequalities. There are arguments that digital transformation can either exacerbate or reduce existing gender inequalities in the labour market. This article provides descriptive evidence that women are less likely to perform highly substitutable occupations than men - even

across all job profiles. However, it can by no means be deduced from this that women are more likely to benefit from digital transformation. Not only do the technological possibilities vary greatly within occupations, but the substitution potentials are also not always and immediately realised. The results from the multivariate analysis show that there is a negative association between occupation-specific substitution potentials and employment development for women and men. Employment shrank between 2013 and 2016, particularly in occupations with high substitution potentials and a low proportion of woman. Overall, it can be concluded that the digital transformation has the potential to reduce gender inequalities in the labour market. This will, however, crucially depend on how new technologies are designed and implemented.

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4.06

## GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE PLATFORM ECONOMY: AN ANALYSIS OF DELIVERY AND PRIVATE TRANSPORT WORKERS IN THE BUENOS AIRES METROPOLITAN AREA

**Francisca Pereyra<sup>1</sup>, Ariela Micha<sup>1,2</sup>, Cecilia Poggi<sup>3</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires, Argentina. <sup>2</sup>National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), Buenos Aires, Argentina. <sup>3</sup>Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Paris, France*

### **Abstract**

In recent years, the expansion of the platform economy has received increased attention for its effects on labour conditions, contributing to a growing literature. However, the analysis of ways in which this new labour modality affects pre-existing gender inequalities in the labour market constitutes a still incipient line of work – and is practically non-existent in the context of developing countries as Argentina, inspected in this study.

The paper seeks to account for the extent to which gender inequalities in the labour market persist, are attenuated or intensified among two occupations performed under the platform modality in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires: the delivery of products and private transportation of passengers. The analysis is based on 40 in-depth qualitative interviews (2020) and a quantitative survey of 750 cases (2020-2021) conducted among female and male workers in these occupations.

Whereas these are still highly male-dominated activities, available data suggests that platforms constitute a more permeable environment for female drivers and couriers. The paper firstly explores the ways in which the platform economy constitutes a more permeable environment for female workers' insertion in what are traditionally male territories. Particular attention is paid to the way in which certain advantages sponsored by work through platforms – as the freedom to take or refuse jobs and time flexibility – have an impact on female participation and permanence in the occupations under study. Secondly, the analysis focuses on the extent to which gender inequalities are reproduced in these particular labour spheres. The performance of women versus men is assessed in terms of hours worked and earnings. In addition to the magnitude of gender gaps, the paper disentangles what are the factors underlying them. In this sense, the enquiry is centred around traditional explanatory factors such as the restrictions imposed to women by socially assigned domestic and care responsibilities, but it also examines other elements more specific to these occupations. The latter include factors such as the perceptions, experiences and behaviours related to street insecurity, the availability of initial capital to acquire better and/or faster vehicles, and the income generation capacity to cope with the systematic expenses that this type of labour entails. Finally, the study contributes to the literature on these platform occupations by accounting for a number of strategies deployed by female workers (and sometimes companies) in order to minimize gendered work-related restrictions.

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## DOES PLATFORM TYPE AFFECT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES? THE CASE OF CHILDCARE MATCHING SITES

**Gaelle Bargain-Darrigues, Juliet Schor**

*Boston College, Chestnut Hill, USA*

### **Abstract**

The emergence of labor platforms destabilized traditional labor relations, jeopardizing existing players and attracting new workers. But while platforms are transforming work, their effects are heterogeneous and are not systematically disruptive. Carework platforms, for instance, have quietly been in existence for twenty years, without radically changing the way caregiving work is agreed upon and performed. Caregiving services advertised on website pages may look standardized, but in practice, working conditions continue to depend on the contingency of the relationship established by each worker with their clients, which happens for the most part outside the platform. Furthermore, social media platforms offer an attractive alternative. Free, informally organized Facebook groups that connect caregivers with prospective families are growing in popularity, prompting some workers to leave for-profit platforms.

This paper is a comparative, Boston area-based study of child caregivers on a for-profit platform and informal babysitting groups. We interviewed a total of 40 workers, half of whom were predominantly users of Care.com, and half who use local Facebook groups. We found that the differentiating factors between the two models are their access modalities, their operating scale and their vetting system. Care.com was frequently criticized by respondents for controlling access to their services through financial or policing means. Beyond the fees required to communicate with prospective clients, the threat of an irrevocable account suspension prompted by potential client reporting looms over caregivers. Those willing to pay to use Care.com to access Care.com's large database of clients face high levels of competition from other providers. Matches often take a long time to happen, or fail to occur. Care.com's business model primarily relies on the number of subscriptions it generates, more than on the number of successful matches it facilitates. This creates the illusion that the ideal job is out there, while hiding the fact that it is likely out of reach for most. Self-organized Facebook groups, on the other hand, offer fewer participants on both sides of the market. But the conditions of access are the same for everyone, and all members are equally permitted to read all ads, gauge the interest they generate and potentially comment. More importantly, the Facebook option allows caregivers to vet their prospective clients by looking at their social media profiles, an option that Care.com does not enable. Finally, Facebook groups give them a chance, in theory, to express their dissatisfaction with clients, a possibility that does not exist on Care.com. In reality, however, negative publications are scarce as they conflict with the groups' self-policing norms. Overall, providers express mixed views about the two models. Care.com tends to be preferred by career nannies, who appreciate the professionalism that the platform allows them to project. Young, casual babysitters, on the other hand, tend to feel more comfortable using social media platforms and value their localness and informality. Whether the Facebook option will reduce demand for Care.com or merely occupy a different market niche thus remains to be seen.

We end the paper by considering whether social media groups may prefigure more organized options, such as platform cooperatives, which locate considerable autonomy and control in the hands of providers. Currently, none of the two models seeks to formalize working relationships between clients and providers, and little to none is done to protect providers' working conditions. As a result, labor-related risks such as payment issues, job cancellations, or physical injuries are entirely assumed by the platforms' users. By tying caregivers' working experiences to their use of online matching sites, we aim to identify the potential improvements that digital interfaces could make to improve child caregivers' often devalued status and working standards.



## WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE: EVIDENCES FROM A DEVELOPING NATION

**Tahsina Khan**

*Bangladesh University of Professionals, Dhaka, Bangladesh*

### **Abstract**

This paper aims to address the proliferation of digital technologies that bear a substantial impact on every sphere of life. With the initiation of rapid digitalization, many developing countries like Bangladesh are focusing on the digital economy. Undoubtedly, digitalization has made a transformational impact on the lives of millions of Bangladeshis and the country has been lauded with LDC graduation, the recommendation from United Nation's Committee for Development Policy (UN CDP) in February 2021. 'Digital Bangladesh', as envisioned by the Government of the country, emphasizes human capital development, connecting of people, digital governance and the development of the ICT industry as crucial to meeting these transformation goals. From the successful completion of MDGs, the country has set its trajectory towards attaining the SDGs and the inclusion of women is vital in all its development interventions.

Bangladesh is well on its way to becoming not only a progressive nation but also an equitable one. This is evident in the rapidly growing involvement of women in the socio-cultural and economic sectors. Moreover, the emerging adoption of IT services across the country and digital applications are accelerating the forward march of women empowerment in Bangladesh. Having said that, this paper attempts to assess the adoption of digital technology at work and its implications from a gender-based perspective. The impact of gender diversity on organizational performance has been well documented in academic literature. Hence, improving the role of women in the labor market through eradicating the persisting roadblocks and capacity building measures are indispensable for the equal right to employment regardless of gender.

The appalling truth behind economic gender inequality is that women are still less represented in technical (STEM) studies and ICT job market. Moreover, very few companies are taking the needed measures to allow women the same opportunities as men while sustaining the kind of work environment that upholds gender values. In fact, a growing number of research studies highlighted the need for workplace flexibility by female employees; yet, access to such a flexible work environment is very limited, even in the developed nations. Often, this discrepancy triggers women to make sacrifices in their professional careers or their family life, whereas fewer men feel as though they have to make such preferences.

While there's no definite answer for how to transform the overall work culture locally and globally, digital and virtual technology can play a decisive role in facilitating companies to create and sustain a more equal workplace. By empowering women in their careers and ensuring their participation in online work platforms and digital forums, the organizations can build a digital workplace to remain over the edge when it comes to hiring and retaining the best talent.

However, as humankind experience the advent of digital revolution and industry 4.0 waves, some different pictures are also evident. Better flexibility in works resulting from adoption of ICT might benefit women, but new atypical work procedures and growth in the automation process may also negatively affect job availability and human capital productivity (Wajcman, 2017). Amid the COVID 19 pandemic, remote or work from home through online connectivity is becoming the 'new normal'. In these times, the pandemic has resulted in job cuts across many sectors, resulting in the shift of workload to the existing employees, thereby adding further load to their professional activities.

Whether positive or negative, digital disruption is inevitable and the ongoing debates on its implications address the grey literature regarding the future of work in a digital economy. Technology and its various dimensions, continue to redefine and reform the way we all live and work. Hence, harnessing the technology to uphold gender equality and women empowerment is not only essential for women and girls, but critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Nevertheless, as women in developing nations like Bangladesh strive to actively participate in both personal and professional spheres, digital technologies will certainly aid in upholding their contribution to economic value creation in national and global markets.

With this backdrop, this qualitative study attempts to explore the implications of digital technology adoption by women at work. By conducting in-depth personal interviews with female professionals and case studies from various service sectors such as IT, education, health care, retail, trade and financial services, etc. this paper would shed light on the factors that aid in embracing the technological interventions at work to upgrade employee engagement and productivity. In addition to this, the paper will outline the challenges and constraints in advancing women's digital capability and connectivity that support the closing of digital disparity and widening the prospect of employment.

## 7.01

# EDUCATIONAL MISMATCH IN EUROPE: CHANGES IN JOB REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS 2000–2015

**Tomas Korpi**

*Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden*

### **Abstract**

Differences in the rates of change in skill requirements and in educational attainment may affect the extent of skill and/or qualification mismatch on the labour market. This could for instance be the case if educational attainment increased faster than skill requirements, and those with higher education as a consequence moved into job with low qualification requirements (over-qualification). On the other hand, educational attainment may become less predictive for job placement, while actual individual cognitive and non-cognitive skills become more important for labour market participation over the life course compared to educational levels (and thus skill mismatches). Whether there is a need for more tertiary educated people is an important question in the discussion about skills requirements. In the past, we observed how filial generations always become more educated than parental ones (at the aggregate level). In some countries, like Taiwan, the share of university graduates is already higher than 70 percent in younger birth cohorts, creating severe difficulties to fill lower skilled jobs. In contrast, in some countries—such as the US, Poland, and Finland, educational expansion seems to have halted or even reversed. To provide a comprehensive picture, we will study the extent to which the relationship between educational expansion, educational attainment, and job requirements at the individual level has changed over time, and whether there are differences in the relationship between education and skills according to skill type. We analyze data from the European Working Conditions Survey from 2000 to 2015 for 16 European countries using multi-level regression methods to account for country specific differences and changes.

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## 7.02

# THE FUTURE OF WORK IN THE VISIONS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

**Tamas Gaspar**

*Budapest Business School, Budapest, Hungary*

### **Abstract**

The pandemic is accelerating the changes to a new world that has been going on due to the technological revolution as well as a value shift on well-being. As a result, the labour market and the world of work are also under change and will face a fundamentally different world by 2040. However, the generation that will make the most of the economically active population in 2040 is the Z/Alfa children now who are at the primary school age and hold different views than the former generations. They need to craft their future career visions to a world that has not yet been created, while the 8-9 age children have no established self-image. The research questions are what future images and visions the primary school year children have in terms of the world of work, and if there is a change in the view of the Z/Alfa children as opposed to the former generations. The research method is adapted to the 8-9 and 14-15 year age, and follows a qualitative mix of methods including observations, focus group discussions, interview, figurative creation, written presentation and futures drama. The results reflect that the influence of the present has a very strong influential power on the images and visions at this age, rather than the future. The boys in research have expressed a wider scope of future vision in terms of physical and social space, while girls were more present and service oriented. As a motivation for career choice pleasure seemed to be the most determining, while public service did so among the elder children. There is no deterministic difference between the present and former generations in terms of stereotype future view but the skills and abilities that form these views are changing and can be developed in education.

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# INTERPROFESSIONAL LEARNING OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION AND BACK AGAIN – THE CASE OF A SWEDISH HOME VISITING PROGRAM TO FIRST-TIME PARENTS

**Cecilia Franzén, Eva-Lotta Nilsson**

*Malmö University, Malmö, Sweden*

## **Abstract**

Political and managerial request for interprofessional teams may entail that professionals do boundary work with the aim to protect and maintain boundaries around certain tasks. However, interprofessional teams can also enable sharing and developing of professional knowledge. This study focuses on opportunities for learning in interprofessional teams participating in a Swedish home visiting program offered to first-time parents. The program implied that child healthcare nurses worked in teams with professionals from maternity care, dental care and social services and carried out six home visits until the child was 15 months old. At the home visits, a child healthcare nurse collaborated once with a midwife, four times with a social worker and once with a dental hygienist. The purpose of the interprofessional teams was to utilize the professionals' diverse knowledge in the meetings with parents to achieve improved health and an equal start in life for children. The professionals were expected to use guidelines with instructions for the goals of each home visits and what the professionals should talk about with the parents.

The aim of this study was to examine professionals' view on working in interprofessional teams, with focus on interprofessional learning at work. The study was built on semi-structured interviews with eleven professionals who did home visits – four child healthcare nurses, two midwives, three dental hygienists and two social workers. The interviews were conducted in December 2020 to February 2021.

## **Places for knowledge sharing**

This study showed that the professionals shared both knowledge about the parents who they visited and their expert knowledge. The learning took primarily place at informal meetings between a child healthcare nurse and the individual from another profession who accompanied the nurse at a home visit before and after they met the parents. The knowledge sharing took form as a chain. The midwife, who had established a relationship with the mother during her pregnancy, shared relevant knowledge of a family with the child healthcare nurse at the first home visit after the child's birth. Similarly, the nurse shared later on relevant knowledge with social workers and dental hygienists. Further, at the home visits, the professionals learned from each other when they talked with the parents. The professionals did not strictly follow the guidelines, their information was rather grounded in parents' own questions and needs. This procedure opened up for the professionals to utilize their expert knowledge in a person-centered way and to support each other.

## **Facilitating factors for knowledge sharing**

Besides the opportunities for communication before and after home visits, professionals emphasized curiosity, respect for each other's expertise, and an open-minded attitude to collaboration as important factors for interprofessional learning. Other facilitating factors seemed to be shared professional goals and values, and teams without traditional status hierarchy. Different hierarchical positions, such as doctors over nurses, can be a constraining factor.

## **Implications for work practice due to covid-19**

Because of the covid-19 pandemic, professionals could not always do home visits. Therefore, child healthcare nurses might have to visit parents on their own or meet them at their workplaces. At such occasion, nurses could utilize the knowledge they had learned from the other professionals and "worked for two".

## **Conclusions**

The findings show that interprofessional learning can take place outside an organizational context in meetings initiated by the professionals themselves. The learned knowledge can be carried from one professional to other within a team, but also be utilized in other work situations.

7.04

## GOOD JOBS FOR ALL? EDUCATION POLICY, TECHNICAL CHANGE, AND JOB QUALITY

**Tomas Korpi**

*Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden*

### **Abstract**

Education has advanced to one of the top priorities on the agendas of almost all industrialized countries. The EU has for instance urged its member states to pursue an elaborate reform strategy in which educational policy plays an important part. Education in other words appears to be one social policy area in which there is unanimous support for welfare state expansion, resisting the present tendency for welfare state retrenchment so predominant in the industrialized world.

Educational reform is often formulated as a response to exogenous changes in the structure of employment and jobs, reflecting an older debate on structural change in industrialized economies and changes in skill requirements on the labor market. However, there is also a more recent literature on the causes of skill-biased of technological change. In this literature on directed technical change, education is seen as a factor that in itself changes the structure of production. This endogenous view in other words gives educational policy a dynamic and constructive role, a role in which social policy becomes a true engine in the transformation of the economy.

The purpose of this paper is to examine if educational reform and expansion leads to better jobs. The paper starts off with a review of the literature on job quality and the production process, in particular of theories of changes in the production process and what causes them. These theories provide the basis for the formulation of a model linking educational reform and job quality, or more precisely increased job complexity which is the dimension focused upon in the theoretical literature. The model is then confronted with the empirical evidence, which in this case consists of a pooled cross section time series analysis of changes in job complexity in 16 European countries. A continuous, multi-dimensional, measure of job complexity is developed using the European Working Conditions Survey, and used to study the relation between educational reform and job quality in Europe between 1990 and 2015.

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7.05

## WORKING TITLE: EXPLORING THE VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS ON CONSTRUCTING A FUTURE, SECOND-LANGUAGE, CRITICAL PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

**Marise Lehto**

*University of Turku, Turku, Finland*

### **Abstract**

In the increasingly multilingual world that we inhabit, there is a growing interest in second-language identity construction and ways of accommodating it to a professional identity, for example, at the intersection of second language and organizational studies e.g. ecology, practices, language as practice and their contribution to identity/second-language identity construction. Although there have been numerous studies conducted into second-language identity, it remains a difficult and challenging construct to understand and is still under researched. Indeed, multiple definitions of language and identity abound across several disciplines, further contributing to the confusion. Recent reviews of studies into multilingual workplaces and the participants' language practices in relation to their professional identity construction, argue for more focused attention and explicit connections to be made between multilingualism and professional identity. There has also been an increasing focus at the intersection of second-language, workplace learning, and organizational studies e.g. ecology, language as a practice. In my

doctoral research, I seek to answer current calls for studies to make more explicit links between the two levels of identity, in addition to integrating approaches across disciplines and subfields.

