

Dilemmas for Human Services 2010
Changes and new directions in
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ABSTRACTS

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The Financial Meltdown and the Crisis of Reproduction: Imaginations of Performance, Participation and Social Justice

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The function of the Keynesian welfare state in the fordist society was, among other things, to cushion the powerful effects of economic crises upon social welfare. During the recent financial crisis state interventions were implemented, primarily to support the financial institutions and secondly to limit damage to the real economy. Public welfare was hardly touched by these interventions. On the contrary; for a considerable time it found itself massively under pressure from two different directions, and this is likely to be aggravated in the coming years: On the one hand this pressure is due to the replacement of the fordist models of society in western OECD countries and the implementation of market economy principles (keyword: New Public Management), and through this, public welfare is already subject to fundamental restructuring processes. On the other hand, developments such as the casualisation of gainful employment have become more perceptible, with the effect that public welfare faces increasing demands and costs at the same time as revenues are decreasing. This is directly connected to the separation of the financial and real economies.

During these processes of change, work is redistributed between market, state, 'third sector' and private households and this is done along the lines of gender, ethnicity and class. The redrawing of work boundaries runs alongside socially changed notions and valuations about performance, participation and social justice. Where the development of the welfare state in the post-war era was characterized by discussions about equal opportunities and distributive justice, current discussions accompanying the restructuring or removal of state interventions emphasize the increase of effectiveness and efficiency in the social provision of services.

The paper starts with this societal restructuring process and, as a first step, draws on research on inequality, work and welfare by asking the question: Which imaginations of humanity rationalisation of public welfare is based on and how is this connected with a redefinition of performance, participation and justice? In the second step, using the example of social and care work, we shall discuss the way in which social injustice will be affected. Finally, the third step explores the consequences that are likely to appear for private welfare and the conditions of the division of labour in this sector.

Vision: A Source of Innovation, Illusion or Social Control?

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Abstract

Vision is considered to be an inspiring statement of what the organisation intends to become and achieve at some point in the future. Organisations that are diverse and non-hierarchical by their nature, however, encompass ambiguities of purpose and success. In such organisations, the level of generality that facilitates acceptance of a vision destroys clarity and the level of specificity that permits measurement destroys acceptance. As a result, any attempt to produce a vision leads to statements that are fuzzy. In the absence of substance and the presence of fuzziness, it is not possible to know where the organisation is going and what it is trying to achieve in the future. As a result, vision becomes a source of illusion which cannot have any long-term motivating power.

Fuzzy vision statements, however, can also provide an opportunity for social control. Fuzziness can be used to create performance indicators, objectives and targets that advance particular agendas and interests. Such an approach, however, can lead to a chronic ineffectiveness and inefficiency. In such circumstances, to overcome the recurrent crisis that remains unresolved, there is a need to treat vision differently where visioning emphasises insight, hindsight and foresight in order to uncover blind spots which are essentially about a failure to see beyond one's basic assumptions about how things are. Such a treatment enables vision to become a source of innovation as opposed to illusion and social control. This can be demonstrated using a trifocal model which considers the provision of public sector along three dimensions: the professional, bureaucratic and managerial dimensions.

It is argued that conflict between the professional, bureaucratic and managerial dimensions is unavoidable, and that the provision of public services requires all these dimensions. Such a conflict means that each dimension has a hidden bias which is connected to its own survival and a struggle for domination. Any dimension, be it professional, bureaucratic or managerial, however, by dominating other dimensions, plants the seed for its own demise by allowing its weaknesses to outweigh its strengths. The challenge is therefore to determine how to make the professional, bureaucratic and managerial dimensions work in partnership, reflecting a perspective of cooperative equals.

Mina Hyre, Paul Dugmore and Lucille Allain

‘A delicate balancing act: meeting professional and higher education imperatives in social work education, preparing students for front-line child protection practice’

Due to a number of high profile child protection cases in the UK in the last ten years, (Laming 2003; Parton, 2006; Lonne et al, 2009; Laming 2009) employers have struggled to recruit quality staff to social work positions in front line children and families teams. These ongoing difficulties have recently been exacerbated by unprecedented negative media attention in relation to child deaths, which has fuelled a national outrage levelled at the social work profession (Garrett, 2009). As such there is a poor public perception of child and family social work, which has deterred some newly qualified practitioners from entering this area of work as well as experienced social workers leaving front line teams.

These tensions and concerns about social work practice have resulted in the government establishing a taskforce to undertake a ‘root and branch’ review of the social work profession (DCSF 2009). The taskforce has made fifteen recommendations aimed at improving both social work education and practice over the next ten years.

Earlier responses to concerns about social work education led to the introduction of an increase in practice learning days from one hundred and thirty to two hundred days to be completed and assessed during the BA or MA Social Work.

The increase in requirements for placement days, coupled with recent significant increases in recruitment to social work education qualifying programmes (e.g. twenty percent increase in four years within our university) has significantly exacerbated the demand for placements. Until recently, the sector skills councils prioritised sourcing a diverse range of placements in the private, voluntary and independent sector. There has been a recent u-turn in this respect with government supporting the expansion of statutory placements in front line social work teams. In this context, securing high quality practice learning opportunities, where students are supervised by experienced social workers, who are able to facilitate them to develop the requisite skill and knowledge base demanded by employers of newly qualified social workers represents a significant challenge for universities offering social work qualifying programmes. In this paper we use a case study approach to explore the approach taken by one university to meet the challenges and dilemmas of meeting the needs of students and employers. We discuss the partnerships we have formed with local authorities and other social care agencies, often bolstered by academic joint appointments and present how different routes into social work education have been developed.

Changes and dilemmas in support and service for people with intellectual disabilities

A comparison between Sweden and Finland

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BACKGROUND

The organisation of support and service to people with disabilities vary between countries but the greatest similarity can be found in the Nordic countries. In Sweden the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (SFS 1993:387) was passed in 1993. The intentions in the law are to promote equality in conditions of life and full participation in society and the rights to social citizenship for the individual. The law highlights the importance of and respect for the users regarding self-determination, integrity, influence and the right to decide about support and services. Furthermore it is stated that the staff are to provide support and service of a good quality.

Komplettering /Finland

The foundation for this study is a comparison of the development of the support and service for people with disability between Finland and Sweden during the last ten years. The basic principles of the handicap policy in Finland are that persons with impairment have the right to equal treatment and participation, thus concurring with the goals in the Swedish legislation. It has emerged in different studies that the right to personal assistance has led to an increase in self-determination and participation in society. It has also lead to increased costs for the personal assistance in Sweden. Changes have been made in the XXXXXXXX in Finland where personal assistance is now a right for persons with serious impairment. New forms of support and service for people with intellectual disabilities have lead to greater interaction with society. In Sweden many actors provide support and service. Approximately 40% of all people with a right to receive assistance use private organisations as providers and by the end of 2006 there were about 450 companies (SOU 2008:77) working in this field. In Finland it is noticeable that the numbers of supported housing solutions have increased but not in the case of those receiving support in their own home. Studies have, however, found a number of different obstacles for reaching the established goals. Influence and participation are limited because of how the support is worked out, organised and how it is carried out. Furthermore it emerged that the activities are mainly carried out in excluded arenas, which weaken the users' possibilities for participating in society. In spite of reorganization and decentralization activities, these are stil performed in the same way as previously. In Finland studies have shown that the goals for the activities in workcenters are unclear and that a change of the activities should be developed (Blomberg, 2006; Lindqvist, 2007; Widerlund, 2007). The directives given to the LSS-committee in Sweden 2008 was, among other things, to consider whether LSS should be legislation for people with extensive needs and whether the activities included in LSS and LASS¹ should be combined in one act. The committee maintained that the formal education of the staff is low and many of those working in personal assistance lack vocational training and that the proportion of staff with higher education is very low compared with, for example, those working in the the care of children. This leads to deficits in the quality and the organisation of the work. Furthermore the committee maintained that the division of responsibilities between municipalities and the social insurance has brought problems. Moreover the committee stated that the personal

¹ The Assistance Benefit ACT SFS 1993:389

assistance reform has reached a stage where the increase in costs can not continue without the long-term stability being threatened. About daily activities the committee suggests that even people with mental impairment shall have the right to daily activities.

