

Changing Work Organisation in the Knowledge Economy for improved Gender Equality

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Information Society

ICTs and information are fundamental to social and economic life

Knowledge Economy

Product of several inter-related developments

- the expansion of the knowledge industries and knowledge occupations
- the growth of investment in education
- the acceleration of learning and change
- Although global, always local

Sex and gender

- 'Sex' – biology
- 'Gender' – social concept
- Gender system

Gender in organisations

- Segregation
- Hierarchisation

Organisational Change

- Organisational culture
- Organisational identity
- Gender system
- Technology

- What is new, is a rule, introduced in a society that is old and in organisations that are established
- Gender is constructed in organisations and also constructing organisations
- More than one type of change takes place at the same time

- The political and economic system is the context
- The strategies of the organisations are also of relevance
- Individuals are agents
- A process of polarisation
- From an equality point of view it is hard to draw clear conclusions

New organisations

There is nothing new with new organisations.
Consequently nothing will happen just like that.

Strategies for equality in organization according to Cynthia Cockburn (1991)

- The equality initiative placed in a high and secure position
- Commit energy and resources to building a women's movement within the organization
- The legitimacy of separate activity and a discourse of difference on terms
- To develop practical alliances with supportive men
- To ensure the equality project has a class dimension
- The transformative aims for the equality project should be conscious
- The need for a strategic approach to the role of equality officer or women's officer
- To address the questions of forming alliances between the disadvantaged groups that are the subjects of equality politics

- The Servemploi-study supported her findings and added that:
- the design of junior jobs should be organised around varied tasks of differing degrees of complexity.
- Regular training and lifelong learning opportunities should be routinely made available to junior employees.
- Training needs should be regularly reviewed and linked to development plans for employees
- Clear progression paths need to be established
- Two-way flexibility of working time is vital
- Family-friendly policies should be available to all grades of employees
- Information technology systems should be designed and implemented to support task integration and to facilitate the exercise of discretion by employees
- Work intensification through the use of systematised processes should be avoided
- In general the above recommendations require that IT managers work closely with HR managers, trade unions and employee representatives in designing and developing IT systems which meet these objectives.

- To reach gender equality in working life we all have to work for it and beware of the resistance that works against it