Changes in the global economy and rapid advances in technology means we live in fast-changing and uncertain educational and workplace environments. Higgs et al (2010:11) liken this change to 'a whirlpool, a vortex with rapids, strong currents, breaking waves, and multiple forces buffering the key educational players'. Whether a higher education student, an educator, or an organisation, these main actors all face particular challenges. For example, recent research points to the struggles that higher education students experience when transitioning from university into the workplace as they try to fit in and make sense of the discourse practices that surround them and work to construct their emerging professional identity (Higgs 2013). One reason is that knowledge that is generated in context A e.g. a university course, does not always transfer smoothly over to context B, e.g. the workplace ((Evans et al, 2013).

This paper reports on preliminary survey findings from the first phase of a mixed-method Participatory Action research project. The aim of this survey is to gather the views and experiences of higher education students on their future, second-language, critical professional identity. The survey employs a nonrandom sampling approach and the categories and items are based on an integrated literature review and covers themes such as future professional self, second-language identity, Discourses & discourse practices in the workplace, skills and competences required for the workplace, transitions, social and pedagogical University educational practices. The research question that guides the overall survey was 'What are the views and experiences of higher education students on constructing a future, second-language, critical, professional identity? The quantitative survey is analyzed using descriptive analysis, yielding descriptive statistics such as single-quantity based statistics and exploratory-based statistics. The findings are also used to inform phase 2 of the study i.e. focus group discussions.

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## 8.01

# GENDERED SOCIAL RECRUITING: NON-STANDARD MODE OF WORK IN SOCIAL MEDIA

**Daria Kosinova**

*Tampere University, Tampere, Finland*

## **Abstract**

Nowadays companies, organizations, and institutions recruit or plan to recruit using social media. In my study, I participate in the discussions on gender and work by focusing on the gendered nature of social media recruiting in the direct selling industry. Only a few studies examine the new direct selling environment brought on by digital technologies. This research theme is relevant in a wider societal context due to the recent turmoil in working life. The coronavirus pandemic has fueled the rapid growth of the industry and even discussed as a strong 'momentum' for it. It is explained by the fact that direct sellers (mostly women) can do work remotely and choose the working hours themselves. There has been a major shift in terms of recruiting processes, which now can also take place online and which is the key to success in the industry. Social recruiting is outside of what is understood traditionally as recruiting as it has a focus on passive candidates who have digital profiles on social media.

In my research, I explore how the affective relationships between social recruiters and passive candidates are constructed and what is the role of gender in this process. This research will combine data from digital ethnography and qualitative semi-structured interviews with Nu Skin's direct-sellers from four EMEA region countries (Finland, Russia, United Kingdom, South Africa). Focusing on affect as a recruiting point opens up new perspectives on social media recruiting practices. In the presentation, I will demonstrate this with the help of my observations from social media and my own experience in direct selling and network marketing.

# TACTICS OF SELF-INTEGRITY IN UPHOLDING MEANINGFUL WORK AMONG OLDER SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN

**Sara Lindström<sup>1</sup>, Heli Ansio<sup>1</sup>, Tytti Steel<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland.* <sup>2</sup>*University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland*

## Abstract

Lengthening careers is a shared policy objective in Europe, and the ideologies of Lifelong Learning and Active Ageing have strengthened (Phillipson 2019). These trends reflect concerns about the demands that rapidly ageing populations place on welfare systems. Older age cohorts in particular are increasingly encouraged to become self-employed (Tomlinson & Colgan 2014).

Despite entrepreneurship policy efforts, men are more likely to employ themselves than women (Bosma et al. 2020; OECD 2019), and entrepreneurship as a male activity is taken to be the norm (Ahl & Marlow 2012). The potential of gendered ageism makes women's ageing automatically viewed as problematic (Krekula 2016; Krekula 2007). The disadvantaged situation has implications for the identification of self-employed older women with entrepreneurial ideals (Tomlinson & Colgan 2014), and even the development of companies owned by older women (Meliou et al. 2019).

At the same time, finding meaning in one's work has developed into a pervasive working life discourse (Tablan 2015; Yeoman 2014). In our presentation, we explore the tactics that over 55-year old self-employed women use in constructing their work as meaningful, particularly through the dimension of self-integrity (Lips-Wiersma *ym.* 2020). We view self-integrity and meaningful work as phenomena that require constant construction, deconstruction and reconstruction by the entrepreneurs themselves.

Self-integrity, or developing and becoming one's self, is one of the key dimensions of meaningful work (Lips-Wiersma et al. 2020). Self-integrity appears especially relevant from the perspectives of age and women entrepreneurs. Previous studies from a comparative gender perspective argue that women focus on multiple measures, such as self-realization, when evaluating their success as entrepreneurs compared to men who more often want to grow their companies to achieve financial success (Manolova et al. 2012). From the perspective of age, we know that older people in general express more intrinsic attitudes toward work: the older the individual is, the more she or he emphasizes work as rewarding in itself, providing meaningful tasks and social contacts (Örestig 2014). Experiences related to purpose in life and personal growth change as people age. Hence, there is a call for studies on how entrepreneurship and gender might contribute to or hinder the maintenance of these in later adulthood.

Our study uses qualitative data generated among ten female participants of a Finnish project that aimed to develop entrepreneurial competences and well-being of over 55-year-old entrepreneurs. The data comprises semi-structured interviews, online discussions, workshop and peer group assignments, and researchers' notes compiled during the project.

The results show three tactics of self-integrity in self-employment: 1) respecting one's self-knowledge, 2) using one's professional abilities, and 3) developing as a professional. These tactics reveal a nuanced interplay of gender and age: they both constrain and are turned into assets by older self-employed women.

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### 8.03

## MEASURING ECONOMIC VALUE AND PERSONAL WORTH IN MOM BLOGGING

**Katariina Mäkinen**

*Tampere University, Tampere, Finland*

### **Abstract**

“Social media influencing” is a relatively new field of gendered digital labour. Social media influencers create curated social media accounts based on their personal lives and lifestyles. A prominent group among them are those whose “content” – blog posts, Instagram stories, et cetera – is centered on parenting, mothering and family life. These mom or family bloggers are like other influencers in the sense that they share their thoughts and everyday lives online through social media channels. They monetize their accounts by selling access to their audiences: companies pay for customized marketing that is done through social media networks.

My research traces commercial mom blogging in Finland as a form of digital micro-entrepreneurship that promises mothers possibilities for working at home and combining aspirational or professional work to being a present, caring mother for one’s children. Its promises of combining work and family life gain their allure in a context in which working life is ever more demanding while simultaneously also the ideals of childcare and mothering have become more intensive.

While mom blogging is often overlooked as a feminized sphere that carries no wider societal interest or as a marginal activity that is not quite work, I argue for the need to recognize it as a form of work that exemplifies many aspects of the current landscape of digital labour and its inherent precarity. One of such aspects is the role that digital technologies of measuring play in structuring this kind of work.

In this paper, I discuss the pervasive practices of comparison and measuring that I have found characterize commercial mom blogging. I examine the ways in which the intertwined practices and technologies of comparison and measuring shape and condition the work of the bloggers as well as their sense of self and agency. I also pay attention to the emotional or affective aspects of these practices: how they produce feelings of inadequacy and insecurity that extend from financial prospects to one’s subjectivity. My wider aim is to contribute to the discussion around the ways in which different technologies of measuring take hold of subjects in the context of the digital economy and its gendered structures.

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## GENDER RELATIONS IN MUSICAL LABOUR: DIGITAL CAPITALISM, SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND CRISIS

**Emília Barna**

*Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Budapest, Hungary*

### Abstract

I propose to explore the intersection of gender relations, digital platforms and the household in the music industries on the basis of qualitative research conducted in Hungary between 2018–2021 looking at the work of musicians (singers, instrumentalists, songwriters, producers, DJs) and music industry workers (managers, promoters, technicians) in a variety of popular music genres. The timeframe covered includes a period of relative industry growth and professionalisation, as well as increasing government control, before COVID-19, and also includes the emergence of the pandemic crisis. The latter affected workers profoundly, as live music events – impossible to be held under lockdown – had become the foremost source of income for the majority of musicians and music industry workers in the years leading up to the pandemic. COVID-19, moreover, has contributed to an increase in the shifting of musical labour into the space of the home, reinforcing an existing rising tendency of digital entrepreneurship in the music industry. This rise is associated with the spreading of digital technology, used in the production as well as distribution of music, and for the purposes of promotion and communication – with colleagues, industry actors as well as the audience. In the paper, I ask, firstly, how homeworking with the help of digital technology has impacted gender divisions and relations in the work of Hungarian musicians and music industry workers. Secondly, how the COVID-19 pandemic and associated factors impacting the music industries have shaped these divisions and relations. In a UK context, Haynes and Marshall (2018) speak of musicians as “reluctant entrepreneurs” to indicate the complicated relation between musicians and entrepreneurship, which stems from the tensions between creative autonomy and the capitalist logic of the cultural industries. In contrast with such narratives of reluctant creative entrepreneurs of countries of the global core, however, Hungarian artists’ view of social media platforms, and the – ostensibly – direct relationship between them and the audience, often is a narrative of empowerment in which digital means appear as “pure” and opposed to the “corrupt” informal networks of the live music sector and the state popular music funding programme. At the same time, this leads musicians to uncritically embrace a neoliberal, individualized strategy that heavily relies on online platforms operated by powerful capitalist corporations, and a discourse that celebrates these without taking account of their capitalist logic. The idea of “direct” access obfuscates the complex role of YouTube and its parent company Google, as well as other digital companies in the power structure of the global music industries, including the geographical inequalities of monetization through YouTube’s advertising policy, which favours artists from the global core. Moreover, the careers of these creative entrepreneurs heavily draw upon informal resources and labour located in the household, which are also deeply embedded in gender relations. Through the history of industrial capitalism, the space of the home has functioned as a site of reproductive labour: a gendered space of housework and care work, structured and maintained through intimate relationships and the institution of the nuclear family. At the same time, the home also functions as a space for various cultural, creative, and – increasingly in the digitalised cultural industries – (cultural) entrepreneurship activities. Desktop music recording and editing software, combined with the availability of online platforms for the distribution and promotion of music, as well as communication with colleagues as well as fans, have ensured that the domestic space has become a crucial site of musical production. Techno-optimistic accounts of “bedroom” music making have emphasised the potential democratizing and emancipatory effects of digital technology. It has also been argued that for women musicians, the domestic space can potentially provide insulation from the competitive masculine public domain of the music industries. According to Paula Wolfe (2012), some scholars see access to digital technology as something that helped create “rooms of one’s own” – using Virginia Woolf’s famous metaphor – for women “and so arguably an increase in women’s self-production practices, facilitated by digital technology.” Such interpretations, however, fail to emphasise, firstly, that the ideal “room of one’s own” is an autonomous creative space free from reproductive tasks – something the domestic space, in practice, does not typically provide for women. Moreover, as I intend to show, the pandemic crisis increased the domestic labour of Hungarian women, including those working in music, and pushed households in the direction of a patriarchal division of labour. Secondly, that digital platforms have hugely complicated the boundaries between public and private: the domestic space is not insulated from public spaces as musicians, for instance, frequently use social media platforms to communicate with their audience publicly from their homes. Digital labour, reproductive labour and creative labour therefore become deeply intertwined in the homeworking practices of musicians and music industry workers, and are being shaped by gender relations both within the household and in the music industries.



## PERSISTENT GENDER INEQUALITIES IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION WORK IN ACADEMIA

**Marja Vehviläinen, Päivi Korvajärvi, Oili-Helena Ylijoki**

*Tampere University, Tampere, Finland*

### Abstract

The presentation discusses the gendered practices (Acker 1992; Korvajärvi 2011) that produce persistent gender inequalities in research and innovation (R&I) work in universities. Under the current knowledge-intensive economy and neoliberal ideology, universities have been transformed from a national institution providing a public good to a business delivering knowledge-based services in education and research to various stakeholders (McKelvey and Holmén 2009). Research at universities is increasingly dependent on external competitive funding and it is expected to have social, and especially economic, impact. As a result, academic research has become R&I work, having effects on the structure and working practices of university personnel, including who becomes selected. Although the gendered practices of R&I work are transforming along the changes in universities, they persistently produce gender inequalities. We ask how gender inequalities are shaped in the changing university institution. Gender inequality refers to intersecting social inequalities 'that are more often experienced by women than men' and that cause disadvantage for women, born and made (Evans 2017).

Our data consist of interviews with 30 women who work or have worked at universities in Health Technology (2018-2020) in Finland. 28 of 30 interviewed women had PhD degrees, most commonly in life or health sciences and engineering, some also in social sciences, humanities or business studies. 26 had children. Nearly all interviewees had done PhD and/or post doc research in emerging multidisciplinary research in health technology at university. At the time of the interview, about half worked in universities, and the others worked in private companies and research institutions. The interviewees narrated their R&I work histories and the interview themes further included their current work situations and future plans, the role of gender in R&I work, and work-life balance. Our methodology is Institutional Ethnography (Smith 2005).

By starting from the point of view of the accounted experiences of the 30 interviewees we analyse gendered practices of university institutions and how they produce gender inequalities at four career stages of R&I work: doctoral student, post doctoral researcher, senior researcher and professor. We scrutinize the persistence of gender inequality in particular and relate our analyses with the studies that have examined problems in women's research careers on the early 1980s (Luukkonen-Gronow 1983) and at the turn of the century (Husu 2001) in Finland.

Persistent gender inequalities appear at all career stages. Especially gender inequalities related to the care of small children, recruitment, inappropriate supervision in the early stages and old-boys' networks have continued from decade to decade. However, gender inequalities are reshaped along the changes of R&I work and have effects on women's careers in new ways. For example, the availability of competitive funding has provided opportunities, especially at the early stages of careers, and yet they included practices that enforced women to change their career plans. At the concluding discussion, we further reflect the persistence in gender inequality with the experiences of the COVID19 pandemia (ie. in GWO) to outline trajectories for the post crises university. The 2020s university has to pay a special attention to the persistent forms of gender inequality to promote gender equality.

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## GENDER AND THE 'WORK-WORK BALANCE' IN HIGHER EDUCATION: BETWEEN OVER-WORK, FALLING SHORT AND THE PLEASURES OF MULTIPLICITY

**Gabriele Griffin**

*Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden*

### **Abstract**

The neoliberalization of higher education in western countries has led to work intensification, projectification, and work-life balance issues for academics which, as the covid pandemic most recently has shown, affect women and men differently. This paper draws on interviews with Digital Humanities practitioners in higher education conducted in 2017-18 in three Nordic countries to introduce the concept of the 'work-work balance', an under-researched phenomenon in contemporary academe. The term 'work-work balance' refers to the ways in which workers in higher education seek to balance conflicting *concurrent* work demands made on them. Four such work scenarios emerged from the data: the 50/50 split across different jobs; working across multiple projects simultaneously; occupying multiple functional roles; and conflicting demands within one job. Whilst men were more likely to report the first and the last, women reported suffering from the second and third more commonly. The article argues that work-work balance, or rather *imbalance*, issues result in the inability of higher education workers to meet the demands put upon them. This raises questions regarding the role of HEIs and research funding regimes in the generation and maintenance of gendered work-work balance scenarios, and suggests that work-work balance issues need to be researched further as well as requiring urgent attention from HEIs and research funders.

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## MEN ARE ALWAYS BETTER? HOW SWEDISH EMPLOYERS JUSTIFY PAY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN GENDER PAY AUDIT REPORTS

**Minna Salminen-Karlsson<sup>1</sup>, Anna Fogelberg Eriksson<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Centre for gender research, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden. <sup>2</sup>Department of behavioural sciences and learning, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden*

### **Abstract**

This paper presents a critical review of gender pay audit reports, with a particular focus on how employers explain and justify differences in salaries between men and women.

Swedish employers have had the obligation by law to survey and report salaries by gender since 1994, and similar obligations apply at present in all Nordic countries. All Swedish employers are currently obliged to perform yearly gender pay audits and, if ten employees or more, employers need to document the survey and analysis of the audit. The documentation, in the form of a gender pay audit report, should contain an account of the results of the survey and analysis, as well as an account of which pay adjustments and other measures need to be implemented in order to rectify pay differences that have a direct or indirect connection to sex. The very purpose of the gender pay audit is to discover, remedy and prevent unfair gender differences in pay. The gender pay audit report is therefore an important outcome of the exercise of performing the audit: it should account for any incidences of gender pay inequality in the organization and also present an action plan to come to terms with these.

However, not all pay differences between men and women are unfair. When salaries are set individually, salary differences can be due to a number of different factors. Consequently, there is space in the gender pay audit reports for employers to explain why salary differences between men and women have nothing to do with their gender. Differences in pay between women and men are considered acceptable as long as these are relevant in relation to the pay criteria and pay policy of the

organisation, individual performance and market comparisons. In line with this, an investigation of The Equality Ombudsman of Swedish employers' documentation of their gender pay audits showed that gender pay differences were often justified in the audit reports.

In this paper we investigate what arguments are used when gender pay differences are justified in pay audit reports, and what views of women's and men's work these justifications indicate and reproduce. We concentrate on gender pay audits of Swedish employers that were submitted to the Equality Ombudsman during the last two years.

The findings show how the justification of men's higher salaries in gender pay audit reports make men visible in the organization. In the justifications men are the subject, as it is their higher salaries that are explained, and women are the object that men are compared to.

The reports stress men's market value, skills and competences, as well as previous and present contributions to the organizations. Conversely, women's characteristics and contributions in these respects are made invisible. A meta-message of the reports is that it is men who are unique, desirable, high performers, and capable of taking responsibility and manage power.

This makes for a paradoxical effect to the pay audit. While the intended aim of the legislation requiring employers to analyse salaries and write pay audit reports with action plans is to level gender pay differences, in practice the reports often justify them instead. As a by-product they also reproduce stereotypical ideas of men's and women's capacities and work and so contribute to a reproduction of horizontal and vertical organizational gender orders.