AIM

The overall aim of this study is to identify and analyze the changing processes and their consequences in terms of the support and service for people with intellectual disabilities during the last ten years with a focus on:

- Development of participation in society for the users
- Suggestions for changes in legislation
- Suggestions to change the rights for more groups of users
- Immigrants as users
- New providers of support and service
- Changing demands for competence

METHOD

The study follows on from the authors' earlier studies and a comparative study between Sweden and Finland. The data collection will be generated from the analysis of documents and interviews with users, representatives from user organisations, directors and staff in three different municipalities in both Finland and Sweden.

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Accounting and Accountability in Networks: The case of a Community Learning Partnership.

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Abstract

Introduction

This paper presents a case study of a Community Learning Partnership. We set this in the context of the claimed shift from government to ‘governance’ in the delivery of public services. We raise questions about the nature of authority and accountability for policy implementation or what might be termed in ‘New Labour’ discourse, “delivery”. This borrows from private sector ideas of results-based management, where time and money are traditionally regarded as finite resources to be project managed.

Methods

The paper draws on research which was carried out by one of the authors at a Community Learning Partnership, which we call ‘Strongham’. Data for the research was generated by studying the partnership for eight months from its inception to the end of its first financial year of operation. The dataset comprises interview material, artefacts, locally generated policy documentation and ethnographic field notes.

Structure

We begin the paper by reviewing the literature around public services agencies operating as networks. In particular, the issues around network management, corporate governance, performance measurement and accountability are explored. We then go on to outline developments in the Sure Start programme (later known as Children’s Centres), which was introduced with the aim of streamlining delivery of early years’ services in England, whilst involving and integrating stakeholders. Then we discuss our case study and examine the issues which arose in practice around governance, performance measurement and accountability. Finally we consider the implications of the findings for theorising about public services delivery networks.

Results

Partnership rhetoric and network governance was found to be in tension with hierarchical, bureaucratic authority. Boundary spanners or policy entrepreneurs had access to more than one budget and could creatively juggle time and money to ensure that implementation targets were met. The case study illustrates how time and money became ‘relativised’ within local communities of practice. Value for money remained a contested issue with disputes about accountability for public funds and disagreement about needs and wants. Moreover, some doubts were raised concerning the co-ordination of activities and consistency of decision-making.

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The changing face of UK social housing: some HRM/D implications

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The changing face of UK social housing: some HRM/D implications

The paper has two main concerns:

- (i) to review the changing contexts and challenges of social housing organisations
- (ii) to explore the impact of the above on HRM/D practices in the sector.

Social housing (SH) organisations in the UK have experienced over 20 years of strategic change, the results of which have been widespread and diverse, including the creation of over 250 new SH providers, new governance arrangements, and changes to their regulatory regime from April 2010 through the Tenancy Services Authority. These changes have resulted in organisations which are more business focused, commercial

and entrepreneurial (Bradley, 2008), where the form of service provision often has much in common with the private sector.

Burke and Ng (2006) have identified three main contextual changes which have impacted organisations in general in recent years and had knock-on effects upon the attitudes and expectations of the employees who work within them: (i) demographics; (ii) technology; (iii) globalisation. To take IT as an example, studies have found that it is commonly adopted by organisations in order to facilitate organisational growth, remain competitive and/or enhance innovative capacity (Burca et al, 2005). This has implications for HRM/D strategies and practices within organisations (CIPD, 2005; Ensher et al, 2002). SH organisations, however, have not to date experienced the challenges of globalisation or radical technological change on the same scale as many other sectors.

Research has shown the sort of challenges UK SH organisations are currently facing, not least with the acceleration of merger activity over recent years (Mullins and Craig 2005). With a few exceptions (see Ward and Preece, 2010), however, little is known about the impact this is having and the challenges being posed in HRM/D terms. Drawing upon our own empirical material collected from a number of SH organisations, the paper outlines and discusses some of our findings in these matters (in particular changing forms of leadership), and develops a future research agenda.

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‘Was I supposed to touch the prisoners?’ issues of ethics, risk and gender during ethnographic research on prison health care

This paper discusses issues and dilemmas which arose during short-term ethnographic work in a prison health-care setting in the UK. The project, funded via the Burdett Fund for Nursing², explored ‘good practice’ in a nurse-led prison healthcare wing (PHW) for male prisoners. The overall study used interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observation and raised issues about (inter)professional identities and identifications in the context of tensions between ‘caring’ and ‘control’ of prisoners. (see Foster & Bell, *in preparation*, Bell & Foster, *in preparation*).

There have been few direct studies of prison healthcare in the UK; there has been some attention to workforce issues but such studies have tended to use surveys or other quantitative methods (e.g. Gray, Pearce & Marks, 2006; but see Condon et al, 2007). Ethnographic observation offers the possibility of more in-depth analysis but this approach may also raise a number of ethical issues, some of which may not be foreseen when approval from an ethics committee is granted. In this example limited access to a prison healthcare wing was approved for the (female) researcher to make observations (two days) and some interesting but risky issues subsequently had to be negotiated ‘on the spot’. These involved potential for subterfuge and closer contact with prisoners than the researcher envisaged. Prior ethical approval for this study had tended to focus on standardised issues of confidentiality in relation to conducting interviews or focus groups without necessarily acknowledging the challenging aspects of operating ‘ethically’ as an ethnographic researcher in this environment.

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² Fundholder was Dr John Foster, University of Greenwich

Safety climate and participatory safety activities in municipal home care services

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Background

The need to promote a healthy and safe work environment for personnel in the home and health care services sectors has emerged. Increased attention has been aimed at the complex web of system components and their interdependencies, giving rise to hazards facing the front-line staff [1, 2]. For proactive workplace interventions to be effective, increased attention have been directed on the psychological and social preconditions for safe behaviours and non-accidents [3]. The concept of 'safety climate' has been standing out as significant. Research has established that the safety climate (e.g. shared perceptions among the members of a social unit) has a positive relationship with how the members behave in relation to safety and safety-related outcomes, e.g. low accident or injury rates [3, 4]. In home care services safety climate and its relation to safety activities and health and safety related outcomes have not been studied before. However, emerging from the need to ensure patient safety and high quality care, safety climate surveys are now being increasingly used in healthcare organisations, mainly hospitals [5, 6]. The relation of safety climate and healthcare workers' safety behaviours and workers- or patients safety outcomes has begun to be confirmed [5, 7]. A number of studies also show that better well-being and non-injury of health care workers results in safer and better quality patient care [7]. Hence, proactive workplace interventions dealing with potentially modifiable safety climate dimensions (e.g. peer safety communication, learning and trust in safety ability; management safety ability; management safety empowerment)[8], have the potential to promote health and safety for both personnel and users.

Aim

This is an on-going project that aims to promote health and safety in home care services by improving the safety climate and the ability to manage situations in work, communicate and cooperate. Focus is placed on management, nursing aides and –assistants working in the municipal home care services for the elderly. Their shared perceptions of safety climate in their work units', individual safety perceptions, self-efficacy, safety activities and outcomes in terms of health and safety are explored.

Methods

In the first part of the study, data were obtained through a comprehensive self-report questionnaire answered by 158 (54%) home care workers in 18 work units. Among other measures, the safety climate on management- and on work unit level was measured with the Nordic safety climate questionnaire (NOSACQ).

Results

At present, data on safety climate and safety-related activities are computed and will be presented at the conference. Preliminary results show that the safety climate dimensions differed between work units'. Which factors that can explain home care workers safety activities, i.e., 'taking part in risk assessments in one's work unit' and 'personal safety behaviour' will be further explored.

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Management in social work – organization, leadership and change in professional bureaucracies

Abstract:

Management in social work is a complex and complicated assignment which entails dealing with conflicting demands and expectations from the surrounding society. This is illustrated in the literature regarding social work management, but is also evident in media reports of cases of alleged misconduct by the social services.

