

Risks, working environment and negative acts: Young workers on the digital labor market (RADAR II)

RADAR II is a two-year research project (01.03.21 – 01.06.2023). The researchers affiliated with the project are associate professor and principal investigator (PI) Mette Lykke Nielsen, The Danish Centre for Youth Research, Aalborg University, assistant professor Louise Yung Nielsen, Roskilde University, senior researcher Johnny Dyreborg, and senior researcher Thomas Clausen, The National Research Centre of Working Environment.

Background

Digitalization and new employment relations challenge a positive psychosocial working environment. International studies show, that the digital distribution of the work potentially can lead have negative impact on the psychosocial working environment: Detailed surveillance, sexual harassment, threats, bullying and harassment from customers/ followers, as well as psychosocial pressure from job insecurity and customer ratings. Hence the focus of this project is to identify, examine, and prevent 'negative acts' among young workers on the digital labor market. The concept 'negative acts' [negative handlinger] include harassment, sexual harassment, threats, and bullying.

In Denmark, this has been examined in a small-scale pilot study, RADAR. This study indicate, that digitally distributed work can impact psychosocial wellbeing of young people negatively, and that the psychosocial consequences are reinforced when the work is unregulated and has an isolating and individualizing character. Sexual harassment in particular is significantly more frequent among young people on digital platforms compared to young people in traditional employment. Young people working with food delivery or other transport tasks appear to have a higher risk of accidents, threats and bullying compared to young workers in traditional employment schemes, although these latter results need to be confirmed in a larger study sample. Digitally distributed work is expected to grow, especially among young workers. Therefor we need knowledge about how to prevent OSH on a mainly unregulated and individualized labor market.

Purpose: To initiate and evaluate measures for prevention of negative acts among young workers with digital mediated work, in corporation with relevant stakeholders and practitioners.

Target group: Young workers 18-30-year-olds with digitally distributed work or work performed on or through digital platforms, including workers on digital work platforms and social media platforms.

Method: Since workers on the digital labor market neither have a traditional employer nor a traditional workplace, new instruments are examined and tested among non-traditional actors in the OSH field.

- Participants collaborate to develop and evaluate a preventive social media campaign with young influencers as senders.

The participants are stakeholders, professionals and young influencers from an already established network. They are chosen because they have an interest in knowledge about and/or access to prevent negative acts on an unregulated digital-mediated labor market.

Results from the pilot project and from the present project about negative acts in digital mediated platform work will be exchanged during the collaborative process to qualify the knowledge transfer and exchange

(KTE) with the relevant stakeholders. We collect 20 qualitative interviews, which allows us to apprehend mechanisms of negative acts in relation to the contexts and life conditions of the young workers. Additionally we carry out an OSH survey among young workers on the digital mediated labor market - developed in the RADAR I project. Altogether, this forms the basis of the KTE-collaboration and allows us to evaluate the campaign's effect together with the relevant stakeholders and thereby ensure better knowledge uptake in this group of platforms.