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8.08

## WHY ARE WOMEN'S OCCUPATIONS LESS PRESTIGIOUS? AN ANALYSIS BASED ON REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY DATA FOR GERMANY

**Sabine Krüger<sup>1</sup>, Christian Ebner<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Bonn, Germany. <sup>2</sup>Technical University Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany

### Abstract

The question of whether women's work is less valued in society has been researched for many years and has also been repeatedly discussed in public, most recently in the context of the (often poorly paid) female-dominated professions that have become "systemically relevant" as a result of the Corona pandemic, for example in nursing or retail. Occupations that are primarily held by women are lower paid and often offer poorer opportunities for career advancement. Social prestige has often been neglected in sociological inequality research since the 1980s in favor of objective indicators such as income or education, but in recent years researchers have increasingly emphasized the importance of prestige in creating and legitimizing inequality (Tilly, 1998; Zhou, 2005; Ridgeway, 2014). To date, the relationship between gender and occupational prestige has been much less researched than salary differences between men and women; moreover, the existing empirical evidence is mixed. Given the current state of research and the mixed findings outlined, the aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between the share of women and the prestige of different occupations using comparatively recent and innovative microdata for Germany. Two questions guide the research in this context:

1. is there a significant (negative) relationship between the share of women in occupations and the prestige rating of occupations?
2. What factors are relevant for explaining a possible relationship between the proportion of women and occupational prestige?

The data basis is a follow-up survey of the BiBB/BAuA Employment Survey 2018 (ETB), which again recorded the prestige of a large number of occupations for Germany for the first time in the 21st century, combined with occupational-level data from official statistics. Compared to older prestige surveys, such as SIOPS (Ganzeboom and Treiman 1996) or the Magnitude Prestige Scale (MPS) (Wegener, 1984, 1985), this survey has the advantage that it maps the current occupational structure and is designed for a current occupational classification (here: KldB 2010 analogous to ISCO-08). The timeliness of the data is particularly relevant with respect to the analysis of gender differences in occupational prestige, since not only occupational

activities have changed since the 1980s, but also societal norms about women's participation in the labor market (Lee et al., 2007; Ebner et al., 2020). Beyond timeliness, our study contributes substantially to the state of the research in several ways. First, we decidedly consider that the labor market is highly segregated by gender. Gender segregation has declined only slightly since the 1970s and has stagnated for several years (Busch 2013a, Schmidt, 2020). An open question is to what extent this is reflected not only in unequal pay but also in social prestige. Second, although some possible factors influencing differences in prestige between male and female occupations are already known. However, with the help of this survey, subjective prestige ratings of occupations can also be related to other occupational factors that are explanatory for this.

Third, in the present study we do not rely solely on objective indicators of occupations, but decidedly include the subjective perceptions of the population (e.g., on wages in occupations). In this way, we take into account the fact that the social construction of prestige is also subjective. Fourth, evaluations of gender-specific occupational prestige can also help to better understand selection processes into typical female and male occupations. Theories of occupational aspirations (e.g., Gottfredson, 1981, 2002) emphasize the importance of prestige and gender typing of occupations for young people's occupational preferences.

Our preliminary results show a negative relationship between the share of women in an occupation and its prestige, which is more pronounced in high-skill occupations.

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10.07

## HOW DO EMPLOYEE TRAITS INFLUENCE MANAGERS' PERCEPTION OF VOICE? AN EXPLORATORY SCENARIO-EXPERIMENT

**Elena Gesang, Robin Stumpf**

*Chair of Business Administration, in particular Work, Human Resource Management and Organization Studies; Heinrich-Heine-University, Duesseldorf, Germany*

### **Abstract**

For what reasons employees engage in voice behavior to their immediate manager has been the subject of research for several decades (e.g., Gorden et al., 1988; Xu et al., 2019). However, the perspective of the voice-receiving manager has only recently come to attention (Bashshur and Oc, 2015; Howell et al. 2015), despite being of crucial importance. Managers are usually the ones to pass on the voiced content to higher authorities and, because of their formally superior role, have more resources themselves to address the voiced content when needed (e.g., French and Raven, 1959; Nahavandi et al., 2015).

How a manager perceives voice depends, among other things, on the voicing employee's traits. To the best of our knowledge, current research has only covered managers' perceptions of single employee traits (e.g., Grant, 2013; Fuller et al., 2015). However, this does not meet the diverse traits employees possess (Organ, 1994).

We aim to reduce the current research gap by investigating how managers perceive voice of an employee who has different combinations of traits. To do so, we generated, via a Latent Profile Analysis, four employee voice types who differ with regard to traits that have been shown to have a stake in employee voice behavior (i.a. agreeableness, felt responsibility for constructive change, voice frequency; e.g., Chamberlin et al., 2017). Based on these employee voice types, we conducted a randomized vignette-based experiment with four scenarios: German Managers were put in the position of having one of the four employee voice types expressing promotive voice (the voice content was held constant) and then needed to state how much they valued and endorsed the proposal (Burriss, 2012; Burriss et al., 2017).

Due to the perception of combinations of traits being unexplored, we stressed our rather exploratory investigation by deriving research propositions, which ranked the four employee voice types according to the anticipated valuation/endorsement of voice by the managers. The results of this analysis shall be presented at WORK2021.

With this investigation, we shed light on the perception of voice by managers (e.g., Whiting et al., 2012; Burriss et al., 2013). The results help to raise awareness of how different the same voice content can be perceived if being expressed by different employees. A proposal that otherwise could have improved organizational functioning may not receive further attention only because it is expressed by an employee with certain traits.

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## 10.08

# INFORMAL LEADERSHIP IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF AN ORGANIZATIONS' LEADERSHIP PROCESS

## Tiina Leino

*University of Vaasa, Vaasa, Finland*

### Abstract

**INTRODUCTION** – In the transformation of work, knowledge workers are becoming increasingly specialized. Actions and information are shared and developed with peers and networks rather than supervisors. When working in organizations, networks, teams and other contexts – it is important to have influence over decisions. The process of one's own work is in one's own hands – this means leading informally is needed. Thus, hierarchical leadership practices do not apply in new ways of working. The collectivistic leadership approaches and their complex interactive relations jointly add to the value created in organizations. This study proposes informal leadership, leadership influence without designated power position, as a part of the organizational leadership process. Informal leadership is an option to renew working, and leading. Acknowledging informal leadership in organizations can ensure authentic and appropriate decision-making.

**METHOD AND DATA** – An extensive literature review on informal leadership was conducted. Six databases were searched on 26th October 2020 for keyword "informal lead\*": ScienceDirect, Web of Science, Scopus, Business Source Premier (EBSCO), ABI/INFORM Collection ProQuest, and APA PsycArticles. Fields included were management, leadership, organizations, business, psychology (applied, social, multidisciplinary), behavioural sciences, and social sciences interdisciplinary. Fields like sports, education, nursing and medicine were excluded. Only English and peer-reviewed articles were included in the search, and

some articles and other papers were added during the reading process. The total result was nearly 300, and eventually, 75 articles were included. Through content analysis, a suggested framework of informal leadership is created.

**RESULTS** – Literature analysis revealed the streams in informal leadership research: the approaches, topics, methods and findings. Most highlighted topics are action, communication, characteristics, connection to others, motivation and influence. Connection to others seems to be a determinant of how informal leadership emerges, gets recognition and motivates. Outcomes are rather dependent on the possibility to exert influence and make an impact. The outcomes are future-oriented and collectivistic in nature since informal leaders aim for ‘the greater good’. The review revealed gaps in the literature, and suggestions for future research are made.

**DISCUSSION** – Collectivistic and plural forms of leadership are needed, as the fundamental nature of organizations is rapidly transforming. Working life is changing, not only because of the megatrends like digitalization but also because of the covid19-pandemia. Location free work has increased and is predicted to stay so. Also, organizations themselves change as they are moving to flatter structures and focusing on lean practices. Expertise becomes even more specialized and is shared and developed among peers. The supervisor’s role shall become an enabler rather than a controller. Thus, the influence used in expertise positions becomes essential, and it is utilized through informal leadership.

New approaches to leadership are required that go beyond the hierarchical leader-focused view, and acknowledge the role of higher levels of analysis, both formal (e.g., team) and informal (e.g., network) (Yammarino et al., 2012). Informal leadership is a rising research topic; the rise started after 2010. A review of the existing literature is needed to create a picture of the topic to gather the current research data, streams and advance its future development. This paper offers a rather comprehensive review of informal leadership literature, one that has not been done yet. By doing this review, a view to current informal leadership research is offered.

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10.09

## DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SCENARIOS IN TIMES OF A PANDEMIC

**Andreas Duerschmidt**

*Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden, Germany*

### Abstract

This paper contributes to the domain of teacher education and deals with the challenges of education programs that strongly rely on synchronous and cooperative learning formats. Context is the organization and implementation of workshops for teacher educators in two Asian countries. The workshops’ design requires face-to-face interaction. However, there is uncertainty whether this can be realized due to the Covid-19 pandemic and current travel restrictions.

The workshops are part of an Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education project. The CONTESSA (Contemporary Teaching Skills for South Asia) project is built on a cooperation between Austria (project coordinator), Cambodia, Germany and Sri Lanka, including a total of six universities. CONTESSA aims at the further development of teaching skills by establishing a teacher training program in the primary education sector in Cambodia and Sri Lanka. Leading universities in Phnom Penh and Colombo are involved directly in the content development.

Most learning arrangements developed by the project partners include online or blended-learning formats. This enables a high degree of flexibility in learning. Apart from these so-called online modules, there are additional Train-the-Trainer workshops, which are currently being developed at Dresden University of Technology (TUD) in Germany. In these learning arrangements (scheduled for summer 2021), teacher educators are guided through topics (e.g. professional development, mentoring) and learning activities that typically demand collaborative learning scenarios. In preparation for a successful program, the workshops need to be designed for both the face-to-face option and the virtual alternative.

The Chair of Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Education at TUD in Germany is happy to address the changing requirements for virtual learning environments and to pass on its own strategies in creating interactive distant learning scenarios. Moreover, the question arises how continuous education programs in teacher training can be organized so that

the learners´ can actively participate – especially taking into account the perspective and the needs of teaching professionals under the given conditions in both Asian countries. In addition, we want to point out how the current situation affects the international cooperation in teacher education with regard to the CONTESSA project.

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10.10

## TEMPORAL STRUCTURES IN A SHIPBUILDING PROJECT

**Niina Koivunen**

*University of Vaasa, Vaasa, Finland*

### **Abstract**

The topic of this paper is time and temporality in expert work. The notion of time has often been linear, objectively measured clock time, efficient planning of work time or the work-life balance. However, there is also a need to investigate alternative temporal realities, such as experiential or event time, and produce contextual knowledge about different organizations (Adam, 1995; Orlikowski & Yates, 2002; Wajcman, 2016, 2019). Moran states how many researchers have studied time and temporality but how it is difficult to create a synthesis of these studies. Some basic assumptions are, however, shared by many authors (2015, 284). First, time has accelerated, second, a new, globally connected time is emerging and third, different concepts of time are intertwined.

Digitalization and increased use of information technology have affected this acceleration of time and the pace of work life (Wajcman, 2016). The time-space continuum of work has changed, the fixed nature of work hours has changed, and work and free time are increasingly intertwined. Compression and acceleration of time include the work pace, interruptions and multitasking. Negotiating for shared schedules is increasingly difficult; it is difficult to have people present at the same time and space. It is often timing that is the challenge, not lack of time.

My purpose is to understand time and temporality in a shipbuilding industry. Project industry by nature is very time-oriented with its strict production timelines and delivery targets. The research material was collected in 2019 at Meyer shipyard in Turku, Finland, during one week of field research. The specific project was called Icon, a luxury cruise ship intended for the Caribbean markets. The material consists of observations, field notes and interviews. The interviews were carried out by dialogical photo interview method in which the interviewees were asked to take photos of moments when they thought about time or temporality (Soronen & Koivunen, 2018). My research questions are: how shipbuilding engineers construct their notion of time and what kinds of temporal structures they follow in their work.

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## THORSTEIN VEBLÉN AND RADICAL THEORY: ARE CAPITALIST SYSTEMS OF DIGITAL PLATFORM TRULY SELF-ORGANISING?

**Mu-Jeong Kho**

*University College London, London, United Kingdom*

### **Abstract**

In the context of contemporary social and economic inequality of income and instability of employment deepening in capitalism, there has been a burgeoning resurgence of interest in 'sharing economy' or 'gig economy' with the development of digital platforms, especially in the field of institutional theories in Marxist tradition over the past decade, stepping outside the ruling neoliberal-consensus. However, the vulnerability of most institutional theories in Marxist traditions hampering their affluent capability seriously to challenge the ruling consensus is their weak integration to radical theory, particularly of Veblen (albeit Veblen must not be stranger to Marxists), on the question unaddressed hitherto, whether the capitalist systems of digital platform are truly self-organising. This question in turn can lead to the sub-questions: (1) how capitalist systems of digital-platform get to organisation and structuration in real-world, (2) what the origin of disorder is in such system of Gig Economy, (3) how they are self-organising, possibly by the variations: on the one hand, market vs. non-market; on the other, pro-capital vs. anti-capital (by those categories of structuration, we can make up an institutional matrix), (4) if they are *truly* self-organising in a philosophical value of social justice in the standpoint of most digital economy workers performing precarious work (5) if untruly (in value and history), what the normative solution can be envisioned, with the duality of reformism to make the capitalistic systems of digital platform work better *within* it versus radicalism looking *beyond* it by reclaiming an evolution. This paper, defining respectively (1) 'order' as 'structure,' (2) 'self-organisation' as social 'process' reorganising, reconstituting and restructuring an 'order out of disorder,' (3) 'capital' as 'result of the laws and institutions' rooted in capitalist relations-of-production, seeks to answer the questions through deeper understanding on Veblen's radical approach to institutional theory, with its application to an empirical case-study in Korea since 2007-2008 financial crisis to the current period of Covid-19 having been organised in 'pro-capital' manner. In doing so, this paper argues: beyond superficial issues of State versus market or Keynesianism versus neo-liberalism, there is a deeper issue of structuration of capitalist systems of digital platforms in Korea, which can be addressed well by most institutional theories in Marxist traditions. But this in turn is only valid if it is connected with radical theory, particularly of Veblen, looking beyond such capitalist system (most institutional theories in Marxist traditions fail to do so), and such connection to Veblen is also a pre-condition of deepening Marx.

**Keywords:** Veblen, Institutional Theory, Structuration, Self-Organisation, Radical Theory, Marxist traditions, Digital Platform Capitalism, Gig Economy, Precarious work, Covid-19, Republic of Korea.

## SHORT-TIME WORK AND TEMPORARY WORKERS IN SPAIN: A DUAL LABOUR MARKET AMID THE COVID19 PANDEMIC

**Miguel Malo**

*University of Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain*

### **Abstract**

The objective of this research consists of analysing how the Short-Time Work (STW) schemes has protected employment amid the Covid-19 pandemic in a labour market segmented by contract type. The national case we analyse is Spain, where the share of temporary employment has been one of the highest in the European Union since the mid-1980s, always above 20% and sometimes above 30% (García-Serrano and Malo, 2014; ILO, 2011). The Spanish labour market is an example of the so-



called 'flexibility at the margin', focusing on new entrants into the labour market. Temporary contracts are the entry port for almost any occupation, bringing about a sort of probationary period more and more extended. The extensive use of temporary contracts has reinforced the segmentation of jobs between two groups of workers who enjoy different degrees of stability and working conditions, and visible via the contract type. Although other sorts of segmentation exist in the Spanish labour market (for example, by age, educational level and skills), all of them are subsumed into the segmentation by contract type (García-Serrano and Malo, 2014).

The STW existed in Spain before the current pandemic. They are called ERTE (*Expediente de Regulación Temporal de Empleo*, or 'procedure for a temporary employment adjustment'). This type of STW is rather similar to other existing in the European Union, as the German 'Kurzarbeit', but usually not including training courses for those workers with a contract suspension. The Spanish ERTE existed before the current pandemic, but they were adapted and updated to the current needs through tripartite social dialogue. Thanks to the implementation of the ERTE the adjustment of total employment has been much smaller than in previous recessions, limiting the rise in unemployment as in other EU countries with different STW schemes (Eurofound, 2021).

The STW schemes are designed to protect incumbent workers, and especially workers with an open-ended contract. According to Eurofound (2021), in the EU workers on casual contracts, agency contracts and, sometimes, temporary workers are excluded from access to these schemes. However, in the Spanish case temporary workers had explicit access to the ERTE, whatever their seniority or the expected deadline of the contract. In this research, I will compare the coverage of temporary and permanent workers by the ERTE. The main dataset will be the Spanish Labour Force Survey, complemented by other administrative data sources.

The preliminary results show that in the first and second quarters of 2020, the relative coverage of temporary workers was slightly higher than that of permanent workers, while for the third and fourth quarters the results are the opposite and stronger. At the same time, I also find an important hiring monthly deficit respect to the average of the three previous years mainly affecting to temporary contracts. These first results suggest that the ERTE were successful overpassing the divide of contract type in the first months of the pandemic, but later the end of suspended temporary contracts when some ERTE finished and the deficit of temporary contracts' hires show an employment adjustment pattern coherent with the segmentation of the Spanish labour market by contract type. In other words, the most part of the employment adjustment rests on temporary workers even with the generalized protection provided by the ERTE to all workers irrespective of their contract type.

The analysis will include the profile of the temporary and permanent workers covered by the ERTE along 2020, with an special focus on gender, age, sectoral, and occupational differences.

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10.13

# HOW WILL AI WILL AFFECT THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (KSAS) REQUIRED OF EMPLOYEES IN WORKPLACES OF THE FUTURE?