Despite the complexity that the role entails, there is only a modest amount of empirical research focusing on the content of and conditions for social work management. In Sweden such research is almost nonexistent. The international research is somewhat more extensive, but again, there appears to be no coherent research front in the area. Despite the rather fragmented appearance of the research, some conclusions remain consistent in almost all empirical studies. A general inference is that the managers of today need to be more strategically orientated and have to put more effort into interpreting and responding to new demands and ideas from the surrounding society than they did a few decades ago. At the same time, they are expected to shoulder an increased administrative and fiscal responsibility, which risks leading to less time for supervision of staff and other tasks.

This paper is based on an ongoing PhD project about social work management which focuses on middle managers who have the everyday responsibility for child protection, social assistance and treatment of substance abusers in the Swedish municipalities (the individual and family services, IFO). The part of the PhD project on which this paper is founded consists of a qualitative study based on twenty-six semi-structured interviews with managers in various positions within IFO and twenty-one diaries on everyday activities, kept by the same managers. The aim of the paper is to give a depiction of how the interviewed managers experience their organizational conditions and the content of their every day work. The analysis will focus on the conditions for management, its organizational base, and managers' strategies in relation to other levels within the organisation, to the environment and to innovation and change. The paper intends to contribute to the knowledge about management in professional bureaucracies, and hopes also to help fill the existing knowledge gap regarding management in Swedish social work and its relation to organizational structures.

Session 2:
Stream Changing forms – limits of the New Public Management – Governance

CHANGE IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

BY

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Change involves process and identity and it evolves over time (Chiaburu, 2006). Organisations change from the original to the present and this makes change inevitable. The process of change depends on the nature and characteristics of whether the organisation is in private or public sector. This is because the two sectors have different objectives and ownerships. The features of public sectors are quite distinct from that of private sector even though the boundary between the public and private sectors is neither clear nor permanent. One main feature of public sector is that it is owned and controlled by the government to provide public services such as electricity, gas and water. They are publicly owned-administered either by civil servants or by managers characterised as having public sector mentality. Whereas, private sector is owned and controlled by shareholders to provide goods and services in order to make profit. It is therefore expected that there will be different trigger factors that will lead to change in these two sectors. However, it is difficult to determine the nature of public sector in Nigeria and what is responsible for change in the sector. Public sector in Nigeria had witnessed several changes in terms of redefining its objectives, management and provision of utilities. The changes had led to several reforms with a view to meeting the challenges of competitive modern world. The sector is expected to be efficient in order to compete with other public sectors around the world but inefficiencies pervade the sector in Nigeria. Public sector reform has been an important objective in recent years as government recognises the central role of the state in adjustment, poverty reduction and service provision. Even if there is general agreement about its content on the need for public sector reforms, there is much disagreement about its content and direction. This paper assesses the nature of public sector in Nigeria and the process of change. It examines factors responsible for change leading to several reforms and instability in the public sector of Nigeria.

Social Responsibility and Competitive Procurement in East Asian States: Reforms and Constraints

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Social responsibility procurement refers to the purchase by government of goods and services and the hiring of construction and engineering contractors for public works, in part, to meet social and ethical objectives. These objectives include:

- a) Serving the needs of specific social groups or business categories which are considered as disadvantaged, so providing business and employment opportunities for them (e.g. minority or disadvantaged ethnic groups, small and medium enterprises, and enterprises owned by nationals).
- b) Promoting environmental standards in the drafting of specifications and building designs, in pre-qualification tests, and in the award and implementation of contracts for goods, services, and public works, with priority given to those which are environmentally 'preferable' (often referred to as sustainable procurement).
- c) Safeguarding ethical integrity (dealing with corruption), entailing measures to ensure that bribery, cheating fraud, collusion, embezzlement and other forms of corruption, as well as conflicts of interest, do not occur in the procurement process and do not influence how specifications and building designs are drafted, the method of procurement adopted, and the award and implementation of the contract.
- d) Promoting work safety measures in public works projects. This entails making them an important criteria in contract awards and a requirement in project implementation, especially in site management. Further provision may be made to penalize and debar from future contracts construction and engineering companies who flout work safety regulations.

In recent years, governments of leading countries of East Asia to varying degrees have incorporated social and ethical objectives into their procurement policies, alongside reforms to foster open competition. Examples are the promotion of sustainable procurement in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan and Singapore, the imposition of standards of work safety in public works projects in those countries, and preferences in contract awards in favour of small and medium enterprises in Indonesia, Bumiputra or Malay-owned businesses in Malaysia, and enterprises owned by nationals in the Philippines and Thailand. In addition, across the region, significant measures to control corruption in the procurement process have been implemented.

The paper will examine the range of initiatives that have been implemented in the countries of the region in order to enhance social responsibility procurement according to the social and ethical objectives mentioned above. It will examine how aspects of social responsibility have become guiding principles in the registration of suppliers, pre-tender qualification, the drafting of specifications, and the award and implementation of contracts.

The paper will then assess the impact of social responsibility objectives on parallel reforms in many East Asian states to create a market-centred system of procurement based on open tendering, equal access and value-for-money. Do such objectives accord with these reforms or do they compromise them? If the latter, what factors determine which of the two approaches prevails?

Paying your way through: Ethical Dilemmas of Entrepreneurship in Ghana

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Abstract

Introduction and conceptual background

The issue of ethical dilemmas presents a formidable challenge in the development of entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial context within which entrepreneurs operate poses a number of unique ethical challenges, for example Bucar and Hisrich (2001) indicate that the financial and operational pressures found within most entrepreneurial firms heighten the incentive to engage in expedient behaviours. At a more fundamental level Morris, Schindehutte, Walton and Allen (2002) argue that the very nature of what some might refer to as “acting in an entrepreneurial way” raises ethical questions and hence business life can be confronted with an enormous range and complexity of ethical problems. Fassin (2005) outlines a number of unethical practices in business which can be represented in the form of fraud, unfair competition, unfair communication, non respect of agreements and unfair attitudes towards and treatment of stakeholders (Freeman, 1984) through the abuse of power or due to conflicts of interest (Crane & Malten, 2004, p.51).

Cavanagh, Moberg and Velasquez (1981) categorize three basic theories that lie behind thinking about ethical behaviour and they described them as ...utilitarian theories (which appraise the social ramifications of behaviour), theories of rights (which emphasize the entitlements of individuals, and theories of justice (which focus on the distributional effects of actions or policies). The Utilitarian theories focus on the consequences of an action. Ethical behaviour is one which produces the utmost good for the greatest number. Utilitarianism asserts that the person in charge of a decision-making should work out the net outcome of a potential action and carry on only if the outcome is socially optimal. Utilitarian-based decisions are unethical if they create personal gain at the expense of society's gain or they lead to the inefficient attainment of desired ends. (Fritzche & Becker (1984). As an example a utilitarian may assess resources provided by the government to serve the needs of all entrepreneurs and the implementers keeping these resources for the benefit of their families as unethical because in the end it does not benefit the entrepreneurs who will use these to build their businesses that will provide revenues for the state as well as employment for other people. Consequently this action does not go to serve the societal good. Hunt and Vitell (1986) posit the deontological/teleological basis for analysing behaviour. The deontological viewpoint examines the actions or behaviours of an individual and is primarily concerned with the basic morality of an action. This viewpoint focuses on the consequences of actions or behaviour and is concerned with the beneficial or harmful results of an action. A deontologist would argue that paying your way through is always harmful because it is bribery and corruption and this is fundamentally immoral and wrong. A teleology might argue that there are situations in which paying your way through is acceptable. For instance in a situation where this action hinges on the very survival of the business especially at the embryonic stages of a business start up where such decisions are very crucial then the teleology's would maintain that bribery is reasonable because the benefits are greater than the harm. What is classified as ethical or unethical behaviour is clearly dependent on the frame of reference within which an action is judged, since there are several frameworks for assessing ethical behaviour, definitions of ethics vary. However, most definitions rely on the general notion that there are some actions that society defines as right or wrong. Toffler (1986) indicates that that ethical issues have to do with the general conception of right and wrong in the attitudes of individuals and the communities

(institutions) of which they are a part. Ethics therefore deals with the distinction between what is right and wrong and has to do with the nature and grounds of morality including moral judgements, standards, and rules of conduct (Taylor, 1975). This study adopts the definitions of Toffler and Taylor. Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) have been long recognised as the engine for growth in developing countries and in Ghana this call has been recognised by many governments and the last president of Ghana in 2001 declared “the private sector as the engine for growth.” This is on the premise that SMEs have a marked increase in the share of economic activities and employment creation in the Ghanaian economy and for that reason worth studying the ethical intricacies and nuances of the entrepreneurial context within which they operate. This paper examines the concept of ethics set in the context of institutional and structural milieu of entrepreneurship in Ghana, barriers Ghanaian entrepreneurs face in an attempt to be entrepreneurial in less supportive environment for enterprise development especially for small businesses. The unethical consequences that results and the structural provisions that needs to be in place to ensure that loopholes are not created and existing to make it profitable for entrepreneurs to behave unethically. The context of this study is premised on the argument put forward by the structural frameworks managers’ insistence on the fact that the individual entrepreneur is the main source of unethical behaviours in entrepreneurship whereas the entrepreneurs direct the blame to the structures and their implementers and the institutional environment within which they operate their businesses. The discussion is set in the context of institutional and structural environment of enterprise development in Ghana.

