

Female Discourses about Household Services

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Domestic work has an important role in everyday life. Especially families with the both providers having a full-day job are afflicted by rush when children are small and the amount of household chores is great (Pääkkönen & Niemi 2002).

Household services have been seen deemed to provide a solution to combine the careers and the family. Although the use of household services has increased, it is still in a low level in Finland. The recent Finnish research shows that only about 10 % of the households have used household services (Varjonen, Aalto & Leskinen 2007).

The work done at home is time-consuming. The time spent in household work equals to one long working week (Takala 2005). However, this household production is not present in the official statistics of national economy, because the work done at home by the members of household is unpaid and for this reason it is work that does not enter the national economy.

The growth in the demand for household services would have an effect to develop this sector and create more jobs as well as enlarge our national economy.

The research presented here is a preliminary study and it includes the analysis of female discourses about outsourcing household work.

The data for the research has been collected in focus group discussions. The data includes five different group discussions that were held during summer 2008 in four Finnish cities: Helsinki, Turku, Tampere and Jyväskylä. The discussions involved 3-8 entrepreneurial women with families. Women with families and with entrepreneurial background belong to the so-called households-in-a-rush-category and are the most active users of household services (Varjonen, Aalto & Leskinen 2007). The analysis used is content analysis.

As earlier said, the study is in its preliminary phase and therefore more data is needed. This preliminary study gives good guidelines to proceed in the doctoral thesis. The forthcoming research will include also data from peer groups of workers in household services. The ultimate research aims at answering to the question why Finns do not regularly use household services.