**Zehra Ali**

*University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada*

## Abstract

The idea of humans being replaced by machines is not a new one. We have witnessed this during the industrial revolution, as well as the digital revolution which is still on-going. Keeping with the trends we have seen over the last ten years in the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), it is safe to assume that such technological advances will restructure and redefine

the way we work. The increasing use of AI in the workplace is going to impact the knowledge, skills and abilities required by employees. The arrival of AI has predicted that certain skillsets will become redundant, causing job loss. For humans to coexist alongside AI in the workplace, it is necessary that they play to the natural strengths and abilities they have - those which would be difficult for a machine to replicate. In this presentation, I share my findings using a rapid, scoping literature review, conducted to show how the onset of AI will affect the knowledge, skills and abilities required by employees to remain relevant in the workplaces of the future. In addition, I hope to bring to light the gaps in the literature and areas for further research.

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10.14

## A CONTINUUM OF WORK RELATIONSHIPS AND OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

**Ulrich Mueckenberger**

*University of Bremen, Bremen, Germany*

### **Abstract**

The paper examines ways in which the status of “employee” might change in a service and knowledge society shaped by globalisation and digitalisation. The traditional concept of the “employee” is rooted in a very specific type of society—the capitalist industrial society—and that this type of society, while it has not disappeared entirely, owing to the forces mentioned above, is no longer predominant. The point of departure is a historical institutionalist critique of the core criterion of the prevailing concept of the employee: “personal dependency/subordination.” This concept stems from a premodern method of production and remains bound to it so that it is not suitable to answer questions regarding the constitution of globalised post-Fordist and service societies.

The paper points out that the concept of “personal dependency” has feudal, pre-bourgeois roots that cannot be reconciled with the normative requirements of a democratic community. A generalised relationship of subordination and dependence cannot be reconciled with citizenship or with a democratic approach to social relationships, nor is it an appropriate - both legitimate and efficient - means of reconciling differing interests and preferences. From a normative point of view, a modernised, legal concept determined by citizenship requires an understanding of work relationships as horizontally as well as vertically “networked,” that is as multilateral and reciprocal discursive relationships. Within functional dependencies, there can be no “subjects” and “objects,” “dependent” and “independent.” Everyone involved is entitled to freedom, opportunities for participation, and the same fundamental rights. These considerations attempt to integrate the social protection of work within a framework of a theory of “social citizenship” which is independent from the employment status.

Empirically, the diversity of employment relationships shaped by globalisation and digitalisation have radically changed the employee–non-employee dichotomy. Today, the same workplace might have people working side by side who have completely different employment status, social protections, and pay levels and who are represented under completely different industries and structures in terms of working conditions and pay—thanks in part to telecommunications and digital networking. A number of people work as “standard” employees and are surrounded by a broad diversity of “non-standardness.” Digitalisation of work appears to increase rather than decrease this diversity. That fact makes it a prime topic for re-regulation.

This paper proposes taking a “strategic” approach to the concept of “employee”. A four-ring model accompanying the paper will show a “continuum” of employment relationships, from jobs with a high level of protection under labour law to those that enjoy little (or no) protection. The goal is to overcome the dichotomy that characterises our work-oriented society and unfortunately divides those who “belong” from those who do not. Within this continuum, a legal distinction must be made between various types of workers - the four distinct rings will demonstrate rather a gradual transition from one extreme to the other (instead of the dichotomy). The type-based continuum is able to reflect the increasingly diverse employment situations and protection requirements that exist in the digital age.

As members of a democratic community, citizens enjoy what T. H. Marshall coined “social rights of citizenship.” Constitutions grant certain fundamental rights of dignity, participation and respect to every citizen. Those rights do not require the performance of market or nonmarket work, only an activity or sacrifice of the individual that benefits the community. It would seem necessary and realistic to grant them more legal protection. Legal protection might include caregiving—nonmarket arrangements caring for others, which are essential for the survival of a modern society. Traditional examples including volunteer work and help for

others, are no longer as closely linked to the market and employee status - but they deserve systematic recognition by society.

The paper (with the four-ring model included) summarises efforts of both legal doctrine and legal policy to safeguard work (in the wide sense of commodified and non-commodified activity) in the digital age. It highlights the fact that the problems described in the four rings and attempts to solve them should be considered not in isolation, but as a whole. This will ensure that attempts at a solution are in keeping with the dynamic nature and growing diversity of work in the digital age.

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## 11.01

# DIGITAL LABOR PLATFORMS IN FINLAND – FORMS OF WORK THEY PROMOTE

**Jere Immonen**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland. University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland*

### **Abstract**

Digitally organized labor and platform work have been in public debate mainly due to employment relations related questions. Behind these debates is the amount and levels of control that platforms have over the workers who often work as freelancers or in different forms of self-employed. (Jesnes 2019) How much they can have control without taking employer responsibilities. This the dominant mode of discussion when talking on platform fairness, but it is notable that the field of platform work is highly heterogenous including varieties of different methods of control and ways to organize work (Schor, Attwood-Charles, Cansoy, Ladegaard & Wengronowitz 2020). It is assumable that fairness can be perceived in different ways in different platform environments by platform workers, buyers and companies providing platform services.

The experience of fairness is highly subjective in many ways. When it comes to fairness in platform work, it is not only important, what is the platform model, but also who is the worker and what is her position in relation to platform and what are her expectations for the work. For example, financial dependency on platform income can affect greatly on fairness experience. (Schor et. al 2020; Ilsoe, Larsen & Bach 2021)

Interrelationship between workers and platforms can be viewed by the theory of institutional logics. The concept of institutional logics refers to interrelationships between individuals, organizations and society. It views Institutions as supraorganizational patterns of material practices and symbolic systems that produce their material lives and render their experiences meaningful. (Thorton, Ocasio, Lounsbury 2012) Institutional orders have a certain logic that guides their organizing principles and provides motivation and identity for social actors.

Online labor platforms have been seen to create tensions between two competing institutional logics: the market logic that legitimizes profit-making through free, unregulated competition among self-employed workers, and the corporation logic that legitimizes market share and revenue growth through coordination and control of workers by platforms (Frenken, Vaskelainen, Fünfschilling & Piscicelli 2018; Meijerink, Keegan & Bondarouk 2021).

In other words, the relationship between platforms and workers in digital environments can have hierarchical elements and workers can be treated like employees, or platforms may serve more as marketplaces for self-employed/entrepreneurs to compete and advertise their services. One debated form of logics is community logics where rules, monitoring and the sanctions are set by community members and users have great influence over the course of platform's actions. (Frenken et al. 2018)

Features of these competitive logics together in different degrees create many kinds of platform environments with different kinds of interdependencies between actors. I expect that this causes differences in workers experiences of fairness and injustice on different platforms. I assume that platforms, built around different logics, focus on different aspects of fairness and have different views on what is fair.

Finnish institute of occupational health has launched three-year project, Fair Work on Platforms ([REITA](#)), to researching how fairness is built, experienced and how it could be developed in platform work. My dissertation is part of the project and focuses on organizational models of platform companies and how fairness is experienced in different platform environments by workers. Examination of platform companies and their organizational structures also gives opportunity to see how platform companies themselves see fairness and how they implement it in their practices.

I have, with cooperation of platform companies, researchers and other stakeholders, created a list of labor platforms registered in Finland. Based on companies' web sites, instructions and terms of services, I have made profiles of user groups platforms seek to reach, and around whose needs the platform services have been shaped. Article in the making presents these groups and brings out the heterogeneity of the worker groups. By analyzing how platforms define their interest groups, we can also have information on platforms' institutional logics and motivations that direct their operations

In conference, I would like to present results from this analyze phase and the article. The focus is in a field of Finnish labor platforms. What kind of employment and work life activity do they promote? How can these companies be classified based on their models and work they mediate? For who these services are aimed for? What do the terms of services and webpages tell about the interrelationship of workers and platforms? This research phase creates basis for subsequent research of platform work fairness.

In the fall of 2021, I have ongoing interviews with platform representatives and workers. In that time, I may have more precise but still preliminary information on our case-study platform companies' operational models in a light of institutional logics, and information on how fairness is experienced in these organizations. These results can also be presented tentatively.

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## 11.02

# TWO DIFFERENT REGULATORY CONTEXTS OF TAXI PLATFORM EMPLOYMENT. DISRUPTION OR CONTINUITY IN HELSINKI AND IN SAINT PETERSBURG?

**Mikko Perkiö, Arseniy Svyrenko, Meri Koivusalo**

*Tampere University, Tampere, Finland*

### Abstract

The impact of new platform-based transport operators, such as Uber, are found to be changing working conditions and the way transport services industry operates up to the level that this disruptive change has been called Uberization. Academy of Finland funded research project, RRR-Uber applies RRR (rights, regulation and redistribution) framework, to investigate the disputed terrain between powers of platform economy providers, drivers and regulators at different levels in comparison between two different regulatory environments in Helsinki and St Petersburg.

This article analyzes how the platform workers (Uber/Yandex.Taxi drivers), define the nature of their employment and share of responsibilities with the platform companies (Uber/Yandex.Taxi). We examine to what extent new global platforms represent disruption of regulatory frameworks in comparison to adapting to the context and how platform workers view their role and position in the labor market.

This study is based on qualitative in-depth interviews (N=40; 20 in Helsinki and 20 in Saint Petersburg) of Uber (including Yandex) drivers conducted by the RRR-Uber project. Participants were recruited by convenience sampling and on a voluntary basis. The abductive content analysis was conducted with the help of Atlas.ti programme.

Uber ride-hailing platform resumed its operation in Helsinki and several other ride-hailing platforms came to the Finnish market as a result of the deregulation in taxi sector in 2018. The taxi sector grew from level of 9000 drivers to 15 000 drivers in less than two years. In Helsinki most of taxi drivers are independent entrepreneurs responsible for all arrangements (licenses, private and social insurances, taxes). Thus, formal requirements to enter this profession remained high. In order to start as Uber driver, it is common to pass exams both taxi entrepreneur license and taxi driver license providing professional status.

In Russia the Uber merged with the ride-hailing platform Yandex.Taxi in 2017. In Saint Peterburg Yandex.Taxi has operated since 2013. Today the IT company dominates taxi sector in many Russian cities. Russia provides an example of role of a digital labour platform in decreasing of grey economy. Regulation of employment applies to conditions of employment and if it is salaried or contractual through self-employment or more formal firm, with varied consequences for responsibilities for and entitlement to social security. We assume that in Russia the operation of the Uber/Yandex.Taxi reflects on broader context of the current Russian

political system. The loose economic regulation is compensated by the limitations of the justice system (weak protection of civic and corporate rights) and social welfare system (weak unemployment protection, limited health insurance program that covers only the essential medical treatment). In Russia most of drivers are not entrepreneurs and their contract with Yandex is mediated by the taxi companies often referred to as “taxi parks”.

Although drivers were similarly worried on their income level, the position and employment context on ride hailing platform employment differed between Helsinki and Saint Petersburg. Working days were much longer in Saint Petersburg with more reported work-related stress. The fundamental difference between cities was the type of employment. In Helsinki platform drivers were satisfied with being entrepreneur, which has been the existing model of employment in taxi sector. The drivers were ready to pay social insurance. Drivers reported being pleased with Uber’s smart technology with international customers in Finland.

Platform drivers in Saint Peterburg were vaguer and more unclear of their employment position, represented, for example, in “I’m just driving and earning” attitude. Drivers avoid contact to authorities, and they wish that a taxi park company, a mediating organization between the platform company and worker, fulfills a limited set of formal duties. Employment includes informality and shadow workers qualities, which also has been documented in the taxi sector earlier.

Our interviews indicate the importance of the existing regulatory frameworks for taxi sector employment in both contexts in Helsinki and in Saint Petersburg. While the change of taxi law can be seen as a window of opportunity for Uber to emerge in Finland, the operational context reflects existing regulatory framework. On the other hand, while in Russia Yandex has benefited from less regulation of the employment in the taxi sector, the shadow worker qualities have continued. Platform operators and employment may bring about and benefit from disruptive change, but as firms and employment they also continue and adjust to different regulatory, employment and operational environments and culture.

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### 11.03

## TRADE UNIONS’ RESPONSES TO THE CHALLENGES OF PLATFORM WORK IN FINLAND

**Sanna Saksela-Bergholm<sup>1</sup>, Markku Sippola<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland. <sup>2</sup>University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland*

### **Abstract**

The Digital economy, such as platform work is opening both new opportunities and challenges in form of non-standard forms of employment. These new forms of work challenge existing working conditions, collective bargaining agreements and other essential trade union functions. This paper looks into platform workers’ labor conditions and at trade unions’ responses to these conditions in the Finnish context. The objectives of this study are three-folded: First, we explore existing social partner discourses on platform work employment relationships; second, we analyse trade unions’ responses to work in terms of collective bargaining and social dialogue. Third, we compare and classify trade unions’ strategies to improve platform workers’ rights. The data will consist of interviews and strategy documents from trade unions and informal networks conducted in Finland. These questions are scrutinized in the Finnish context, but the findings are also compared with corresponding international data.

## IMMIGRANT WORKERS AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITIES IN LABOUR PLATFORMS IN FINLAND: EXAMPLES FROM FOOD DELIVERY AND RIDE-HAILING

**Arseniy Svyarenko<sup>1,2</sup>, Mikko Perkiö<sup>1</sup>, Benta Mbare<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Tampere University, Tampere, Finland. <sup>2</sup>Finnish Youth Research Network, Helsinki, Finland

### Abstract

The digital labor platforms often portray themselves as technology companies that offer a great degree of flexibility to workers in various spheres of the economy. However, in the certain types of low and moderately skilled platform work the architecture of platforms, their algorithms and practices significantly limit the autonomy of workers. The work autonomy is undermined by the digital surveillance, algorithmic management, high intensity of work, and lack of channels of communication from workers and the platform. Furthermore, labour platforms tend to transfer to workers a significant share of responsibilities for working conditions and means of production normally assumed by the employer. In the unidirectional communication through app interfaces platforms distribute tasks to workers, often without fully informing them on how jobs are distributed and how the decisions are made by the algorithmic managers that exercise extensive control over workers job performance and mobility.

In our paper we examine work autonomy, occupational identities and migratory status of workers who perform on-location platform determined work in Helsinki. We draw comparisons of working conditions in ride-hailing and food delivery in Helsinki. For vulnerable groups of immigrants and young people the platform work may lower the entry barriers to the labour market, may offer additional income, and opportunities to raise the social status. At the same time, the labour platforms also create various detrimental challenges to the workers' wellbeing, and reproduce the inequalities. We draw our conclusions from ethnographic interviews with 20 Uber drivers and 20 food delivery workers from Helsinki. For workers of immigrant background who often experienced limited access to labor market the ride-hailing and taxi work offered a perceived increase of social status. Due to specifics of national regulation Uber drivers are taxi entrepreneurs, their work is less dependent on the platforms, and they have greater work autonomy and strong occupational identity. At the expense of stress and exhaustion the delivery workers often combine delivery work with traditional part time employment with the aim of having access to occupational healthcare and other employees benefits. The grey areas in regulation of the platform work find their manifestation in the occupational identity confusion observed among some of delivery workers.

## THE MULTIVOICED NATURE OF PLATFORM WORK - WRITINGS AND DISCUSSION ON THE CURRENT PHENOMENON OF WORKING LIFE IN EUROPE

**Marja Rautajoki**

*University of Turku, Turku, Finland*

### Abstract

In my doctoral thesis, I study the discussion on platform work, its status and the meanings it receives from the perspective of different actors and influencers in the EU's economic and cultural area.

Platform work has become one of the key phenomena of the platform economy, and its importance is growing in the labour market, social debate, decision-making and legislation. The term platform work is used for a wide range of work, employment

and work tasks related to platforms, such as work performed in a platform company in an employment relationship (e.g. Google), the work intermediated by the platform (e.g. Uber) and the content providing work via the platform (e.g. Instagram) (e.g. Kenney, Rouvinen & Zysman 2020, 17). What these different forms of work and platforms have in common is that they have created a new way of coordinating labour supply through emerging technologies. The latest research shows that digital platforms are changing the supply of work by increasing the opportunities to seek short-term work, but at the same time offer the opportunity to evade regulation, such as taxation and social security, thereby undermining the quality of employment. (Urzi Brancati, Pesole & Fernández Macías 2020, 3, 7-8; Eurofound 2018; Graham ym. 2020; Vandaele 2018.) Understanding the diversity of platform work requires a realistic understanding of its current prevalence, factors contributing to and hindering spread, economic and social impacts and future prospects. (e.g. Alasoini 2018, 74-75, 88; Eurofound 2018, 59-66; European Commission 2021a; Schoukens 2021, 309-311.)

According to the European Commission's statement published on 24th February 2021, platform work and improving the conditions of platform workers have risen to the European Commission's main topics and objectives. Platform work is therefore a topical, multidisciplinary and international research subject that deserves to be examined in the context of linguistics as well. Research on working life from the perspective of linguistics has recently been carried out on, for example, multilingualism and multilingual jobs in working life (e.g. Meyer & Apfelbaum 2010), on language skills needs in working life (e.g. Breckle & Schlabach 2017), special linguistic activities in working life (e.g. Vine 2020; De Silva & Thomson 2016) and cultural differences (e.g. Tiittula 2005). Workplace discussions, workplace speech, identity issues and conflict and dissent have also been studied linguistically (e.g. Vine 2017; Vine 2020). Several of these studies have analysed language and linguistic choices from the perspective of, for example, critical discourse analysis, gender studies, corpus linguistics or leadership research.

The research frame of my doctoral thesis differs from previous working life research in the field of linguistics, as multivoiced linguistic research on platform work based on discourse, text and content analysis in the EU context has not been carried out to the same extent and from a multi-set perspective. By analyzing the linguistic choices of texts and speech, it is possible to identify the meanings that are created for platform work in different contexts, as well as discourses on the phenomenon. Language and linguistic choices create perceptions of the world, maintain values and attitudes, and build people-to-people interactions and power relationships (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2019; Jokinen, Juhila & Suoninen 2016).