Methodology

The study adopted qualitative research approaches and data was drawn from interviews I conducted in Ghana from July to October, 2009 with 25 women and eight men entrepreneurs, whose enterprises cut across various sectors of the economy: manufacturing, food processing, fruit processing, education, clothing and textile industry, beauticians, etc. I also spoke to eleven representatives who are implementers for policy frameworks and different support organizations for entrepreneurship development as well as with five ‘gender advocates’. These categories of informants were included in the study because they are deemed as key informants who provided supplementary data to what the entrepreneurs said. I tape recorded all interviews with subsequent transcription undertaken to facilitate a detailed content analysis. The interviews were informal and focused on such areas as the business characteristics, their motivation for starting their businesses, and the general environment for business life. The interviews made in this study did not explicitly focus on ethical issues per se and therefore the respondents were not asked direct questions about their ethical attitudes and behaviours towards business issues. Rather they were asked to describe the Ghanaian entrepreneurial environment and describe who the Ghanaian entrepreneur is. The entrepreneurs were also asked to describe the challenging and troublesome situations they have faced and continue to face in their entrepreneurial career. Consequently, the respondents brought ethical issues into the discussions by themselves. Data analysis was done by adopting Miles and Huberman’s (1994) flow model components of data analysis consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. This paper is based on an ongoing PhD project about, Entrepreneurship, Gender and Sustainable Growth in Ghana and Sweden: Obstacles and Opportunities.

Results and Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals a number of ethical breaches in the practice of entrepreneurship in Ghana. These entrepreneurs operate in an environment they describe as frustrating and challenging; there are numerous structural loopholes that the entrepreneurs have to negotiate in order to attain their entrepreneurial dreams. Given the circumstances under which they operate and in overcoming structural obstacles to attaining their entrepreneurial goals they often walk a fine line between witty resourcefulness and an absolute exhibit of unethical behaviours in the pursuit of their entrepreneurial dreams.

The paper presents the views of the entrepreneurs and that of the structural frameworks managers about the causes of these unethical behaviours described as persisting among some business persons/owners in Ghana which include; Survival: businesses must look for ways to survive; A reliance on other social institutions to convey and reinforce ethics and the society’s culture that may inadvertently breed unethical behaviours among others. Irrespective of the premise on which unethical behaviours are exhibited it stands to reason that standing firm against unethical enticements has been and continues to

be a challenge confronting every business person involved in large or small enterprises (Cooke, 1988, Stoner, 1989). The question then is how far should entrepreneurs be encouraged to subvert established norms and status quo to achieve their entrepreneurial goals? Both managers of the structural frameworks and entrepreneurs have been looked upon as guilty of unethical behaviours.

The findings further show that there are structural obstacles that can make entrepreneurial activity seem completely unfeasible, nonetheless we find entrepreneurial activity happening even in the most stifling, frustrating and challenging environment such as described in this study. While entrepreneurial ethics may be stunted by the entrance of ethically broken business “charlatans” into the entrepreneurial domain or the pursuit of selfish/survivalist aims, indeed many of the respondents point to several individual entrepreneurs who have made it and distinguished themselves in their entrepreneurial endeavours in such depraving business environments as they describe it. The key for the individual entrepreneur is to identify and examine the obstacles that represent the greatest threat to convert these into innovative ideas and ways of doing their business and then figure out ways to overcome them. *“...I have not gone into any other country but I know that here opportunities abound and here if you do business and your business is doing well you can live like a king because you don’t need too much, so if your business is good and you are doing good sales and your profit is good you can even do good work for people, you can help the society so you can live and feel good. But to start and float..., it is difficult! It is very difficult. But well perhaps the difficulties of business doing in Ghana is a challenge so that when you are able to brave it and go past the difficulty then you can call yourself an entrepreneur! So I would not see it as an obstacle that cannot be surmounted, it is difficult but it should also serve as a motivator but well it is difficult but I want to get past the difficulty.”*

Business is difficult and in difficult times the first goal of a business is to survive. Perhaps it is at this instance that the Ghanaian entrepreneur walks a fine line between creative problem solving and unethical behaviour. The Ghanaian entrepreneur according to this respondent is typically creative and intelligent and hungers for success, is very motivated and desires to achieve success” The structural obstacles he or she must face in attaining important business success and be able to *“have their names written down in stone”* may invariably lead to unethical behaviours due to desperation and frustration in dealing with the barriers and harshness of the business environment in which they operate. The entrepreneur comes to view these structural provisions as burdensome, red tapes and many find success to be unattainable unless rules are twisted or conked-out as exemplified by this excerpt from Mark *“...entrepreneurs cannot be straight forward else they wouldn’t survive.”* Nora comments and says *“Often support schemes are provided and you tend to hear of those things but they all end up in people’s pockets, yes friends and families and other things so it does not really go to help business people but it does not mean you cannot succeed. You can succeed but it will be very, very, difficult, it is not easy especially if you want to be ethical, that is the most difficult thing, I mean there are two types either you are fighting the government or you are fighting the institutions; fighting the government or the administration both are difficult but the government one is like too difficult. In fact the institutional ones are also difficult, you have to pay your way through and if you are not prepared to pay they will waste your time, waste your time till you pay”*

But what happens in the case of those individuals who do not want to pay their way through and desire to be very ethical? These individuals have had to resort to other means such as clever resourcefulness as Duncan depicts his experience of what had happened over the years going back to the days when obtaining import licensing was a requirement for businesses in Ghana. Historically he recalls seeing his parents struggling to obtain the licensing only on the closing dates for obtaining them, *“they will not give them the import license until the Last day of the closing of the import license, they will give it to my mother because if you ask her for bribe she will go and report you and you see you have to pay bribe so that they can get theirs and you can also get yours”*. He joined his parents in the business at the time that there was relative improvement in the import licensing situation however, there was still restrictions on foreign exchange transfers. In his schedule as the Marketing consultant to his parents business he was doing the export and he intimates *“people will attack you that you are transferring money and they treat you as if you are a criminal because you are in business. And these are public servants; I would not take that so for me I become confrontational. So I try to ditch you and I like that! I don’t want to tell you about what happened but it was this big man who did that to me; but I think I was happy about the results. I went and reported it to the old lady, (referring to his mother) and she went straight to the vice president at that time and the man got fired. After that I went to the bank and nobody wanted to help me, yeah and that is the kind of frustrations; but that is historical. In the past as is indicated here they (his parents and Duncan) used nepotism to counteract the frustrations they*

encountered in their business endeavours but currently he indicates “*now current, current, you go, we are nice, we have grown wiser so you go and make your parcels available, they ask people for bribe and they give it but nobody asks us for bribes because in my house we are trained not to do that so we don't do that. So they do it then we send the parcels. That you do the work then we send the parcels. In a way we are also competing but what can we do because if you don't do that you will not survive.*”

