There is the Joy of Work: The Disabled as Teleworkers

The object of the study is to learn about the work of the disabled and their experience of work. In this study telework means modern telework, in which modern information technology is used.

The subject of this research are disabled teleworkers in different parts of Finland (N=32). I interviewed them during 1995 - 1997. The grip of the research was mainly qualitative the, method used was interviews. The themes of the study were based on how the disabled experienced working and on their experiences of other kind of work. In my study I have six themes when examining the disabled workers and their working:

1) background, 2) working conditions and equipment , 3) the rate of the government in giving employment, 4) the choice of work and the experiences of working, 5) income, 6) the attitude of family and friends and the connection to the employers.

In the theoretic part of the study I will first describe how the concept and forms of work have changed from traditional into modern ones. Modern telework is the central point in this study. Secondly I will examine disability and technology and thirdly disability and working.

According to the results of the research a little over ¼ the teleworkers were men (N=32) and a little less then ¾ women. When examining the results I divide the interviewed into men and women disabled as children or as adults. The average age was 41 years. Most of them were married couples, or couples living together. There were plenty of illnesses and disabilities, some of them serious handicaps. The basic education varied from elementary school to high school graduation and from vocational training to university degrees. They lived in one family houses or apartments. The working equipment varied from a mere terminal and printer to high powered computers with Internet connections. The equipment had been paid by themselves, Kela, insurance companies and employers. Almost everyone had been a customer at Kela or the employment agency. The best way to get work had been with the help of the ‘bush radio’. Bookkeeping was one of the most common works, but there was also among others programming, doing research, translation, writing cassettes and consulting. The interviewed were motivated in their work and they did not feel lonely. Disability has not been a disadvantage in working. The salary was necessary as a supplement to pensions and benefits, but the work itself was more important. The family members took a positive attitude to the work at home, and friends were also supportive. The connections to the employers were taken care of by telephone or at meetings. The feedback from the employers was slight. The interviewed considered teleworking good means to give employment to the disabled. The study gave cause for some suggestions related to social policy.


Avainsanat-Nyckelord-Keywords
telework - disability
disability - homeworking

Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe-Where deposited

Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter-Additional information