My research makes it possible to define the role of platform work from the point of view of public debate, employee, labour market and employer. To define the role, I seek to answer these main questions:

1. How is platform work described in the German-language written media in 2017-2021 and how have the meanings of platform work changed during the period?
2. How do platform workers talk about platform work in Finland and Germany?
3. How do actors in the international labour market position platform work?
4. What kind of representations are produced by platform companies related to employer image and social entity?

I examine these questions in four articles of my doctoral thesis, each of which approaches the discussion of platform work in a variety of perspectives. The first article examines newspaper articles on platform work in the German press in 2017-2021, the actors present in them, including contributions. In WORK2021, I plan to present the preliminary analysis and the data, and point out the certain discourses of the discussions concerning the pandemic.

The second article deals with the perspective of those working on the platforms, which is highlighted by analyzing interviews with employees working on the Upwork platform. The third article opens up the perspective of international labour market actors by analysing publications on the platform work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The aim of the fourth article is to assess the positioning and employer image of platforms offering platform work. The aim of my research is to produce a multi-voiced picture of platform work and discussion about it. To achieve this goal, the data from each article will be analysed using the same methodology, consisting of a combination of text analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis.

## GOVERNING REPUTATION, DISTURBANCES AND COMPETITION: HOW FREELANCERS ENCOUNTER FEATURES OF AN ONLINE LABOR MARKET PLATFORM IN ACTION?

**Laura Seppänen<sup>1</sup>, Hanna Toivainen<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland.* <sup>2</sup>*Tampere University, Tampere, Finland*

### Abstract

In its triangular arrangement logic consisting of the online labor market (OLM) platform, clients and workers, platforms reduce the cost of the transaction, making it peer-to-peer and decentralized (Acquier et al. 2017). Sundararajan (2016) argues that the forms of commerce and of employment in the sharing economy are not new, but the sharing with strangers and the scale of sharing are new. The commercial sharing and transactions are enabled by e.g. technologies, user feedbacks and creating necessary trust between strangers.

Vallas and Schor (2020) depict online labor platforms as “permissive potentiates”, an instable economic and organizational form that qualitatively differs from market, hierarchy and network forms. On the one hand, the OLM platform company aims to increase income and value for shareholders. Its income generation is dependent on the amount of transactions and data, both of which are collected from platform users. The bigger the user ecosystem, the more profitable is the platform. On the other hand, users are there voluntarily. Indeed, as autonomy is highly appreciated by the workers, platforms have to be permissive and build mechanisms allowing autonomy and freedom of choice for users. Still, platforms need to set limits to users’ autonomy, not least to govern the balance between supply and demand on their platform market. Overall, supply exceeds demand in virtual platform work, and this has intensified during COVID-19 era (ILO 2021). Also, the heterogeneity of users (Vallas and Schor 2020) also obliges platforms to limit users’ freedom.

In our presentation, we will study the features or mechanisms with which an OLM platform manages the complex contradictory elements and aims of its business, users and environment. We will do it by examining, how these complexities are manifested in the practices of freelancers’ work on a global OLM platform, and what actions and decisions freelancers take when encountering these complexities. Our presentation is a qualitative inquiry into workers’ concrete encounters with platform mechanisms when they pursue their objectives of gaining income, clients, and other heterogeneous aims. The findings are based on interview data of those working on the Upwork platform and residing in Finland, during years 2018-2019.

The findings will focus on three core themes that center around platforms’ intermediation between workers and buyers. The first theme focuses on the mechanisms around reputation building, such as customer feedback and platforms’ criteria for rating freelancers. Reputation of users on the platform is a many-sided currency in the platform activity: It is valuable data for the platform, indispensable for freelancers in the competition, and also a powerful way for the platform to bind users to its activity (Seppänen, Spinuzzi, Poutanen & Alasoini, 2021). For some freelancers, reputation building is the best thing on the platform, allowing them public visibility both inside and outside platform. For others, the algorithmic system of feedback and scores brings stressful uncertainty and a reason to leave the platform. The second theme involves the mechanisms mediating disturbances in the worker-client relation, such as alerts of misbehavior and conflict resolution. And thirdly, we will study, how freelancers deal with platform’s controlling, and in particular, the not-controlling, of the global competition between freelancers, and what are the consequences.

With these findings, the aim is to contribute to theorizing on the uncertainty, fragility, and potentials of online platform work, and to discuss its societal roles especially in the context of Nordic working life.



11.07

## PLATFORM-BASED FOOD-DELIVERY AS 'ESSENTIAL LABOUR' DURING PANDEMIC CRISIS: NEW RISKS, TEMPORAL CHANGES AND DIGITAL ALGORITHMS

**Delia Badoi, Ana Maria Preoteasa, Filip Alexandrescu**

*Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania*

### **Abstract**

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 produces a multitude of consequences on working life as we know it. Some of them caused economic vulnerabilities and uncertainty about the future of work in hard-hit industries, situated on the frontline of COVID-19 (ILO, 2020). For the categories of workers affected by unemployment or losing jobs during the pandemic, the food delivery platforms become a new source of revenue and a prospect for a temporary job (Badoi, 2020). The platform workers could never stop working during the lockdown periods or be organized for defending their labour rights (Altenried et al., 2020).

Previous studies (Pesole et al., 2018; Brancati et al., 2020; Polkowska, 2020) indicate that food-delivery platform workers are economically in a precarious situation, usually working in self-employment arrangements or mini-jobs along with insecure and temporary working contracts (Goods et al., 2019). The COVID-19 crisis emerged the increase in hourly-paid mini-jobs within the delivery industry as a partial countermeasure for the labour market. Working on delivery platforms means the registration through a digital application for additional earnings under the influence of an 'excellence score' (Veen et al, 2019). In many European countries, including Germany and the United Kingdom, the delivery platform workers are mostly immigrants, with social situations that prevent them from giving up delivery work during the COVID-19 pandemic (Morbiato, 2020; Altenried et al., 2020).

This paper focuses on the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food-delivery platform understood as 'essential labour' (Polkowska, 2020). We employ an ethnographic and interpretative methodological approach, analysing the levels of self-perceived economic precariousness and labour risks of Romanian food-delivery platform workers from two angles. We present first the interplay between the workers' subjective understandings of labour insecurity and exposure to new health risks as frontline workers. In the next step, we show how the pandemic reshaped the perception of temporality changes by modulating discourses about flexible working and algorithm' calculation of personal scores on the application. The methodological approach includes empirical data gathering from an ongoing online ethnographic study, using an interpretative methodology for conducting in depth-interviews with food-delivery platform workers from Romania. This paper presentation is part of ongoing research that investigates the relationship between challenges, insecurities and opportunities of the working conditions offered by delivery platforms in Romania. The research project focuses on alternative strategies of neoliberal flexible employment and new economic vulnerabilities mediated by technological changes.

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11.08

## GENDERED ASPECTS OF MICROWORK PLATFORMS

**Asmita Bhutani**

*University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada*

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the gendered aspects of microwork platforms. Microwork includes standardized, fragmented and repetitive tasks such as labelling objects in images and videos, recording utterances and translating texts that eventually feed automated machine learning software for driverless cars, drones, speech recognition speakers and other tech products. Emerging research by digital sociologists suggests that there are millions of hidden low-paid workers in countries in the Global South as India, the Philippines and Kenya performing microwork to cater to the growing demands of machine learning companies in the Global North. Existing studies using a gender lens focus on issues of the digital divide mainly referring to access to the internet, the

conflation of home and workplace, the algorithmic bias in hiring and task distribution. The literature mostly misses analysis of both the relation between the labour market and patriarchal societies as well as gendered subjectivities that one brings to/ experiences at work. Using the case of microwork platforms in India, I highlight the gendered aspects of these platforms.

Platforms as infrastructures allow for geographically dispersed workers and an algorithmic distribution of tasks. The model is exploitative as it promotes the replaceability of workers. As infrastructures, platforms displace the physical workplace. This alters the mobility of workers across spaces. Women, in patriarchal societies traditionally worked in agriculture or in domestic work, both requiring them to be geographically limited and hence restrict mobility. Due to the feminist struggles across the 1960s and 70s combined with increasing demand in manufacturing and service sectors, women increasingly became mobile and travelled to the workplace which also granted more visibility. Visibility in the workforce also meant increasing participation in worker struggles (even though minimal in comparison to working men) and hence, demanding (and in many cases achieving) labour rights as increasing social security, paid childcare leave, paid maternity and employer-sponsored health insurance at least in the formal sectors and increasingly in many informal sector public and private companies as well. Platforms with their dispersed workers and decomposed tasks model encourage mostly home-based work. This work reverses the rights attained over decades by feminist struggles. Instead, it pushes workers towards insecure and precarious work that makes home, the site of work. For women in patriarchal societies, the home has been historically the most exploitative site when it comes to women's economic and political position.

Platforms as mediators transform social relations between the employer and employee making these relations hidden and impersonal. Microwork platforms signify feminized work in the service sector where these infrastructures also build on the traditional social relations of workplace violence and surveillance that are necessary to sustain piece wages and absence of worker rights or benefits. The largely invisible platform labour process enables misclassification of workers, fragmentation of tasks and alienation from the larger tech industry. This invisibility proliferates the exclusion of platforms from labour laws and policies. What does this mean for women in this workforce? Women, who already lack representation and participation in unions are at a disadvantage and violence against women that occurs on the platform or due to the platforms in their homes, are out of the purview of state response.

Microwork, as low skill work, enables an easier entry point for women with incomplete educational milestones (considering overall low literacy rates of females in India). In that, it contributes to maintaining a permanently deskilled gendered workforce. Positioned as flexible, low skill work, it is likely to also burden women's overall working time further and become a quicker exit route from the labour market in the absence of adequate social support. Further, to get back into the workforce, say after a childcare break, in a better-skilled job would require reskilling initiatives which in most countries in Global South is hardly ever state-sponsored. The likelihood of then re-entering the labour market remains low.

The political economy of these platforms in India remains unexplored from a feminist and materialist framework. The interdisciplinary approach of the paper helps bring together research from digital sociology, political economy, gendered violence and agendas of active labour struggles for platform workers. As the pandemic continues, traditional service sectors with substantial participation of women are turning into platform work. The focus of the paper is microwork platforms but holds implications for the gendered impact of platformization of work in general for research and activism.

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11.09

## **NAVIGATING THE AFTERMATH OF CAPITAL MOBILITY OF IN THE GIG ECONOMY: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT ON WORKERS AND THEIR RESISTANCE IN THE GTA, CANADA**

**Youngrong Lee**

*University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada*

### **Abstract**

While we know a great deal about global capital mobility in traditional industries such as the manufacturing industry, we know very little about yet emerging capital mobility in the gig economy and its impact on worker subjectivity and collective

action. Using the case of Canadian Foodora, a multinational platform that left Canada in 2020, but the gig workers are still unionizing, I situate global capital mobility in the local labour market. Drawing upon participatory ethnography of a gig workers' union and interviews with organizers and former Foodora couriers, I investigate two-level impacts of the exit of a powerful global platform on the individual level and the collective level. The findings reveal unexpected parallel impacts of the local embeddedness between capital mobility in the gig economy and traditional industries. The economic and social effects and the emotional attachment of devoted gig workers debunk the dominant discourse that gig workers are simply part-time workers free from commitment. The impacts are salient for financially dependent and organized gig workers. Although a platform's capital mobility in part halts and discourages gig worker resistance, the union navigates it by pushing forward social unionism, building an industrial union of gig workers in Canada, and a worker-owned co-op.

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11.10

## CAN EMPLOYEE STATUS WORK IN THE PLATFORM ECONOMY? A CASE STUDY IN SWITCHING FROM INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR TO EMPLOYEE STATUS

Hannah Johnston<sup>1</sup>, Lidong Chen<sup>1</sup>, Juliet Schor<sup>2</sup>, Ozlem Ergun<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Northeastern University, Boston, USA. <sup>2</sup>Boston College, Boston, USA

### Abstract

Employment status has been at the crux of debates about the viability of the platform economy. Platforms have argued that formal employment is incompatible with firms' needs and drivers' desires, and that workers are, and should be treated as, self-employed independent contractors. Employment, they argue, could hinder firm productivity and would curtail working time flexibility, a feature that is seen as key to attracting a workforce. Critics, on the other hand, have frequently argued that platform workers' decisions about work schedules and working time are driven primarily by when jobs are available, not by workers' desires or preferences for flexible work. While this debate has been dynamic, opportunities to conduct a data-driven assessment of the merits of these arguments are rare and few opportunities to measure the impacts of employment status on working time flexibility and firm productivity exist.

This paper presents a case study of a US-based delivery platform that engaged workers under both formal employment and independent contractor regimes. The case is unique natural experiment of a company that shifted a portion of its independent contractor workforce to formal employment before the passage of AB-5 legislation in California. Drawing on administrative data, which includes information on delivery routes and drivers' schedules, and on interviews with drivers and middle and upper-level management, this paper tests a series of hypotheses related to flexibility and firm productivity. Hypotheses are tested in two ways. We compare data from the same regions over time (while workers were independent contractors and after they became employees); we also compare data from select cities in California, where drivers were employees, with other regions of the United States where drivers remained independent contractors. While the dataset is not inclusive of worker earnings, working time and route data are fundamental components of firm cost; thus, improved workforce utilization and minimizing waste within the system suggests increases in firm productivity. Meanwhile, by examining patterns in working time between independent contractors and employees, we are able to determine what, if any, impact employment status has on workers' total working hours and on the variability of their work schedules. Our findings reveal that, owing to improved worker performance and productivity, company management viewed the introduction of formal employment favorably. Additionally, we find that the switch to employment status did not significantly alter drivers' working time.

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## AN UNEASY FUSION OF GAME WORK AND GIG WORK: PLATFORM GAME WORK IN CHINA

**Mengyang Zhao**

*University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA*

### **Abstract**

The debate of gig economy skews toward male-dominated and geographically tethered job categories with a tendency of monotonizing the labor processes and conditions. Inspired by the nascent academic efforts to expose the diverse labor regimes and subjectivities under platform economy (Gray and Suri 2019; Milkman et al. 2020; Schor et al. 2020; Ticona and Mateescu 2018), this article introduces and analyzes the distinct features of platform video game work in China, a novel type of platform economy rooted in the special formation of the Chinese gaming market as well as the precarious labor regime. Platform game work encompasses a wide array of online video game services including but not limited to live game streaming, power levelling and game companion that match customers' demands with individual workers. With the precipitous rise of eSports, platform game work has developed into the defining feature of the Chinese video game industry during the past decade, luring millions of young gamers to become digital laborers. It is estimated that in live game streaming alone, there are more than 3 million active streamers in 2020, attracting an incredible 350 million viewers (iResearch 2020).

This article constitutes a preliminary prism to illuminate the unique labor processes and inner stratification in the newly emerged gig game sector in China. Platform game work shares characteristics of traditional game development work as well as mainstream gig work, but is conspicuously overlooked by both realms of study. A thorough investigation of platform game work foregrounds new perspectives in the labor analysis of video games that are often fixated on labor identities, labor processes and social movements of formal game makers consisting of white-collar male laborers in post-industrial economies (Bulut 2020; Ruffino and Woodcock 2020). Recentering academic attention on platform game work divulges the increasingly rampant internal segregation within the video game industry, as more temporary, contract, outsourced, women and immigrant labor are recruited to construct, promote and sustain the booming market at an unprecedented pace (Bulut 2015; Ozimek 2019). In a parallel vein, platform game work possesses the potential to enhance and critically interrogate the study of platform economy, as its changing platform architecture induces distinct laboring experiences that contribute to the multiple ways in which we imagine the future of gig work and automation.

In this paper, I begin with a review of extant scholarship on game work and platform economy, followed by data and methods. After an overview of the compositions of video game industry in China that lay a fertile ground for the burgeoning of platform game work, the article details three salient features that set platform game work in China apart from other gig work: the common occurrence of extra mediators, the hybrid use of human labor and algorithms in order matching and community regulation, and the mutual reinforcing of fast-moving platform architecture and workers' mobility across platforms, which stifles workers' possibility for rights seeking and collective actions. Pinpointing these unique features, this article calls for a more fine-grained analysis of both game work and gig work, to divulge the inner contradictions and stratification especially when the two intersect.

## THE POWERS OF UNCERTAINTY IN TELECARE

**Joni Jaakola**

*University of Turku, Turku, Finland*

### **Abstract**

Recently, technologically mediated 'telecare' solutions have become popular in achieving care to be more efficient, productive, and targeted in times of economic austerity and care deficit in ageing populations. While telecare has been implemented into care work, caring has increasingly become a practice of managing risks. This article draws from ethnographic research on

the telecare solution Elsi in a care home setting and illuminates the properties of telecare as a form of risk management. The argument is, that telecare practices deal in many ways with 'uncertainty work' that produces epistemological, ontological and ethical uncertainties: uncertain knowledge, uncertain entities, and uncertain values. These uncertainties produce outcomes such as 'a productivity trap' which accomplishes the care worker as an entrepreneur while diminishing the responsibilities of care organizations and institutions.

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14.09

## HOW E-HEALTH CAN CHANGE DEMAND AND CONTROL: EXPERIENCES FROM HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS' MONITORING PATIENTS THROUGH DIGITAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**Lena Petersson, Gudbjörg Erlingsdóttir, Christofer Rydenfält, Björn Ekman**

*Lund University, Lund, Sweden*

### **Abstract**

The technological developments in the e-health sector are enabling new and more advanced methods to monitor and care for patients digitally. The general purpose of digital care is to dismantle the constraints of time and space between the provider and the patient. This in turn leads to a possible reallocation of resources to those parts of care where they are needed the most. For the healthcare professionals this transition may imply a shift from personal meetings with the patient to digital communication; from measuring various parameters themselves to receiving health data reported by the patients; from booked patient meetings to a more continuous monitoring of the patient's data and that an algorithm in the digital system suggests which patient(s) should be prioritized. This type of healthcare is a growing area of e-health and patient studies are currently performed to measure the medical effects of digital care systems.