In line with Duncan's experience Ben who runs a catering services in the hospitality industry, although hesitates in coming out with his views on the matter shares in the view that if one desires to be straight forward one would not survive in the industry in particular and in the field of entrepreneurship in general. Given that they all seem to be operating within the same cost environment and therefore have a common cost bearing. Invariably there is very little option left for the entrepreneur but to be involved in cutting corners having to motivate people for jobs and those individuals who offer job contracts operate on the principle of “reciprocity” (like to have something in return). “*I had contracts from corporate bodies when I started, but the demands for cuts and inflating of invoices were getting a bit too much and the money that they were taking from me was even much bigger than what I was taking so when I started saying no to that kind of behaviour, all the job contracts started cutting short.*” For him this is one of the reasons why entrepreneurs are not straight forward because as he indicates “*they cannot be straight forward else they wouldn't survive, exactly, because the person sitting in the office giving you the job knows six, eight, twelve people to give that same job to. He does not look at the end result of the product development too much but his end result is what he benefits from, I couldn't do that, I started and my conscience was not serving me right*” He indicates that because of his refusal to continue in this unethical behaviours all corporate contracts have ceased with no orders coming in because he failed to comply with the “norm” and therefore other more “willing” entrepreneurs have taken his place and are doing the jobs he used to do. He now wants to diversify and move from contract catering into something he refers to as “*let me train and rather go into training people so that people will use their conscience to work but I cannot stand it.*” When I sought an interview with Ben and introduced myself and the kind of interview I was seeking from him (researching on entrepreneurs) he asked himself “*am I an entrepreneur?*” In a more sombre reflection on this statement Ben said “*I asked myself this question because I am not seeing myself as such, you need to be a bit out of the normal, and there is a certain life you need to live to succeed in this world.*”

This is what the structural provisions and the environment has made out of an otherwise brilliant entrepreneur! The recognition that the private sector is the engine for growth for the Ghanaian economy is also a presupposition that the business people are really the ones in the driving seat to push the economy to grow in terms of its GDP component. They set up the businesses and industries and therefore create jobs; they employ people and obviously contribute substantial amounts to the total spending money in the system. If industries and businesses create jobs then the question is if these same industries are not assisted to grow, how can they become the engine for growth? Metaphorically for an engine to function effectively it needs oil and fuel and therefore no one can operate an engine without these necessary tools; for the Ghanaian entrepreneur who is the engine in this regard believe that they do not have the fuel and the oil. The fuel and the oil they refer to are: the microeconomic policy that should be in place to make the financial institutions function to the benefit of SMEs; the resources available that will make it possible for any industry to have land to operate their industry. Resources must be available to facilitate effective communication for business to run, and the effective process of registering a business without incessant bureaucratic procedures. Information must also be available at the various institutions and ministries and agencies that are promoting SMEs in terms of equipping and supporting them in order that they can effectively offer valuable services for SMEs to grow.

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Case Management – Trust in Cooperation

Through the concept trust this paper considers cooperation between staff from health county council and local authority, social welfare department. Presenting empirical data collected from a new form of integrated organisation in North Bothnia County; Case management. Case management is an integrated organisational form which comprises two different organisations into one that shares the majority of tasks, irrespective of which organisation was originally responsible for them (Westrin, 1986). This leads to new conditions for managers as well as for Case managers.

Today, cooperation is a necessity but has at the same time become problematic. Reforms within the public sector during the 1990's involved dividing responsibilities between the health county council and the local authority. As work become more specialised (Gough, 1987) and new boundaries were created it became difficult to coordinate activities (Regeringens prop. 2002/03:20). To improve cooperation there are several things to consider, for example to clarify responsibilities, increase the knowledge of each person's work and the time set-aside for cooperation, agree on the purpose and goals and gain the support of managers for cooperation (cp. Danermark and Kullberg, 1999).

In this context "trust" becomes interesting. Cooperation is aided by trust (Grimen, 2008), and it is more demanding not to show trust than to show trust. The "trustor" (the one who give trust) transfer something to another persons keeping. But trust does not always result in the expected effects; to transfer something involves risk-taking and there are no guarantees that the "trustee" (the one who gets trust) does not misuse the trust. Trust is not always about trusting a person; it may be about trusting someone's knowledge, which is common within a profession. Then the common work is characterised by a *chain of trust*, in which different professions or occupational groups add their work to what is done before. On the other hand, where different professions or occupational groups work together it is more common that the work includes control over what is done in previous links (ibid.).

The results of the interviews with Case managers and their managers indicate a positive experience of cooperation and an interest in succeeding in their work. Furthermore, cooperation within Case management is characterised by the chains of trust. It also identifies their choices when they give priority to Case management and the degree of importance it gets for cooperation.

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Dilemmas and consequences in Public elderly care; gender equality and cultural diversity within a changing practice

Katarina Andersson

Introduction

Since the early 1990s, the conditions to provide for the elderly groups are continuously changing in Sweden. New forms of organisation, mainly influenced by New Public Management, rationalisation, and strife for efficiency, are common trends within the public elderly care of today and home care services is the most common way of organising elderly care. In other words, the provision of care for the elderly takes place within the private sphere, in the elderly people's homes. Also, the administration of care performed by the care managers is concerned with needs-assessment practice and is often separated from the actual care work. The individualising trend which can be seen in many societal areas as well as in elderly care, emphasize freedom of choice and individual rights for the elderly clients or customers. Swedish elderly care is also an arena for the implementation of political objectives such as gender equality and cultural diversity, which can lead to contradictions in needs-assessments as well as in care work practice. Is it possible for the elderly client to refuse to be cared for by someone whose appearance will conflict with his or hers wishes or beliefs? Or alternatively, is it appropriate for the care workers to refuse caring for an elderly person for any specific reason? How are individual rights maintained and whose rights are mostly respected? Meetings between different actors within elderly care imply consequences and dilemmas which this ongoing project explores further³.

Methods and materials

A new organisation reform with strong emphasis on the elderly as customers and a good freedom of choice is the applied concept in the investigated municipality in one of the bigger towns in the middle of Sweden. The empirical material consists of interviews with dependent elderly, care workers and care managers and the analysis focuses on the informants' views on different aspects of care. Also, a survey answered by 29 care managers that comprise more than two third of all the care managers in the municipality. The open-ended questions were analysed discursively with focus on

³ The project has been approved by the ethical regional committee (EPN).

how care managers referred to dilemmas in meetings with elder clients based on gender and ethnicity.

Result

In needs assessments, the care managers have to follow the law and political standards equally. However, the managers gave unequal support to older women and men and less support to women. The analysis of the survey further reveals that the care managers' believed that elderly immigrants compared to elderly ethnic Swedes, demanded different care solutions that were hard to fulfil. According to the care managers, one reason is that the immigrants do not understand the Swedish welfare system and how it operates.

Conclusions

Despite National goals on diversity, a homogenous standard is practiced in Swedish eldercare. Also, legislation with ideals of gender neutrality, further support the discourse of homogeneity. Thus, diversity within the context of eldercare seems to be contradictive as consequence.

Session 3
Stream: Changes in the Human Services and public sector or New forms of professionalism

Elvi Richard & Maria Wolmesjö

First Line Managers Conditions of How to Handle Ethical Dilemmas in Social Work and Police

First line managers in Social work- and Police organisations seem to be confronting new, higher demands which are contradictory and they have to handle ethical dilemmas in their daily work. They have a freedom of action in many situations and their decisions affect other people's life in different ways. First line managers in these professions are interesting to study both of them, but in some issues - when taking children, youths or adults into temporary custody or when there are threats and violence - social workers and policemen have to interact with each other. This makes them interesting to study together.

The aim of this study is to compare what kind of ethical dilemmas first line managers in different professions *must handle* and the conditions of possibilities *how to handle* these ethical dilemmas.

The theoretical perspectives in this study are professional theories and theories of public ethos, democracy and economy values, attitudes and ethics. Concepts as professional work-cultures, as well as concepts as set of rules and regulations and rule identity are central. In this first study (which is part of a larger project) we focus upon documents as laws, regulations and ethic codes in document analyses. Depending on how these documents are formed it can affect the way first line managers *chose to*, or *must* handle. An interesting question is when there are differences, which profession will take command and make the final decision? What consequences will there be for the users/clients involved?

