Becoming a construction worker in the connected classroom: Opposing school work with smartphones as happy objects

# Details

## Year

2020

## DOI

10.3384/njvet.2242-458x.2010165

## Issued

2020

## Language

English

## Volume

10

## Issue

1

## Start Page

## End Page

## Authors

Asplund S.-B.;Kontio J.

## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Nordic Journal of Vocational Education and Training

## Publisher

Linkoping University Electronic Press

## Topics

* Learning
* Social mediation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement

## Sample

25 students aged 17 to 19 attending a mid-Sweden upper-secondary school class in year 2 (of 3) of a vocational education programme, a
Building and Construction programme.

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

This article aims to fill a very specific and acute gap; in addition to the few studies on youth and digitalisation, smartphones and other mobile tools, it is very clear that the field of research concerning these issues in regards to vocational education and training is close to non-existent. By examining male Building and Construction programme students’ collective use of smartphones in interaction during classes, this study contributes to increased knowledge about some of the challenges and possibilities that arise with the digitalisation of vocational education and training. The study uses new and innovative methods regarding how students’ digital activities in the classroom could be captured and studied, and approaches video recorded data through the lens of Sara Ahmed’s ideas of happy objects (2010), and the concept of community of practice (Wenger, 1998). The analyses show how the identity constructing processes that take shape when the students orient towards the smartphone as a happy object intersect with the students’ future vocational identity as building and constructing workers, as well as explicating an anti-school culture.

# Outcome

"[F]eatures of identity constructions previously found in research on workplaces and during workplace-based learning (Ferm et al., 2018) is indeed
produced already in the classrooms of vocational education. Through the methods used in this study, we have been able to point out how these identity constructions are being made here and now, and the role the smartphone plays in these processes; highlighting traits found by previous research on male students in vocational education, such as the use of male jargon, foul language and a counterculture in relation to school assignment." (Authors, 85-86)