

Mervi Hasu, Sari Käpykangas, Eveliina Saari & Pirjo Korvela

The office worker in the advent of automation: An everyday-life view of the work life profiles of typists engaged in home-based, full-time telework

This article explores the everyday life of home-based, full-time teleworkers in the context of public-sector office work at the ‘moment before the automation of work’. It examines, from the workers’ point of view and in terms of their personal lives, what it means to do digitally aided telework at home in the advent of possible automation. The article is inspired by research on everyday life in sociology and home economics. The context is the typists’ work and digitalised dictation process in hospitals: the work is highly standardised and shift-based, and it operates around the clock. The research method is qualitative and involves thematic, ethnographic interviews conducted in the homes of teleworkers. The analysis revealed that the participants produced four different types of authoring of their everyday life and work as digitalised home-workers: Adjustor, Concentrator, Hobby Enthusiast, and Wage Earner–Entrepreneur. The results confirm the interpretation of the societal fabric of everyday life in homes. From the perspective of the micro-level analysis of everyday life, telework at home is not a place to escape to or a dream come true; it represents the multifaceted transformation of working life, with all its tensions.