The entrepreneurial manager emphasizing the importance of good meals for the children and for the elderly – a case study of changing practice from a Swedish municipality

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This paper is about the reorganization of the public sector in line with New Public Management (NPM). Although it is an international trend there are national interpretations. The national context is Sweden. As the welfare obligations in Sweden as a rule are decentralized to the municipalities there are also local interpretations to be made and to be studied to make well informed analyses.

So – the municipality is Linköping – a municipality being proud of being in the NPM frontline. The sector chosen is the delivery of meals for every person in the municipality zone of responsibility that is mainly elderly and children – both in the daycare units and in the schools. The municipality production and distribution of meals has changed dramatically during the last twenty years – from a unit with problems concerning costs, the attitudes of the employees and quality to a cost-effective unit producing high quality meals by proud employees. The changes are to a high extent explained by a charismatic manager animated of the importance of good meals for society's weakest individuals. She was awarded the prize 'manager of the year' in the middle of the 1990-ies!

The changes related were implemented in the early phases of the reorganization of the production of the municipality. In the next phase, starting around the year 2000, private providers were invited to execute the production of the municipality in most areas. Meals was one of the delivers that were "put on the market" in units connected to a school, a service home for the elderly etc. The manager prepared continuously reactions to keep the market both for the sake of the quality of the meals and the jobs for her employees. The story ends when the manager is forced to retire as she is considered as a block preventing change. How come that this manager turn from an awarded person to a block? How come her strategies for handling dilemmas between efficiency and quality are not valid any more?

In the paper the story is told more in detail and relate to NPM in practice. One organization is used for the case as the characteristics of the individual organization is both the context and an appropriate unit of description and analyses. One individual, the manager, is used as a lens through which the changes on the local, national and even international level can be understood, in line with the sociologist Brian Roberts writings on how individuals can be used to understand society. The changes taken place is also put in a time-perspective through a discussion with the 'street-level bureaucracy-concept' in a new situation. With the combination of these different theoretical perspectives I hope to come beyond the common descriptions of the consequences of the NPM on the lowest levels in organizations.

Session 4

Stream: Political Influences, Changes and/or implications for the Social Welfare Services

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It takes two to tango

- challenged conditions for intra-professional relations

Purpose – In this article we seek to examine how public sector professionals experience intra-professional relations in the light of public sector reform and in particular NPM-influenced organisational changes.

Design/methodology/approach – This study departs in sociology of professions, focusing on the intersection between profession and organisation. The article is based on qualitative interviews with teachers and nurses; two important welfare sector professional groups.

Findings – The findings suggest that the adoption of ‘new’ governance ideals can bring unintended consequences; changed conditions for intra-professional relations, illustrating a tension between the logic of the profession and the logic of the organisation.

Research limitations/implications – The work has focused on Sweden and in particular on two professional groups in two specific work contexts where organisational changes have been introduced. However, the results may be applied to other countries and work contexts having undergone similar public sector reforms, and in particular where new public management processes and procedures have been introduced.

Practical implications – The findings highlight dilemmas and unintended consequences of planned organisational changes; changed and in some ways deteriorated conditions for intra-professional relations. The organisational changes to some extent go against the logic of the profession, and this article unveils the reasons behind this tension. If managers and policy makers gain knowledge about the logic underpinning the professionals’ experiences, the possibilities for successful implementation are strengthened.

Originality/value – While many studies have focused on professions on a macro level, this study takes specific work contexts into account, and highlight unintended consequences of organisational changes, affecting both profession and organisation.

Key words – Intra-professional relations, public sector, professional work, governance, organisational change, collegiality

Neo-liberalism and education

Today we are facing an increased neo-liberalism in society where privatisation and marketing increase at the same time as the public sector changes (Cervantes, 2009; 2008; 2007; 2005; Clarke, 2004). International research shows that neo-liberal reforms such as privatisation of the education system influence the school sector (Zajda, 2006). For example Coffey (2001) shows that the education system during the last 20 years has undergone significant transformation concerning social, economical and policy changes. The withdrawal of the state, the economical and political practice with deregulation and privatisation increases (Harvey, 2005).

Neo-liberalism and globalisation are important cores in the process of dissolving the public sphere (Clarke, 2004). Neo-liberalism in education can be viewed as social and economical policies that increase the use of market mechanism in education (Davidson-Harden and Majhanovich, 2006). In this article neo-liberalism is explained as privatisation of the school system where independent school increase. Neo-liberal concepts such as competition, privatisation, choice, competition, responsibility and customer are used in the public sector and schools are viewed as an individual issue (Franzén, 2006).

Neo-liberalism depends on regional context and national politics (Thomas et al. 2004). In Sweden neo-liberal thinking influence policies and practices, something Harvey (2005) describes as circumscribed neo-liberalism. The more subtle changes that occur in the Swedish school system have to do with ideas about entrepreneurship and the market reflected in school activities (Lindqvist et al, 1999). Myrberg (2006) argues that there were economic and educational arguments that led to the changes in the education system. It was the government's expectation that competition would help to improve the quality of the school and provide a better educational variation that would inspire school (Myrberg, 2006). The proximity principle, where pupils from the neighbourhood gathered at the nearest school has been abandoned in favor of the choice of another public school, and the possibility to start and choose independent schools (Lindbom, 2007). Initial the establishment of independent school influenced the educational order in a minimal way, which meant that the school field did not changed in a radical way (Bunar, 2004). The reason for this was that it was a small amount of independent school started and most of them where started in larger cities (ibid.). Because an increased amount of independent school starts – and not just in larger cities – the internal order at the education field has changed and dominate structure are challenged (ibid.).

The purpose of this article is to discuss those aspects in a local context where independent school increases in a local authority that initially had no experience of competition from independent schools and where the demographical situation

changes. The article focus on the leaders opinion concerning independent schools and their consequences.

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Organisational Effectiveness and the Role of the HRM Function in Higher Educational Institutions

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In this paper, different definitions of organisational effectiveness are considered and related to various conceptions of rationality; particularly in the context of how the human resource management function is seen as contributing to organisational effectiveness in higher education institutions. The paper is derived from research being carried out by one of the authors into perceptions of the role of HRM in universities.

Rationality can be perceived in terms of *technical, economic, social, political* and *communicative* forms of rationality. The first two are essentially instrumental forms of rationality and relate to the contention that the effectiveness of organisations can be assessed in terms of how well (or efficiently) they achieve their objectives. The final three conceptions can have more deliberative implications and relate to an alternative view of organisational effectiveness, which concerns the extent to which the organisation satisfies the competing needs of its stakeholders.

A framework for value for money analysis, derived from Boyne, is set out in the paper which combines the '3Es' model of effectiveness with the Input-Output-Outcome model. We then go onto look at various conceptualisations of the *measurement* of organisational effectiveness. Combining these two approaches leads on to a discussion of changing views of organisational effectiveness in public services, associated with the NPM. The role of the HRM function in supporting this changing of how organisational effectiveness is conceived is then considered in the light of the above developments. In particular, the effect on public sector professionals of moving from a 'stakeholder satisfaction' oriented view to a 'meeting objectives' oriented view of organisational effectiveness is examined.

This discussion is intended to clear the ground for the empirical study of whether HRM functions in universities are in fact seen as attempting to re-orient their institutions towards a top-down form of organisation, which emphasises objectives and efficiency; as might be hypothesised from the previous discussion. If so, this would imply a move away from the traditional view of the nature of the university. This held universities to be particularly discursive and participative organisations, where effectiveness is regarded as meeting the varied needs of stakeholders, such as academics, students and the wider society, in a balanced way.