One example of such a patient study is SMART HF II; a randomized controlled trial study that was conducted in Region Skåne, Sweden. The aim of the study was to investigate if the e-health solution LifePod® increases patients' knowledge, compliance and quality of life, and thereby affects readmission and care visits. LifePod® is an e-health solution that enables the exchange of information and communication between healthcare professionals and patients. All patients have their unique care profile in the system where they report their health parameters. An algorithm creates visualizations of the patients' condition and makes an evaluation of which patients should be prioritized. However, the study does not include how healthcare professionals experience this transition from traditional care to digital care. As this is a new area within e-health there is limited knowledge about how systems such as LifePod® affect healthcare professionals' work environment.

In the research project "Between Pod and Patient – what happens when care becomes digital?" we aim to investigate how the healthcare professionals' work changes when care becomes digitalized. The objective of this paper is to present data from a pilot study that explores how the healthcare professionals' experience the implementation of LifePod® using the demand, control model as a theoretical lens (Karasek, 1979).

### **Methodology**

Interviews were conducted in three healthcare settings in Region Skåne. All three settings participated in the SMART HF II study. In total, we conducted 19 interviews, sixteen semi-structured in-depth interviews with practitioners and three additional interviews with other stakeholders, including the doctor that is responsible for the SMART HF II study, the nurse that operationalized the study and a representative from the company behind LifePod®

The interview guide consisted of the following themes: an introduction about the role and duties of the healthcare professional and the organization of the work in the healthcare setting, the healthcare professionals work and communication with patients and colleagues, the use of LifePod® and finally some concluding questions. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed with support of the demand and control model.

## Research outcomes

The results show that the professionals, generally, express themselves in positive terms about the shift towards digital care. This includes being able to provide care that is based on up-to-date information and the present needs of each patient. They also state that a major advantage of LifePod® is the feeling of control that the system offers by its overview of the patient data. The professionals also describe that they, by looking at the data, can evaluate the medical status of the patients providing an increased sense of security to them.

The algorithm in LifePod® creates visualizations of the individual patient's condition and the system ranks different patients' need for care. When the nurses log into the system they thus see an overview of their patients' data and their needs screen through a colouring scheme. The signals indicate whether actions, ranging between no action to immediate actions, are needed. As the patients' entries of data into the system are voluntary and not scheduled, the nurses neither know the number of patients who have reported data nor how much of the reported data will demand actions on their behalf, when they log in to the system. This, in turn, can make it problematic for them to plan their time schedule visavi other work routines as, for instance, planned patient visits.

Being responsible for the system and for responding to the patients' data may, in turn, be interpreted as increased demands on the nurses. The results thus indicate that LifePod® may change the work conditions of the professionals, mostly in a positive way but also in a more complicated way regarding both control and demands, in some dimensions. In the presentation we will analyse and discuss this complexity in more depth.

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## 14.10

# EXOSKELETONS – SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT CARE WORKERS' PHYSICAL RESILIENCE?

**Riika Saurio, Lea Hennala, Satu Pekkarinen, Helinä Melkas**

*LUT University, Lahti, Finland*

## Abstract

Care work involves various physically strenuous stages. Tools of different kinds, like cranes, are used to facilitate these work stages. In the stages for which no suitable tool exists, the caregiver's physical strength is used as an aid. That easily leads to injuries, sick leaves and early exits from work life. Exoskeletons, a form of wearable robotics, can be one solution to support the resilience of care workers by reducing physical exertion. Exoskeletons are external mechanical structures that support human posture or motion. Exoskeletons are used in other fields, such as industry, with good results. However, still little is known about the use of exoskeletons in supporting care work (Turja et al. 2020).

Integrating technology into care work is a question of mutual adjustments between technologies and various work practices. Thus, to get the full benefit from the physical support brought by an exoskeleton, it is necessary to take into account a number of related issues affecting the integration of technologies into care services, such as willingness to use them, practical suitability, workflow integration, and the role of social environment.

To investigate such issues, we conducted a field study concerning user experiences with Laevo exoskeleton in geriatric work. Laevo helps reduce lower back load. The research was done in three care homes in Finland, and eight care workers (N=8) participated. Each care worker used Laevo for one week. The care workers were interviewed before and after the trial period and they kept a diary during the trial. The main focus of the research was user experiences during the implementation process.

The results of the field study showed, for instance, that in certain moves and positions, Laevo was felt to be useful, but there were also many issues to be developed. The development needs of Laevo that emerged in the study are mainly focused on the appearance, wearability and usability of the device as well as client and worker safety.

Concerning *usability*, Laevo was perceived to be light enough, but its appearance was desired to be sleeker. A sleeker appearance was estimated to increase the device's comfort and wearability and to attract less embarrassing attention from fellow human beings. In addition, it was hoped that the exoskeleton could be worn under work clothes. Behind this desire, there is a need to have a less obtrusive dress but also the *avoidance of danger*. The torso structures of the device may get stuck in the work environment or, for example, clients may grab them. It is also perceived as a matter of increasing the safety of the use that the device would enable a quick response to changes in the environment.

Care workers found it unfortunate that it is slow to put on the exoskeleton or take turns using it among the care workers in the middle of busy care work. It was hoped that the necessary adjustments could be made to the exoskeleton already before putting it on and that the scale would be visible in the strap adjustments. It was also suggested that each care worker would have their own exoskeleton. In addition, the human physique and the material of the undergarments were felt to affect the usability of the exoskeleton.

Related to *social environment* issues, most of the clients did not pay any attention to the use of the exoskeleton, but some of them commented that the care worker looks like a robot when wearing the device. The care workers reported that some clients were quite suspicious. The reason for this may be that when the care workers wore the exoskeleton, their appearance came across as clumsy and awkward. The study also revealed that the clients showed compassion toward the care workers who "had to use" the exoskeleton.

The role of *orientation* and proper familiarisation to the device was considered a critical issue. The care workers hoped that orientation would be given simultaneously for the whole workplace. This would allow for both peer learning and the opportunity to help others and get help yourself. "Learning by doing" was felt important.

In this study, we identified some of the requirements and potential restrictions of exoskeleton use in care work, which has been an almost untouched research field so far. The implementation of exoskeletons could potentially support care workers' physical resilience and prolong their careers and reduce the future lack of care work professionals. The market of exoskeletons is growing, and products have already been developed that are lighter and can be used under the clothing. However, in addition to the technical usability issues, there are various workflow-related challenges to solve, so that technology does not remain unused for such reasons. The role of care management and various policy issues are also crucial in their integration.

**Key words:** exoskeleton, care work, user experience, requirements, restrictions

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## 14.11

# MORE TIME FOR EMPATHY OR MORE TIME FOR TECHNOLOGY? HOMECARE WORKERS IN TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

**Inka Koskela, Marja Känsälä, Eveliina Saari**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

## **Abstract**

**Motivation** – Elderly care services are facing growing challenges of provision in our aging society. This is due to the increase of the elderly population, new user segments, and shortages of financial and human resources in organizing the health and care services. The solution to these shortages is believed to be found in smart care technologies and their implementation in elderly care services (Kovalainen et al. 2021).

Technology providers often make a promise that the smart care technologies improve quality, availability, and cost-efficiency of elderly care. Once routine and technical tasks are delegated to technologies, workload of the workers will be eased, and more time will be released for human-to-human encounters, caring, and empathy, which are in the core of care work. However, previous case studies (Bergschöld 2018; Ertner 2019; Hamington 2018; Kamp & Hansen 2019) have shown that these promises are not easily fulfilled. Instead, technologies and their implementation in care work have added new tasks to already strained workers. It is also suggested that the implementation of technologies contributes to a larger change in work, *'a transformation*

of what care and care work is about' (Kamp et al. 2019, 1). In our study, we aim to explore how homecare workers themselves perceive and experience the technological changes in their daily work.

**Theoretical framework** – Our theoretical framework consists of different frameworks including processual organizational thinking (Hernes 2007; Langley & Tsoukas 2010), theories of agency (Emirbayer & Mische 1998; Archer 2003), and studies theorizing empathy (e.g., Bowe 2019; Fortin et al. 2020). In the literature review we will search previous studies on empathy, technology, and interaction in homecare (e.g., Strandberg et al. 2012). With the help of this multi-approach, we aim to understand care work and caring as a situated, relational, and material activity constructing the organizational and institutional reality that is not pre-existing nor stable but is constantly *in the making* (Hernes 2007) as the people are actively engaged in shaping technologies and learning with and about them.

**Research questions** – In our study, we explore, how the use of homecare technologies transforms organizing of the care work and what are the benefits and pitfalls of using technology in care work. In this paper we focus on the following research questions: 1) What kinds of technologies homecare workers use in their daily work? 2) How do the homecare workers perceive the use of homecare technologies and their potential impact in the care work? 3) How do the care professionals in telecare and face-to-face care understand the ideals of 'good care' and 'empathy in care work'?

**Data and analysis** – The empirical data has been collected in 2021 in four worksites providing homecare services in two municipalities in Finland. One of the sites is dedicated providing solely telecare services for the homecare clients, while three other units provide homecare for the elderly in their own home. In each site, care work is supported by different homecare technologies facilitating e.g., communication between the clients and the homecare personnel, and independent living, functioning, and security of the elderly people. The qualitative research data consist of thematic interviews with homecare workers (n=12) and telecare workers (n=5). The data will be analyzed using inductive content analysis by focusing on care professionals' perceptions and experiences about the technological transformation of their daily work.

**Expected results** – Based on preliminary findings, and as opposed to general concern, a shift from face-to-face care visits to video-mediated telecare does not imply a shift from human-centered and emphatic care to distant and emotionally cold care. The telecare workers report that the video-mediated interaction is radically different from the interaction with clients taking place during the home visits. Video-mediated care seems to deepen the client-care worker interaction and their social connection, as the technology mediation enables the care professionals to concentrate solely on the clients' issues and worries and nothing else. Thus, the video-mediated telecare creates a unique form of care and re-organizes 'care time'.

Along the benefits experienced at the level of client-care worker relationship, the homecare technologies also bring forward some pitfalls, as they add new tasks and new divisions of labor among the homecare professionals. Those visiting at homes are now supposed to take care of the client, functioning of the technology, and the client's know-how in using the homecare technologies.

**Discussion** – We reflect how the use of technology changes work, agency of the homecare workers, and their relationship with the clients. The analysis of the interviews also enables us to specify the next phase in the data collecting: ethnographic observations on homecare work. Within the analysis, we will identify moments worth observing during the working shifts to understand how homecare technologies change and have an impact on the care work and client relationships in practice.

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14.12

## SOCIAL MEDIA – A TOOL FOR CARE WORKERS FOR CONSTITUTING CARE AND ELDERLY CARE ORGANIZATIONS

**Vilja Rydman<sup>1</sup>, Anu Sivunen<sup>2</sup>, Eveliina Saari<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Finnish Institute of Occupational health, Helsinki, Finland. <sup>2</sup>University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

### Abstract

Elderly care in Finland is in crisis. The Finnish population is aging at an accelerating pace and the concern is to get adequate and high-quality care in the future for everyone in need. Lack of resources and qualified and skilled workforce is already a



challenge and this shortage will mostly increase in the future. But the crisis of care cannot be simplified solely to shortage of resources, as several other factors are also in play in the crisis (Kovalainen, 2020). Furthermore, the care work is changing with new technological applications becoming more common. More and more functions are being supported by smart technology (e.g. video communication, medicine dispenser robotics, telemedicine, chatbots, patient record systems). The implementation and use of new technologies also demand care workers to adapt, learn, and actively modify new skills and maybe to have a new mindset for care work (Saari et al 2020).

In our paper, we focus on the use of social media in an elderly care organisation. Care for the elderly is not considered among the most attractive topics on social media. The attractiveness of the elderly care sector to potential new employees is declining although the need for labour increases. The reputation of employers in the sector has suffered. For example, a reputation measurement conducted by T-Media (Helsingin Sanomat 29.10.2019) revealed that two large care companies received top positions as the most ill-reputed companies when Finns rated the integrity of companies.

In this paper, we focus on how elderly care workers use social media in constituting care and elderly care organisations. We are interested in how social media posts construct and shape the ways elderly care is seen on social media and how care workers' roles and elderly care organizations are constituted through these posts. We are also interested in how care workers construct and enact engagement through communicating for and about their work on social media.

Our research question is: how care workers perceive the role of social media in constituting care and elderly care organisations?

### **Theoretical approach**

We draw on the theoretical perspective of communication constituting organisations (CCO) which takes the approach that communication is not seen as something that happens inside the organisation, but it is a process in which organisations are experienced and identified (Coreen & al. 2011).

As an organisational phenomenon, we approach communication both as a process and a product (van Zoonen & Banghart 2018; Fairhurst & Putnam 2004; 2014) meaning that the role of care workers and the work they do are constantly constructed through their work-related social media use, but these social media posts also constitute and bring care organizations into existence to wider public. Looking organisations as discursive constructs is the starting point for the whole CCO perspective (Putnam & Fairhurst 2015), which will help us understand how care work and different tasks of elderly care are constructed on social media.

### **Data and methods**

We apply in-depth, qualitative methods to understand the daily role of social media and how care workers use it on daily basis. Our case organisation is a Finnish elderly care organisation called with pseudonym "Haven of Tranquillity". The organisation is a forerunner of use of social media in elderly care and very active in different social media channels (YouTube, Twitter and Facebook). They also organise lots of events through their social media channels for people outside their own organisation. Twitter is an important and active channel for this organisation.

We interviewed 8 care workers and 5 supervisors in the Haven of Tranquillity on themes such as the change of work and technology-mediated communication; use of social media; learning and professional agency; relationship with clients and empathy; a sense of community and well-being at work. One part of the interviews was to reflect a tweet made by a care worker working at Haven of Tranquillity. The data collection is ongoing and will also include ethnographic video observation of care workers' working days and technology use situations. These observations and initial analyses will also be reflected together with research partners to enable learning. We will also collect a sample of social media data from the Haven of Tranquillity's official Twitter stream.

### **Expected results and discussion**

Our initial analysis indicates that the managers and care workers pose different meanings to using social media as a task, tool, and representation of elderly care. Care workers and supervisors perceive social media's role in constituting care and elderly care organisations in various ways. Social media posts can shape the ways care and care organisations are seen in public but also how their work is seen from inside the organisation and by care workers themselves.

We discuss how using social media changes care work and management of care organisations from CCO perspective. We will also identify critical points, which should be observed in care work as our research proceeds.

## TECHNOLOGY AS A MODIFIER OF TRUST: HOME CARE WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF TECHNOLOGY USAGE

**Joonas Karhinen**

*University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland*

### Abstract

In Finland, the growing demand for care services for older people and the scarcity of public resources have led to significant policy challenges for the elderly care in recent decades. The “aging-in-place” policy has put more emphasis on home care, which has increased the share of home care in the provision of services. At the same time, the role of digitalization in elderly care services has become more significant which has been presented as one key solution for the challenges. These policy developments have affected especially the home care services.

In this article, I examine the experiences of home care workers' usage of digital technology in their work from the perspective of trust. My research questions are:

1. What meanings do home care workers ascribe to digital technologies and how do these meanings reflect trust in their work?
2. In what ways do the technologies support or undermine their trust experience in care work?

The dataset consists of open-ended answers about emotional experiences of technology usage in the context of Finnish home care work (n = 570). The answers are drawn from the Eldercare Work and Technology survey collected in 2019. The data is analyzed using a method of thematic analysis, and paying particular attention to the situations and meanings related to the use of technology and further, trust from different perspectives.

The rapid digitalization affects the conditions of home care work and the implementation of care. Utilization of technology is linked to the objectives and reforms of the care policy. Therefore, it is also essential to look at the role of technology in building trust among home care services. The connection between trust and digitalization as well as the digitalization of home care work have both been studied to some extent in recent years, but research examining all of these in same research has still been quite limited. This research will increase knowledge and understanding of the connections between digitalization, trust and home care.

Different technologies are an everyday part of home care work nowadays and they affect care work in many ways. For example, technology brings new competence requirements to employees and as a result, technology transforms the professional competence and adaptability needed in care work. Different technologies have a direct impact on care work, as the performance of work tasks in a high-quality and required manner may depend on this technology. Technology is also present in the care situation with an elderly client and may therefore affect care relation between care worker and client.

Trust is generally defined from an individual's perspective as a means of managing vulnerability or social risk. Different forms of trust can be distinguished: people-to-people trust (interpersonal), trust in institutions and trust in organizations. In addition to trust, it is important to consider the individual's confidence and how this is related to the formation of trust in different forms. Mutual trust between the care giver and the care recipient is important in care relationship, because the latter has to trust the person taking care for them. This is also strongly influenced by the trust in care organizations and the care service system.

The preliminary research findings show, that the home care workers' ascribed meanings for technology can be considered as expressions of different forms of trust. Technology is a modifier or mediator of trust between care worker, clients and organization, but often it is also expressed as an object of trust in itself. Technology affects employees' confidence and self-efficacy as users of technologies, which is related to professional competence and the reliability of technology. Technologies, especially mobile phones with client information and enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, are present during client visits and may disrupt the care situation. Poor reliability of technologies due to connection problems or software malfunctions reduce the employee's ability to perform work tasks and to provide quality care to the client. These systems organize the working day schedule, client list and work tasks. Schedules do not take into account needed time per client or that the work conditions that may change. The lack of training and inadequate familiarity with the use of technology also creates problems for the care worker, which also harms confidence and self-efficacy. This negative spiral may undermine trust among home care and in the whole care service system as an institution, and therefore further affect its legitimacy and public image.

