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CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS
STUDYING THE ENACTMENT OF ANALYTICS IN AN ORGANIZATION

This doctoral thesis investigates how organizational members enact the technology of analytics in their quest for rationality. An inductive longitudinal qualitative study was performed to study the introduction of analytics in the corporate sales department of a telecommunications organization. The study sheds light on three phenomena related to the enactment of analytics: First, the study illustrates how epistemological clashes emerge between analysts and users, who may have conflicting perspectives on the sources of knowledge, how knowledge is obtained, and how knowledge statements are justified. Second, the thesis explores how organizational members render their actions visible while interacting with digital technologies and their analytics features, and investigates the performative effects of those practices. Finally, the study explores the process of symbolically adopting the analytics artifacts, and shows that those symbolic actions can have unintended consequences for the actors who perform them. Overall, this thesis contributes to the field of rationality by suggesting that more data and analytics do not necessarily entail more rational actions, because there can be different conceptions of rationality situated in the practices; because producing data for visibility can also have other performative consequences; and finally because information may often be used symbolically.

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STELLA PACHIDI