Session 4
Stream: Gender and Human Services

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Att.: Conference on Dilemmas for Human Services 2010

Abstract

Changes in welfare professions – reflections on the meaning of gender

Seemingly, a new and different type of professionalism is developing in the welfare sector. However, what is happening in welfare professions should be seen in light of changes in public sector and in society more generally. In this paper I will call attention to the fact that economical thinking, as represented in New Public Management (NPM), may have a tremendous impact on professional work, and I am especially concerned about what is happening in work areas where women are, and traditionally have been, in majority. Greater efficiency and effectiveness in producing and delivering public sector services is the stated objective of NPM (Evetts 2009). Obviously, this focus will leave its mark on work contents, role performance and relationships in work organisations. As pointed out by Evetts, managerial control, standardisation of work and procedures, and externalised forms of regulation are some of the characteristics in this framework. Such elements are important in what Evetts calls organisational professionalism, which is a different and contrasting ideal-type to occupational professionalism. The latter is characterised by discourses constructed within professional groups, collegial authority, discretion and occupational control of the work. In addition to the works of Julia Evetts (2008, 2009), I will draw on Sara Banks (2006, 2008), both of them are concerned about the contents of professionalism and professional work, and, furthermore, the direction of the developmental changes which is taking place in work organisations, having absorbed aspects important in a NPM-frame (cf. Banks 2006, Evetts 2009). However, when going further into such changes, I think it is of great importance to be concerned about the meaning of gender. Built on male standards as they often are, models and theories used in promoting changes are not gender neutral. As pointed out by Dahle (2008), a gender perspective has been missing in theories and discourses of professionalism and professions; hence, putting on gender lenses would shed light on power relations otherwise not seen.

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Opportunities and barriers for women as innovative entrepreneurs – a Swedish case

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Abstract

“Women as idea carriers” was an EU-project in the north of Sweden aiming to improve gender equality, the frequency of women as entrepreneurs and support women to be innovative entrepreneurs in product and knowledge development. One part was a qualitative study of women’s experiences of opportunities and barriers as entrepreneurs in the region of North Bothnia. The interviews were taped, transcribed and analysed by content analysis. Opportunities experienced were support and solidarity from other women and professional male consultants when women’s innovations were rooted in practical problem solving in domestic sphere and therefore not counted as inventions. Barriers experienced were different hindering structures, lack of knowledge, lack of communication strategies in relation to men, lack of time and personal insecurity were perceived as barriers. Entrepreneurship and innovations mirrored the division of labour which created barriers for women to identify themselves as entrepreneurs. As a consequence of the male norm and the labour market structure women had difficulties to get financial support as their ideas were not counted as innovations. In conclusion it has shown to be important and necessary to understand women’s specific conditions in different regional contexts such as North Bothnia when stimulating political and societal growth.

Gender equality and local culture in Northernmost Sweden (Tornedalen Area): women's views of men

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Abstract

In this study I examine gender related questions in Tornedalen (Northernmost Sweden) based on interviews of 103 women of varying ages. The study involves a historical perspective from the middle to the late twentieth century. The focus of my feminist poststructuralist analysis is at women's view of men. The women give multiple views that could be related to each woman's own life experience as well as her thoughts about equality issues. The interviewed women often have strong opinions about men and gender equality. Many women describe men in Tornedalen as masculine, strong, targeted, trustworthy, and hard working. Men are also considered to be egoistic, boring, silent, dominant and too traditional. Many women portray relationships in Tornedalen as unequal; and that men often dominate relationships and avoids doing household tasks; a situation which many women considers being unfair. Over the time span studied (about 1950-1995) there have been major changes in society, including a transition from a time when almost all women were housewives to later times when this has become more and more rare. It is noted that gender relations, and views of men, expressed in narratives representing times around the 1950s often are quite similar to those expressed in narratives representing the middle 1990s. This might seem surprising considering the fact that so much has happened in society over the fifty years covered, including transitions from an almost exclusively rural to a more urbanized life (in the countryside) - from a time when almost all women were full-time housewives to a time when this has become a rarity.). The study suggests that women's views of men are based on norms and values which are more adapted to a time when most women were housewives. Some of the narratives also illustrate how women carry a protest in themselves, protesting against inequality and dominating men. Many women have a negative view of men and often blame the local society for producing inequality and strong differences in gender functions. The local culture seems to have strong expectations/demands of what it means to be a man and a woman, respectively. It is clear that women identify themselves as Tornedalen women, and it most often it seems that they feel more in common with female youth than with men of the same age. Overall, in women's perspectives, a picture of Tornedalen men emerges which links to a local culture which keeps on to strong and old traditions.

Inactive Banana Time: Lean Production and the Degradation of Work in the UK Civil Service

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The UK Civil Service has been subject to a constant series of governmental and managerial initiatives over the last 30 years aimed at increasing efficiency and productivity, and emulating the private sector. In 2004, the Gershon Report identified public sector efficiency savings of £20 billion with the reduction of 80, 000 jobs – it is important to note that this was before the current recession and threat of ‘deep cuts’ to public services. In the context of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the pressure to cut jobs is pronounced, aiming for 25, 000 job losses by 2011 through the centralisation of operating sites and the introduction of lean production working methods, which it is claimed will increase both productivity and quality. This has been implemented to a large extent, with the current workforce standing at 79, 000 as compared with 100, 000 in 2004 – ‘05. This research critically examines the consequences of the adoption and application of lean production techniques to HMRC, which is important and unique as an instance of public sector service work, as such methods are typically associated with private sector manufacturing industry.

There is a substantial literature on the degradation of white-collar work. Braverman (1974) argued that the use of Taylorist work methods deskilled, fragmented and routinised work, tightening managerial control over the labour process and resulting in the degradation of work, including white-collar employment. Such claims resonate with more recent studies on white-collar labour processes. For instance, Baldry et al. (1998) found that modern open plan offices were characterised by an intensification of work, lean staffing and team Taylorism with managerial obsession of productivity targets. Furthermore, in research into the privatisation of British Gas, Ellis and Taylor (2006) argue that what were once considered relatively good and secure jobs, were now restructured, routinised and repetitive. Sennett (1998), in a macro analysis, assesses such transformations of working lives in *The Corrosion of Character*. He asserts that there has been a movement away from secure, structured and meaningful work, to the new capitalism which is characterised by insecurity and low-trust, yet there are increasing work demands and pressures. Related to these themes of degradation, Francis Green (2001) argues that there has been an intensification and extensification of work, particularly in the public sector. This is marked by increasing workplace pressures and threats to job security, which have health and well-being implications.

This paper is based on extensive empirical research which was conducted across 6 HMRC processing sites during 2008 – ‘09. The primary aim was to investigate the application of lean production to the clerical labour process and examine its impact on the lived experience of labour. We conducted 36 interviews with shop-floor workers, middle managers, and union representatives at each of the 6 locations. Analysis of the qualitative data facilitated the development of a detailed questionnaire, which was distributed to 15% of the workforce at

each HMRC site. A total of 840 questionnaires were completed, being a 51% return; and the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data revealed some significant and stark results.

Prior to the introduction of lean, working at HMRC was seen as a relatively secure and stable job, with good conditions, personal development opportunities and flexi-time. There was 'whole case' working, with staff overseeing cases in their totality, thereby having some control, autonomy, and discretion, and could take informal breaks and interact with colleagues. Advocates of lean, claim that it is a superior way of organising work that eliminates waste and inefficiency; whilst simultaneously continually improving quality and productivity (Womack et al., 1990). Although there is limited reference to workers, this is typically located in the language of mutual gains, with promises of enhanced worker involvement and responsibility (Radnor and Bucci, 2007). While numerous critics argue that lean results in constant pressure and subordination, which deteriorates the experience of work (see Danford, 1999; Stewart et al., 2009). Womack and Jones (2003) go on to assert that lean can be extended beyond manufacturing and successfully applied in service sector environments. Our study uncovered similar worker experiences to those reported within manufacturing, but with new dimensions in the office environment. Management consultants had conducted 'classic' time and motion studies on case work at HMRC resulting in the fragmentation and simplification of processes. Workers now have to meet strict hourly targets that are collated on whiteboards, which relentlessly increase the pace, volume and intensity of work. Another feature of visual management is the use of kanban flags, where workers have to wave green flags for more work, thereby tying them to their desks. Furthermore, staff are only allowed two personal items on their desks, and the farcical nature of this situation was highlighted in the interview data, where a manager asked an employee whether a banana on a desk was "active or inactive"!

This brutal form of Taylorism has degraded and dehumanised what was once considered a decent, secure and satisfying job. Elements of employee control, discretion and autonomy have been diminished, and flexi-time and training opportunities are seen as 'incompatible' with lean productivity and efficiency targets. It came as little surprise when our survey returned results that showed 77% of staff would like lean to be abolished, and many of those interviewed claim that it is a form of corporate bullying.