## WORKING FROM HOME: ADAPTATION DUE TO COVID 19 HEALTH POLICIES AND WORKER WELLBEING

**Alda Santos<sup>1,2</sup>, Vânia Carvalho<sup>1</sup>, Maria José Chambel<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Psychology, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal. <sup>2</sup>School of Healthcare, Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal, Setúbal, Portugal

### Abstract

In early 2020, due to COVID 19 pandemics, health policy issues dictated social distancing and lockdown, which was extended to work domain in occupations where teleworking (i.e., remote working, outside an employer's office and using information and communications technologies) was applicable. Consequently all work that could be executed remotely shifted from office to home. Therefore workers, mostly without previous experience of teleworking, had to quickly adapt to this new working reality. If undoubtedly more safe and with opportunity to manage their work life in a more flexible way, novice teleworkers shifted suddenly and somewhat unwillingly to a work situation characterized by different conditions and resources compared to previous office life. Furthermore, working from home implies permanent co-existence of members of the household, that possibly need to share technology resources. Also, parents need to provide care and/or assistance with their children's schooling. Overall teleworking may also contribute to a more difficult management of boundaries between nonwork and work domains. All these circumstances previously mentioned (e.g., novelty and sudden onset, interference with personal life) may impact worker wellbeing.

Our project aimed to study the impact of telework during the first period of isolation due to COVID 19 (March 2020), exploring the following research questions: What are the average levels of wellbeing indicators (namely burnout and work engagement) among teleworkers? Are there identifiable profiles that distinguish healthy teleworkers (i.e., low burnout and high work engagement levels) from workers considered to be at risk (i.e., high burnout and low work engagement levels)? How are teleworkers managing and balancing their work and personal lives? And, lastly, does supervisor support show positive associations with workers' wellbeing and work-nonwork balance?

Data was obtained with the voluntary participation of 372 teleworkers from four Portuguese services organizations. The online survey was accessed through a link, guaranteeing participant privacy and confidentiality, and included the following scales: Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure, Utrecht Work Engagement Brief Scale, work-family balance scale, and supervisor support scale.

Our sample is mainly of female gender (76.1%) and about half report parenting responsibilities (50.8%), of which 51.1% report having their children at home as well. For most participants (79.8%) this was their first teleworking experience. As for wellbeing indicators, averages of burnout and work engagement indicate the sample globally shows no signs of chronic stress and reports being engaged and feeling motivated by their work. As for a combined indicator of wellbeing, healthy teleworkers (reporting low burnout and high work engagement levels) represented 61.8%, compared to 38.2% workers that report higher average levels of burnout and slightly lower of work engagement. Although these last average levels are not critical, these workers may be at risk of developing more serious indicators of exhaustion. Concerning work-nonwork balance, teleworkers show an average level, which indicates participants consider adequate their equilibrium between work life and personal life, which is also related to their wellbeing. Supervisor support also showed positive relationships with work-nonwork balance, which, in turn, evidenced positive associations with teleworkers' wellbeing.

Teleworking does not seem to be a passing trend and therefore is crucial that organizations are aware of possible related effects, namely their working force wellbeing, which may reflect in worker performance. Our study shows supervisor support as an important element, that evidences positive associations with work-nonwork balance and worker wellbeing. Therefore it is important for organizations to enhance supervisor awareness of their crucial role in supporting their subordinates while teleworking. Organizations may also contribute to skill development in this area by giving their supervisors adequate training. Supervisor support may therefore reflect in more balanced work-nonwork lives and higher levels of energy and work engagement and motivation while teleworking. It is also noteworthy that workers report developing strategies to increase their own work-nonwork balance and wellbeing, such as establishing work schedules and workstations at home. As these strategies seem to contribute positively to worker wellbeing, organizations may also consider encouraging them and even, for example, organising workshops or forums among their workers for skill development and experience discussion.

## USING DRAMA-BASED METHODS TO ADDRESS THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

**Vincent Grosjean<sup>1</sup>, Béatrice Cahour<sup>2</sup>, Ophélie Morand<sup>2</sup>, Marc-Éric Bobilier Chaumon<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Nat. French Institute for research and safety, Vandoeuvre, France. <sup>2</sup>Ecole Télécom Paris / IPP, Paris, France. <sup>3</sup>Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris, France

### Abstract

From an occupational health perspective, current digital practices constitute a harsh problem: many negative outcomes are regularly pointed out.

For some authors, e-mail has become the metronome of executive's activity (Bretesché & al., 2012) because it has a direct impact on their professional practices, which will be organized around the management and constant prioritization of information received in a continuous flow mode.

Personal and subjective determinants, but also collective norms and organizational choices are intricately interwoven in such a way that workers can consider they have no other choice than to do so, despite an emerging awareness of adverse consequences of these current dominant practices.

Attempts to reduce those negative outcomes often have little impact. Our hypothesis here is that this absence of success could be partially overcome by mobilizing approaches that are radically different from those traditionally employed.

### Complexity

We all agree that we live in a world of complexity and that our relationships with digital tools are embedded in a complex net of interrelated issues. This observation should perhaps encourage us to get rid of analytical approaches to deal with the adverse effects of digitalization on work activities. Techniques and methods that encompass this dimension of complexity should be privileged (Morin . 2007).

### Low awareness of interactive practices – low opportunity to process differently

We have observed that the workers are initially only partially aware of what is wrong for them in their interactions with the digital media, as well as the root causes of their difficulty, not to mention the possibilities to proceed differently (Créno & Cahour, 2016). Modern tools, designed to be highly interactive, undoubtedly contribute to a pre-reflective – only partially aware- mode of interaction with tools used everyday.

### Intervention rationale – reflexivity and theater role

Then a preliminary goal of a sound intervention process should be “to raise the level of awareness” of the work processes and of their determination by digital constraints for the workers concerned by the intervention.

We wish to support the transition from a pre-reflected experience, inscribed in the action (what we do without knowing clearly how we do it, or what we perceive/think without knowing that we perceive/think it) to an experience accessible to reflective consciousness (Vermersch, 2012). This implies that workers go through a reflection process where they are focusing their attention towards their own experience.

To do this, we coach them in describing precisely which aspects of their relationship with digital technology is problematic and they would like to see changed with the intermediating aim of building a scene that illustrates concretely the difficulty they experience in their everyday life. The short scene will then allow them to reconstruct and project the complexity of what is at stake, and to visualize it from a remote, distanced perspective, allowing the reflexive process to take place.

### Intervention methodology

The intervention process could be understood as a succession of two phases during which collective elaboration takes place.

The first step of the intervention involves a group of employees of similar hierarchical level. They start by exchanging on what

is the problem in their work mediated by digital tools. They are then asked to elaborate and play collectively a short scene illustrating their difficulties.

During a second step, they will then play the scene in front of a larger group, which includes members of the board of managers, trade union representatives, as well as members of the HR management. The intervener will then play a role of moderator, leading the collective understanding of the difficulties at play by the larger group and, if solutions emerge, suggesting public members to test "on scene" the proposition, with the help of members of the first group of actors (The possibility to play concretely a proposed solution helped to realize some of the limitations of this solution).

## **Results**

Analysis of the interactions during the process of construction of the scene show how people exchange on how they see their situation, about their difficulties and possible solutions to cope with it. The very nature of the difficulties is explored deeply, and a broad spectrum of mutually reinforcing factors that create the unsatisfactory situation are progressively integrated in the scenario.

The collective analysis of the broader group integrating managers and decision makers leads to a rich representation of all the factors that lead to the problem as defined by the scene (in the case studied of spillover from the work sphere into the private) and allows for the collective construction of some possible solutions

## **Conclusion**

The methodology seems to meet the challenge of making it possible in a relatively short period of time to represent for oneself (i.e. for the first group ) and to represent for others (i.e. the larger group including decision makers) a complex set of intermixed factors at play to conduct to unsatisfactory digital use.

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# **HAPPY HOME OF ICE - EXPLORATION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF REMOTE WORKERS UNDER COVID-19**

**Heini Pensar**

*University of Vaasa, Vaasa, Finland*

## **Abstract**

### **Background and research purpose**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us are working from home. While remote working in earlier literature has been considered a benefit limited to few, it is now widely adopted as a mandatory form of work, likely to permanently affect the way we work in the future.

Literature to date is inconclusive on the risks and effects of remote working. While some studies indicate notable benefits (improved work-life balance and effectiveness), others warn for the latent risks connected to remote working (blurred boundaries, continuously switched-on). Literature to date regards remote working as a voluntary or partial arrangement, whereas new research is needed to build understanding of how work-life balance can be supported in the full-time and long term context of remote working. This study builds on the three dimensional balance construct by Casper et al (2017), proposing that employees evaluate the combination of their work and nonwork roles based on an affective factor (emotions), effectiveness factor (success) and involvement factor (engagement). Balance is achieved when individuals feel that these factors commensurate with the value they attach to the role. In this context, other empirical studies to apply the model in remote working have not been found, and this is the first study with such focus. This study also extends the literature on remote working in the context of COVID-19 and mandatory remote working.

The purpose of this study is to firstly describe specific features in remote working impacting the balance construct, secondly to explore how the work-nonwork balance is altered in remote working, and finally to understand the outcome of these changes.

## Content analysis

The analysis is based on 75 semi-structured interviews with home working employees (average age 41,7, 52% women, 28% represented supervisors) from 6 large-size corporations with operations in Finland.

## Findings

Working extensively and prolonged from home affects the employees possibilities to adapt time spent on work and leisure. Remote workers describe a good work-nonwork balance as experience of having sufficient resources and energy to manage both work and home related duties and responsibilities. The specific features of remote working described as promoters for the balance experience were found to be flexible work arrangements in terms of time and place, decreased commuting between home and office, less frequent travelling due to COVID-19 restrictions, increased autonomy and trust from employer as well as altered work-life policies that encouraged combine work and spare time activities during working hours.

On the basis of these features, the balance construct was affected in all of the three levels, the affective, effectiveness and involvement levels. The influence over the affective factors were described as increased happiness, as remote working gave them more in charge of their lives, in both domains. Some even felt happier in their marriages, and many expressed Additional positive affects toward their employer for showing trust and because of the new work-life policies supporting the reconciliation of work and nonwork demands.

The effectiveness factors were equally impacted in both the work and the home domain. Flexible work arrangement, in terms of place and time, allowed employees to work where and when it best suited them. For example, many felt they could work more effectively from home, since they could focus on work without interruptions. Others described they could attend home chores during the days and work when they felt most productive, e.g. early mornings. The primary change was connected to the employee's ability to impact own effectiveness by planning the day based on individual and family needs. Being able to effectively combine work and nonwork, the employees enjoyed improvements in both domains.

The Involvement factors were described as control over one's schedules and time allocation, which improved given the greater autonomy in working. A tangible example of it is the time recovered from commuting, which the employees could use for activities they valued, for some it had increased the working hours, and for others it meant additional time for rest and leisure. Working without spatial bounds also provided opportunities to be more present at home and for the family.

The remote workers described beneficial outcomes connected to their improved balance experience.

They reported positive impacts such as decreased stress levels, increased energy level at afterwork hours and improved life satisfaction. However, the work-nonwork balance was influenced by the way the individual chose and was able to manage the balance. The remote workers described the importance of self-established routines, control over workload and working hours and prevention of work intrusions into one's leisure. Similarly, they reported the significance of the employee's support, in permitting boundless working, showing trust, managing workload and having sufficient work-life culture and practices in place.

Based on the result we recommend employers to establish culture that emphasizes trust and employee autonomy, and supports flexible work arrangements (with work-life programs and benefits) and measures employee work-life balance as a key indicator of well-being.

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# POOR PSYCHOSOCIAL WORK ENVIRONMENT IS ASSOCIATED WITH MALADAPTIVE DECISION MAKING TENDENCIES IN EMPLOYEES

Meg Kiseleva<sup>1</sup>, Kevin Teoh<sup>1</sup>, Chris Dewberry<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Birkbeck, University of London, London, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Independent researcher, London, United Kingdom

## Abstract

Psychosocial work environment, including poor social support, job insecurity, and high job strain, is a significant risk factor to employee wellbeing and incidence of anxiety (Andrea et al. 2009; Murcia et al. 2013). Anxiety may result in changes in employees' decision making behaviour. Research has demonstrated that highly anxious individuals perceive ambiguous events as more threatening than those with low anxiety (Maner & Schmidt, 2006) and exhibit higher avoidance during periods of environmental stress (Mkrtchian et al. 2017), possibly because high risk perception is generally associated with risk-avoidant behaviour (Figner & Weber, 2011). Decision making is often marked by uncertainty, so anxiety may translate into a pattern of decision avoidance. The avoidance of decisions may in turn increase reliance on other people's support and reassurance in making them, thus leading to high decision dependence (Dewberry, Juanchich, & Narendran, 2013). Such behaviours are likely not only to hinder career progression, especially in fields that value independence and innovation, but also negatively affect organisational outcomes. This research examines the relationship between psychosocial work environment, anxiety, risk perception, and decision making. If maladaptive decision making tendencies, such as decision avoidance and dependence, can be decreased through improvements to work environment that result in reduced anxiety, it may enable staff to deal with day-to-day issues at work more effectively, potentially benefiting not only their performance and career prospects, but the organisation as a whole.

We have surveyed 122 people in full-time employment in the UK. Psychosocial work environment was measured by the *Recognition, Meaning of Work, Job Insecurity, Insecurity over Working Conditions, Horizontal Trust, Vertical Trust, Organizational Justice*, and *Sense of Community at Work* subscales of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ III, Llorens et al., 2019). Higher scores indicated poorer psychosocial work environment. The State-Trait Inventory for Cognitive and Somatic Anxiety (STICSA, Ree et al. 2008) was used to measure state anxiety. The instructions have been modified to refer to how participants have felt over the past 2 weeks when they have been at work. Decision making was measured using the *Avoidant* and *Dependent* subscales of the General Decision-Making Style (GDMS) questionnaire (Scott & Bruce, 1995). Risk perception was measured by *Ethical, Financial, and Social* subscales of the Domain-Specific Risk-Taking (DOSPRT) scale (Blais & Weber, 2006). The study has been pre-registered at <https://osf.io/f8beh>.

A mediation model was tested in R using package lavaan 0.6-7 with psychosocial work environment as the independent variable, decision avoidance as the dependent variable, and anxiety as a mediator. Anxiety fully mediated the relationship between psychosocial work environment and decision avoidance and was positively associated with decision avoidance. A serial mediation model was tested with psychosocial work environment as the independent variable, anxiety as mediator 1, risk perception as mediator 2, and decision avoidance as the dependent variable. The positive relationship between anxiety and decision avoidance held, however, risk perception did not have a significant effect. An exploratory extension to the first model was tested with psychosocial work environment as the independent variable, anxiety as mediator 1, decision avoidance as mediator 2, and decision dependence as the dependent variable. Anxiety had a significant positive association with decision dependence and this relationship was not mediated by decision avoidance, although decision avoidance had a significant positive relationship with decision dependence as well. The relationship between poor psychosocial work environment and anxiety was also positive and significant in all three models.

The findings suggest that creating a safe and supportive work environment is beneficial for employee wellbeing and their decision making abilities. In line with previous research, this study has found a significant relationship between poor psychosocial work environment and state anxiety. In turn, anxiety appears to be positively associated with both avoidance of decisions and increased dependence on others in making them. This suggests that fostering a favourable work environment that promotes mental wellbeing of employees may translate into a better pattern of decision making that is not marked by avoidance and dependence. In jobs where proactivity and independence are valued, that may result in better performance and increased career prospects. Risk perception, however, did not have a significant effect on decision avoidance in this study. A larger sample may help to detect this relationship and the mechanism through which anxiety may affect decision avoidance.

## SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE LEADERS´ PERCEPTIONS OF WORK ABILITY AND WORK ABILITY MANAGEMENT

**Julia Anttilainen, Eija Haukka, Ritva Horppu, Pirjo Juvonen-Posti, Terje Leivategija, Irmeli Pehkonen, Minna Savinainen**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

### Abstract

In Finland, a reform to respond to the needs of our health and social services and poor economic resources has been underway for several years meaning constant changes and uncertainty to the organizations and their personnel in this sector. Continuous change has been found to be reflected in perceived well-being at work. The management of well-being at work and work ability management have shown to be effective in reducing sick leaves, increasing the retirement age and reducing the costs of work disability. Organizations that invest in work ability management have also been found to manage better in the midst of business change and structural reorganizations.

Work ability is often viewed as an individual attribute as a result of diseases. Work ability has been defined from multidisciplinary point of view and although there is no single definition, there exists a consensus that work ability is defined by one´s work, work environment and societal context, too.

We assume, that the way how one understands the concept of work ability reflects on how (s)he determines work ability management. To our knowledge, there is lack of studies concerning leaders´ understanding of the concepts of work ability and work ability management.

In this study, work ability management has been defined to include all activities that are planned and followed in the organization itself and in cooperation with other specialists, such as occupational healthcare providers, to promote and maintain occupational safety, work ability and health, and to support staying at work.

The aims of the study are to explore,

1. how work ability management has been conceptualized in previous studies and “grey” literature,
2. social and health care leaders´ perceptions of work ability and work ability management and
3. how leaders´ perceptions of work ability are reflected in their perception of work ability management.

The leaders´ perceptions of work ability are analyzed on the basis of a model emphasizing different aspects of the work ability conceptions: 1) a medical or disease-based framework, 2) the work ability balance model, 3) psychosocial models, 4) biopsychosocial models, 5) the integrated individual in the work community model, 6) employability-based models, 7) a work ability as a social construction of a society or organization and 8) other diverse and dimensional models of work ability.

The research is based on the data collected in the project “Strategic work ability management and the social welfare and health care reform in Finland” (2019-2021), carried out by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

The research material consists of transcribed individual (n=5) and group (n=12) interviews with 40 top and middle management representatives from four Finnish joint municipal authorities for health and social services. Content analysis is used as a method of data analysis, using Atlas.ti -software as a tool.