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The Good Society

In this paper I will discuss different notions of what society is ending with a proposition of what the good society is.

During the 19th and 20th centuries notions about what a society is emerges within the western world. Some are proto-capitalistic, others not. Sociology is soon established as a social science with society as its object. My thesis is that these notions increasingly become ideological reflections of Capitalism – understood in the Marxist way: as a mode of production. Thus, what we need is a non-ideological understanding of society, and especially of the good society. We need to base society upon man.

A good society based on economical and cultural growth What is Kiruna?

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The consequence(s) of opening a new face in an iron ore mine in the north of Sweden promise to be far reaching; especially for the city of Kiruna. Faced with the prospect of tumbling buildings and ruined infrastructural assets it has been decided to move parts of Kiruna city out of harms way, retuning evacuated areas back to nature (cf. Kiruna Municipality, 2010). The “transformation” of the city involves much more than constructing or relocating buildings. In a grand project, flexibility, adaptability and sustainable resource use are considered imperative to growth in the “new” city and the region, as well as prerequisite in creating a good life for the city’s inhabitants.

In addition, the expansion of employment opportunities for the populace through the creation of an infrastructure that favours industrial growth is an important objective. Good development opportunities for trade and industry presuppose a good infrastructure that creates conditions for a highly competitive production of both goods and services. This is a matter of buildings and communications but even of access to a well educated labour force, after all, it is essential that actors want to reside and work in Kiruna. This presupposes access to provisions, accommodation, education, health care, political representation, free-time as well as a sense of security and participation.

One of the many challenges facing those planning the future Kiruna is to better understand how to accommodate the demands of trade and industry without compromising with the needs and interests of the actors that inhabit the city. Indeed, this is at the centre of Theme 1 of the complex *Nya Giron* project (financed jointly by the European Regional Development fund, the North Bothnia County authorities and Luleå University of Technology). Taking into consideration the preferences and opinions of different stakeholders, the primary aim of the project is to help those planning the future Kiruna make informed decisions in their endeavour to make Kiruna “a good society based on economical and cultural growth”.

This paper considers in which way(s) Kiruna is dissimilar to a good society based on economical and cultural growth. As the ideas endorsed by Neo-liberalism gain support in Sweden (cf. Hirst, 1998; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Clarke, 2004; Harvey, 2005; King, 2009) the paper engages the conception of a good society based on economical and cultural growth endorsed within Neo-liberal ideology and compares this with a current illustration of what Kiruna is. Utilising secondary demographic data and primary empirical data provided by the city’s inhabitants the paper discerns dissimilarities that indicate that the vision of the “new” Kiruna demands more than a simple transformation of the city’s physical assets.

Keywords: Neo-Liberalism, Kiruna, Change, Economical growth, Cultural growth.

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Whither UK Public Services: From Public Sector Bureaucracy to Social Enterprise?

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At the time of writing this abstract it is uncertain who will govern the UK after the national elections that must take place later this year. It seems likely that the ruling Labour Party will lose its majority and a Conservative Party government will take power. This is taking place against the backdrop of financial and economic problems for this as for many other countries, as the consequence of the global financial crisis and recession. There is consensus across all major parties that the large public financing deficit must be addressed, and the consequences for public services and public sector spending are likely to be severe. If parties differ it is largely about when and how far to 'cut' – not whether.

In this context it is perhaps not surprising that reform of public services is something that the major parties in the UK are seeking to put near the top of their agendas for change, perhaps as a way of convincing a sceptical public that there is the potential for improving public services even as funding might need to be cut. In this both major parties seem to be pursuing the 'social enterprise' model as an attractive reform proposal. Any new government is thus likely to have this somewhere on their policy change agenda.

This paper seeks to evaluate the case for reform of the public sector on 'social enterprise' lines. A recent government paper advocates such change quite forcefully: 'We want to see an increase in the number of people helping to run or own local services and assets, and to transfer more of these assets into community ownership' (Communities and Local Government 2008:12). Social enterprises are 'businesses with primarily social or environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners' (Social Enterprise Coalition 2008:1). In this paper the concept of 'social enterprise' is set in the context of a long history of campaigns for 'workplace democracy' and worker cooperatives on the one hand, as well as neo-liberal ideology on the other. The paper examines the threats and opportunities offered by the 'social enterprise' model with particular reference to the employees who provide the services offered. It is contended that much depends on the specific model adopted, but also on the institutional and fiscal context in which it takes place.

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Public e-services – for whom?

Citizens' perceptions of the Internet as a contact channel

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E-government, i.e. the use of ICTs in public administrations and the associated processes of organizational change and skills development, is today viewed as an important way of providing better services to citizens and making public administration more efficient. In Sweden, the political leadership has expressed the intention to become world-leading within e-government. The conditions seem favourable – Sweden is ranked as the global leader in e-government readiness, and a number of public e-services are available, ranging from mere information provision to fairly complicated online services. However, citizen adoption of governmental e-services remains relatively low and the expected results from e-government initiatives have not yet been achieved. Researchers also point to a gap between citizens' expressed interest in using public e-services and actual use.

Quite naturally, the capability and willingness of citizens to use public e-services will affect the implementation of e-government. Organizations such as OECD and UN, as well as researchers, point to a number of potential advantages of using public e-services, such as increased accessibility and convenience, faster service delivery, higher information quality, and direct or indirect cost savings. However, there are also downsides. For example, moving resources to e-services implies that service levels through traditional contact methods (e.g., personal visits or telephone services) might decrease. Preference or necessity to use traditional means of contact has been suggested as one of the main barriers to usage; hence, providing e-services will not eradicate the need for "human" customer service. Concerns about privacy and data security may also contribute to making citizens hesitant to use public e-services. Accordingly, studies have found a strong correlation between citizens' trust in e-government and their willingness to use e-services. Moreover, individual factors such as higher age and lack of Internet experience have been shown to contribute to lower adoption of public e-services.

In light of the above discussion, and in response to calls for further research to increase the understanding of citizens' perspectives of public e-services, the purpose of this study was to explore citizens' perceptions of using the Internet in the contact with their municipality. The study, which was conducted as part of a larger research project, investigated citizens' trust, perceived advantages and disadvantages of the Internet as a contact channel, as well as their preferred means of contact with the municipality.

Data were collected through a total of eight focus groups in four Swedish municipalities, followed by a mail survey to randomly drawn samples of citizens aged 16-74 in two of these municipalities. A cluster analysis resulted in three groups of respondents, which differed significantly from each other in terms of perceived advantages and disadvantages, trust, preferred contact channels, demographics, and Internet use. Such differences among citizens need to be considered when e-services are developed and implemented. Results also highlight the importance for municipalities to clearly communicate the existence and advantages of e-services, taking into account differences in attitudes, preferences, and Internet usage ability among diverse groups of citizens.

Spaces between Public and Private

: new technologies, new challenges

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the reconfigurations of subjects, objects, and technologies that take place through transactions and negotiations in the new spaces or blurring of boundaries between health institution and home. New subjects and objects emerge in technoscientific practices, and it is therefore important in technology design to take responsibility for how some practices, subjects and objects and not others come into being (Suchman 2007). We are using a range of examples, based on our own empirical work and secondary sources, in a discussion of how boundaries are discursively and materially enacted and how subjects, objects and practices come into being in the enactments. The context is neo-liberal with a focus on growing individualization in Swedish society in the encounter between people and technologies in which new spaces are created. Discourse analysis is used in the analysis of data to understand people's praxis, as expressed and connected to action within constraints (Alcoff 1988). This approach helps us to understand how language is used to create the social world although we also acknowledge Fairclough's (2003) work that sees social agents as not simply "pre-positioned in how they participate in social events and texts" (2003:160). We thus engage with our data as text, whilst remaining sensitive to the social, political and economic context from which it is derived. In this paper we conceptualize identities as multifaceted and fluid, and not fixed in some essentialized part (Hall 1990).

The findings address questions about how, in what way and whether people should or would want to adapt to new spaces that challenge traditional values and norms about every day life and the blurring of boundaries between health institution and the private home. The value of this study is the meeting between different rationalities, in terms of caring of subjects (humans) and caring of objects (non-humans).