The questioning of the interviews was guided by the objectives of the project, the existing work ability support models of the participating organizations and the research literature about factors influencing successful work ability management.

Analysis is underway. In the Work2021 seminar, we present findings on how work ability management has been conceptualized in previous studies and “grey” literature.

The project is financially supported by the European Union Social Fund via the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.



# A GENERIC MODEL FOR PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH WITH COLLABORATION BY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTHCARE AND WORKPLACES IN 2021–2022

**Minna Pihlajamäki, Hanna Hakulinen, Pauliina Mattila-Holappa**

*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland*

## Abstract

**Project background:** “The Mental Health Support in the Workplace - Generic Model for Occupational Health Cooperation” is a part of the “Action Plan for Working Life and Good Mental Health”. In accordance with the government program, the National Mental Health Program was announced. The strategy’s line “Mental health as capital” covers activities related to strengthening mental health in working life. The need for a national Mental Health Program is an increase in long sick leave and disability benefits due to mental disorders.

Disability due to mental health issues cause a burden both on an individual level and in the societal context. In 2019, Kela paid a total of 3,829 million euro in health insurance benefits, comprising 14.9 million sickness benefit days and 1.2 million partial sickness benefit days. About a third of sick allowance days last for more than 30 working days. Of the new sickness allowance claims, 27% began on the basis of musculoskeletal disorders and 25% began on the basis of mental and behavioral disorders. Sick allowance days were reimbursed the most on the basis of mental health disorders (34%) (KELA 2020a). In 2019, disability benefits were paid 2,449 million euros. There were 1.61 million pension recipients (28% of the population), of whom 1.33 million are on old-age pensions and 0.20 million on disability pensions. A total of 23,000 new disability pensions were granted in 2019, of which 53% were due to mental and behavioral disorders, 19% to musculoskeletal disorders and 10% to other causes. (ETK 2020).

**Aim:** The aim of the two year (2021–2022) project is to develop collaboration between workplace and occupational health service (OHS) providers so that a new general model can be used to proactively, systematically and effectively to influence the psychosocial burden of the workplaces and prevent mental health-related incapacity.

The project aims to effectiveness:

- 1) Workplace – OHS provider pilots have developed a model that support mental health in different situations and in different work communities, and their effectiveness has been demonstrated.
- 2) A model can be implemented in all workplaces.
- 3) The nationwide dissemination of the model for use in workplaces and OHS has been announced and partly started.

The model does not provide full solutions for the workplaces. The model helps them to determine and assess the situation, to find the appropriate solutions for the actual problem and for OHS as their implementers.

**Methods:** This abstract is based on the plans execute fieldwork and creative workshops. The project includes following steps: mapping the background, set the goal with collaboration the piloting workplaces, developing and piloting the generic model, monitoring and evaluation the implementation.

**Model for collaboration.** A previous systematic review reported three themes (contract requirements, characteristics of dialogue and definition of roles) related to good collaboration between employers and occupational health service providers (Halonen et al. 2017). These themes will be included in formulation of a generic model.

In accordance of the generic model, in cooperation between different actors in the workplace and OHS, it is possible to:

- 1) assess the need for work ability support and the risks and resources of the work environment
- 2) set the development goals required by the situation and determine OHS needs
- 3) to choose the measures for supporting work ability and affecting the work environment
- 4) agree on the responsibilities of the various actors and the coordination of measures and the overall process
- 5) take the necessary measures
- 6) take care of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the measures.

The implementation of the model requires the participation of different actors in the workplace’s and OHS’s. When implementing the model, it must be taken into account that workplaces and OHS must influence competence (strengthen), knowledge and implementation of work ability support methods and practices, and change the operating culture.

**Outlook:** This project creates a generic model for collaboration among the workplace and OHS in support of mental work ability and mental health during the years 2021–2022. The model emphasizes the principles of cooperation, competence and prevention. This paper is a blueprint of building the generic model. This project introduces description of the generic model and criteria for a successful cooperation, give material and tools to increase mental health skills in working life, tools for occupational healthcare.

Keywords: mental health; occupational health; workplaces; prevention; collaboration

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# WHEN TRUST BREACHES IN THE WORKPLACE— CONSEQUENCES AND RESTORATION

Taina Savolainen<sup>1</sup>, Mirjami Ikonen<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Eastern Finland Business School, Joensuu, Finland. <sup>2</sup>University of Eastern Finland Learning in Digitalized Society Research Community, Joensuu, Finland

## Abstract

The topic of the abstract aims to provide insights into trust in workplaces, and specifically trust restoration after trust violation. The paper increases understanding of consequences and restoration that trust breaches cause in workplace relationships also providing some implications for workplace practices and skills development. Trust restoration is topical due to the current remote work increasing the chance that trust will be tested and violated.

The paper deals with trust in workplace relationships and presents empirical examples of the narrative study based on the data from the healthcare sector. Our focus is on the restoration of trust after trust violations or breaches were experienced within work relationships. More specifically, the study aims to increase understanding of how trust is restored, studying decisive incidents, moments (and phases), and what informants perceive as most significant in the process of their recovery (healing). The question is what violates trust, what consequences broken trust causes, and how the wounds are healed. The purpose of the empirical study is two-fold; first, to produce new empirical findings from trust restoration in work relationships still scarcely studied empirically, and second, to provide insights into current and further research searching for new and richer methodological avenues.

Lately, trust is widely recognized as an intangible asset within society and workplaces forming a foundation for cooperation in workplace relationships. Trust enables collaboration and improves performance e.g., through trustful workplace climate (Savolainen & Lopez-Fresno, 2013). Trust is also an important skill in organizations and their leadership. Trust is embedded in communication, abilities, and dependence in relationships such as the leader-follower dyad. Currently, working and management occurs more and more technology-mediated and remote between people, which may make changes in trust relationships. In times of changes, as during Covid19, functioning relationships support organizations to cope in times of uncertainty (Atkinson, 2004).

When restoring trust, requires interaction and communication (also face to face) in the same way as trust-building. However, trusting is less studied in the contexts of deteriorating work relationships and climate that inevitably expose people to risk, dependence, and vulnerability within relationships, and especially in the situations of trust deterioration and breaches. As trust in workplaces deteriorates, commitment to work weakens, people are unable to give their best, they suffer multiple consequences. Trust violations affect an individual's experience of psychological safety and trust. People may encounter crises,

or even change jobs. Harmful situations may also reflect more widely in society, for example, absences due to trust breaches causing mental health consequences. Moreover, early disability pensions may apply with high costs per year.

The qualitative data consists of 20 written accounts about working life experiences describing trust restoration in the leader-follower relationships. The thematic content analysis method was employed in the analysis of the narrative data. The stories of informants describe events that led to a lack, or a breach, of trust in the workplace, what consequences occurred, and how trust was restored (how informants recovered from wounds).

The findings revealed three phases within the trust restoration process discussed in more detail in the paper. The findings of the narrative analysis reveal the long-term consequences of the resulting strength and wounds, causing a collapse in trust at work, health, and health at work. The findings of the study show how trust management can both prevent and contribute to the recovery of wounds. The interesting finding is what potential forgiveness provides in stages and processes of recovery and healing when vulnerability inhibits the wounded from 'taking the next step'. Finally, leaders need to take care of training working life skills together including trust-building with employees, as trust concerns everyone and the well-being of the entire work community. Implications suggest avoiding mistrust (violation) unleash, and most importantly trust breaches.

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## WELL-BEING AT WORK ON TIMBER HARVESTING AND TRANSPORT

**Marja Kallioniemi<sup>1</sup>, Janne Kaseva<sup>2</sup>, Aarre Peltola<sup>3</sup>, Arja Anttila<sup>3</sup>, Esa Katajamäki<sup>3</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), Vihti, Finland. <sup>2</sup>Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), Jokioinen, Finland. <sup>3</sup>Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), Helsinki, Finland*

### Abstract

Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) carried out a survey among those who harvest and transport wood material from forests to the different kind of processing and energy plants. During autumn 2019, totally 4 000 randomly selected employers and entrepreneurs were contacted three times and asked to answer a questionnaire or online survey related to well-being at work. The survey was conducted after a year 2018 when the demand for round wood was exceptionally high due to the peak in forest industry's business cycle -- this survey occasion obviously affected the following results.

We received 1 282 answers; 454 (37 %) from plant drivers, 266 (21 %) from timber truck drivers, 266 (21 %) from official workers, 186 (15 %) from loggers and timber workers and 68 (5 %) from other respondents. Most of the respondents were salary earners (69 %) while the rest were employers 18 % and self-employed persons 13 %. The response rate was 32 %. Our questionnaire included six themes of well-being at work; a) work amount and load, b) the job satisfaction, c) work ability and health, d) stress, e) interaction and social relationships and f) recovery, living habits and support for coping.

The respondents worked more hours per week (45 h) than workers in Europe on average (36 h) or in Finland (37 h). Most of the hours per week worked self-employed among timber truck drivers (54 h) and employers among plant drivers and timber truck drivers (both 53 h). Overall, the respondents were rather satisfied with their job, but nearly half (47 %) assessed their work as mentally rather of very stressful. The most stressed respondent groups were official workers and women respondents. The work ability index (0-10) was the highest among salary earners (8,1) and lowest among loggers and timber workers (7,8). Working during an illness was rather common, since 40 % of all respondents had done so during the last 12 months.

The respondents were rather satisfied with their work conditions. Most of them (77 %) assessed their work as important and meaningful daily or weekly. This was the most common among self-employed persons and loggers and timber workers.

The respondents evaluated the means to improve well-being and coping. The better organizing of work was among the most important mean among all profession sectors. The respondents had a possibility to write down answers to an open question about the most feasible methods in order to improve well-being and coping. One third of all 583 written answers focused on improving the working environment. Every fifth answer concerned personal means like adding rest and exercising.

The National Forestry Strategy 2025, established by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland, poses a target to improve well-being at work within the forest sector. In addition, sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of United Nations

aim at ensuring well-being; in more detail, the aim is to provide decent work for all women and men. These aims are relevant guidelines for intervention efforts among forest harvesting and transport work. Related to the big challenges of mankind to mitigate the effects of climate change, the forest can bind the gases from atmosphere. Therefore, it is important to ensure the forest management and growth -- and well-being at work among the professionals of this sector. It has been suggested conducting a follow up survey in future.

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## SUCCESS AT WORK AND ITS PRECONDITIONS IN CONSTRUCTION SITE MANAGERS' CAREER STORIES

**Krista Rautio**

*University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland*

### **Abstract**

#### **Background**

This research exposes views on and experiences of success at work in the field of construction industry. Careers and work in the construction industry have been shown to have various sector-specific characteristics: employees' work and wellbeing stressors are characterized by a high workload, long working days, and insufficient time spent with family. The industry is described as among the largest, most complex and most people-intensive sectors to work. Sector-specific features are, for example, structural fragmentation, diversity of work practices, and rapidly changing projects. New technologies, digitalization, internationalization, new types of business models, and climate change are changing operations in the field. This not only poses remarkable challenges but also major chances for leadership, career development, and success; hence, this makes studies in the construction industry an interesting research field, thereby justifying the need for topical research in this field.

With its multidimensional focus on site manager's experiences the study aims to supplement the discussion in the field of career success. This study focuses on narratives of work success, particularly searching:

1. How site managers perceive success at work from their different subject positions.
2. The subject-position-related preconditions to success at work according to their descriptions.

There are two reasons for studying these site managers. First, they work near the actual construction and therefore face the sectoral characteristics of the working environment mentioned above. Second, they work in positions for which it is required to have either higher education or at least remarkable experience in the field; whichever case, it can be assumed that they have already formed some personal views in their career and also a successful performance in it.

### **Methods**

The data were obtained from 21 site managers through a semi-structured interviews. The interviews distributed three thematic topics: 1) career story, 2) management, and 3) success at work. This study is part of wider research, particularly focusing on the third theme. Nineteen of the interviewees were men, and two were women. The age range varied between 25 and 74 years (< 30 N = 2, 30–39 N = 7, 40–49 N = 2, 50–59 N = 4, 60 > N = 5, 70 > N = 1). The work experience gained in the field varied from 3–42 years: 3–9 (N = 3), 10–19 (N = 6), 20–29 (N = 2), 30–39 (N = 4), 40–49 (N = 6). All interviewees were Finnish. The sub-areas of industry the interviewees represented were mining, infrastructure, building construction and or renovation, energy construction, and civil engineering. Analysis of subject positions offered the most attractive method to apply in this specific study design. The subject positions appear in the results in such a way that all the resulting roles can be seen as more or less mutable and time-bound.

### **Findings**

Results confirmed that the experiences under study comprise successful performance as: I) site managers, II) members of the community of construction industry, III) specialists, IV) representatives of certain stages of career, V) individuals, and VI) in

societal roles. The subject position analysis revealed the complexity of experienced success; for example, one can be more successful in one role but less in another. The results indicated that perceptions of success change among career phases and that the key preconditions for success are cooperative leadership skills, accumulation of knowledge and experience, committed attitude toward work, and optimism when facing adversities. Additionally, the features described as characteristics of the construction field, such as traditional and masculine working culture, out-of-town jobs, project-typed work, and diverse teams, affect site managers' success. Alongside praise and goodwill, career success is associated with downsides such as adversity, failure, and choices that lack a single right solution. Sense of community appears strong in the stories, and in this regard, the field is described as exceptional regarding other fields.

## Discussion

This study explores discussions about the career performance and wellbeing of construction site managers. Prior research has introduced informative and operational elements of site management and success-promoting factors, such as good management skills, developed knowledge management processes, and systematic cooperation. For the novelty value of this study, it can be considered that the success of site managers has not been studied in such a multidimensional way. Previous studies present practical prerequisites for success, and often success manifests as the efficiency of a construction site. Research concerning employee's wellbeing is mostly linked to management, occupational safety, and pay. Little attention has been paid to the personal experiences of success of the site managers. Thus, the results can be used for developing the education, management, and work communities in the field. In this process, the research opens up a new perspective on promoting individual career success and encourages further research to focus on and deepen positive psychology approaches in research concerning work in the field of construction.

Keywords: success at work, construction industry as social environment, positive (career) psychology, subject positions

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# PILOTS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS – A CHALLENGING MIX?

**Jorma Liikamaa, Ville Pietiläinen**

*University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland*

## Abstract

This presentation takes a look at airline pilot's wellbeing and mental health. Pilots' mental health – and the challenges pertaining to it – is a recognized phenomenon, but it still has a marginal role in aviation research.

Airline pilot's work belongs to professions where the tolerance for mistakes is very limited. During decades, savvy procedures have been developed to ensure a safe operation in a changing operating environment. The safety management system covers resource management for crew members producing highly predictable work patterns minimizing the possibility for error and if an error or mistake still happens, it will be detected before escalation to a threat for safety.

Still, in the middle of everything is the human being. The safety management system is based on the assumption that human performance is at optimum.

A person who wants to start a career in commercial air transport doesn't make the decision based on good pay, or low retirement age. They have a dream of flying and that is all they want to do. If their character strengths support their dream, they will be able to advance in their career, get more experience and finally, the door for an airliner would open for them.

In some countries, the airlines select their pilots based on accumulated flying hours and a simulator skill test only. There will be an aptitude test, but the psychological side is not really emphasized. The Federal Aviation Administration has ruled out requiring psychological testing for airline pilots. According to the FAA, psychological tests are ineffective because they reveal a pilot's mental health for only a moment in time without providing insight into whether the pilot will suffer problems later. Instead, the FAA encourages greater voluntary self-reporting by pilots of mental health problems.

The purpose of this research was to find out what kind of research has been done on airline pilots' mental health status, how does airline pilot's mental health status correlate with flight safety and how are the pilots supported in case of mental health issues. These questions were answered through an integrative literature review. We did not follow a strict protocol that is the characteristics of the systematic research review. The pilots' mental health is a relatively marginal research field that was leading us toward multiple research sources. However, we endeavored to capture a comprehensive conception of the research field and set specific literature criteria. We focused on 14 articles that were chosen for a more detailed analysis. The review results are distinguished between three content categories covering the aspects addressed in the analytical questions: 1) Pilots' mental health issues. 2) Pilots' stressors. 3) Pilots' depression and suicides.

The literature reveals that the pilot's mental health issue is a delicate matter. According to the review, the pilots are often reluctant to report their mental issues for fear of being grounded or having their licenses revoked. The lack of adequate support has led to the formation of pilot advisory groups. Groups like these consist of peers in the piloting profession. Even though the members are experienced aviators and may have a caring personality, they should be trained in occupational psychology to be able to give appropriate support and guidance to deal with the existing issues.

After the 2015 Germanwings tragedy, detecting mental health issues amongst pilots has been gaining increased attention. Surprisingly, there has been less focus on understanding wellbeing amongst pilots or understanding the relationship between stress and wellbeing and safety. The same is true on understanding how pilots adapt to stress, how they cope, and what kind of self-management techniques they might be using.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) produced regulation concerning pilot support system: A pilot support program (sometimes referred to as "Pilot Assistance Program") aims to assist and support flight crew members in recognizing, coping with, and overcoming any problem which might negatively affect their ability to safely exercise the privileges of their license. It provides peer support to fellow pilots, offering referrals to professional resources when appropriate while upholding strict confidentiality.

It is worth to be mentioned here that the regulation does not require that airlines themselves should have their own system to support the pilots, they need just to see that there is an existing pilot support program of some kind.

Airline pilots' mental health problems have been a closed chapter. It is evident that pilots suffer from the same issues as the rest of the population. Openness is required and pilots must feel safe to discuss their health issues with the appropriate health professionals without fear.

In conclusion, this presentation proposes that mental wellbeing is essential for flight safety. Accordingly, mental health should be included as part of the aeromedical assessment for pilots and follow-up should be extended throughout the airline pilots' entire flying career.

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