



Sustainable Development in a Diverse World (SUS.DIV)

STRATEGIC PAPER OF RESEARCH TASK 1.1

“Cultural diversity: Mapping dynamic processes”

Future Research Activities and JPA for the next 18 months

Participants

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Future Research Activities

In the coming years, this task group will work on four core themes, which are common to the research activities of the five different partners. We further link these themes to the concept of social cohesion, which we consider the social pillar of sustainability.

Four research themes

1. *How is diversity constructed?*

Consistent with our dynamic perspective on diversity, all research partners study how diversity is constructed, examining the impact of contextual factors, interpersonal relations and/or power (in)equality on the specific construction at hand.

Research partners: K.U.Leuven, CEIFO, FEEM, Università Politecnica delle Marche Ancona, Umea University

2. *How is the construction of diversity impacted by the historical development of globalisation?*

A second research theme addresses the historical contextualization of diversity and examines the impact of globalization trends on diversity. The question is addressed at two levels. First, at the organizational level, we study how a company's own history affects its understanding of diversity. Second, at the institutional level, we examine how the changing global context in which institutions operate influences the ways in which they understand diversity.

Research partners: CEIFO, FEEM, Università Politecnica delle Marche Ancona, Umea University

3. *How is diversity governed?*

This third research theme addresses the ways in which diversity is governed or managed. Similar to the second theme, this question is addressed at both the organizational and institutional levels. At the organizational level, we examine diversity management practices in different companies and their impact on outcomes such as inclusion of minority employees. At the institutional level, we examine the role and influence of the state in shaping the way organizations manage diversity.

Research partners: K.U.Leuven, CEIFO, Umea University

4. How is diversity presented/marketed towards organizations' external stakeholders?

This fourth and final question addresses how organizations present their diversity governance towards their external constituencies and why.

Research partners: CEIFO, FEEM

Diversity and social cohesion

In the research activities of task 1.1 we operationalize the concept of sustainability primarily through its social dimension. We focus on the relationship between diversity and social cohesion, which we consider a key indicator of social sustainability. The overall goal of our research projects is to investigate conceptions of diversity and diversity management to distil the conditions under which diversity leads to social cohesion and therefore to sustainability.

Following the definition of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2005), social cohesion of a modern society refers to a society's ability to secure the long-term well-being of all its members, including equitable access to available resources, respect for human dignity with due regard for diversity, personal and collective autonomy, and responsible participation. In line with our dynamic perspective on diversity, this definition stresses the importance of the quality of the bonds between individuals and between them and the community to which they belong (relational dimension) and stresses the importance of equity in access to resources, human dignity, autonomy, and participation (power dimension). By focusing on the quality of relations, and avoiding prescribing how such relations should look like, it is further fully compatible with our contextual approach to diversity.

Evidently, social cohesion is not a 'natural' condition of (contemporary) societies. Rather, it results from communities' ability to develop non-violent consensual processes to resolve conflicts. Scholars have pointed to the fact that social cohesion does not necessarily require sharing values, norms or beliefs (Council of Europe, 2005, Westin, 2004), is not simply the result of uniformity (Westin, 2004), and is even compatible with social differentiation (Durkheim, 1993). Rather, social cohesion is achieved through 'sharing of the political objective of achieving equity' – where equity must also be understood as the 'equity of capabilities' necessary to develop as an individual in the

context of existing social relationships (Council of Europe, 2005). Friedkin (2004) has argued that social cohesion can occur in large, complexly differentiated groups thanks to particular social processes of coordination of behaviours and group-level structural conditions. However, empirical research on these coordinative social processes in diverse communities is still lacking. Our research activities specifically aim to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between diversity and diversity management on the one hand and social processes of social cohesion within a diverse community (a group or an organization) on the other.

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Appendix: Research projects of the research teams

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Research project 1: Embedding the notion of diversity within the productive context

Objective

The study develops a theoretical model explaining how contextual factors affect the definition of diversity in organizations. Specifically, it investigates which contextual factors make specific socio-demographic differences salient, which socio-demographic differences become, as a result, salient, and why.

Research methodology

The theoretical model is inductively built from an in-depth qualitative case study of an assembly line in an automobile factory. A case study methodology was considered suitable to address the research objectives because it allows maximal data collection on the organizational context, which is needed to gain new theoretical insights (Eisenhardt, 1989) on the relationship between that context and diversity in the data analysis process. Qualitative data was collected in three phases. In the first phase, the company's HR director and the HR manager were interviewed, in the frame of a previous research

project on diversity management. In the second phase, an experienced researcher collected data by means of 20 open-ended interviews with production manager (1), supervisors (3), operators (4), poolman (1), HR manager (1), HR clerks (6), and trade union representatives (4). Respondents were selected on the basis of either their demographic profile (minority in terms of sex, culture, or religion) or the relevance of their function relative to diversity management. During the third and final phase, three-month-long fieldwork was carried out in the CarCo assembly hall. Data were collected by means of ethnographic techniques such as participant observation (Spradley, 1980); 35 semi-structured interviews (Spradley, 1979) with supervisors (5), team leaders (5), operators (17), pool(wo)men (2), HR manager (1), HR clerks (3), the company's doctor (1), and a company nurse (1); internal documents on the company, HR and diversity management, training, and production system; and 150 photographs.

Research field

In the last two decades, the diversity literature has been flourishing and diversity has grown into a well-established research domain in organization studies. The vast majority of the empirical diversity research has investigated the relationship between personnel heterogeneity in terms of tenure, professional background, sex, ethnicity/race, and age, and organizational processes and outcomes such as conflict, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998; Kilduff, Funck, & Mehra, 2000; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999).¹ Despite the impressive amount of empirical studies (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), the lasting inconsistency in results is currently hampering the consolidation of past research and the theoretical development of the domain (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). Diversity remains a 'box' yet to be opened (Lawrence, 1997; Neale, Northcraft, & Jehn, 1999; Richard, Kochan, & McMillan-Capehart, 2002; Pelled et al., 1999; Shapiro, 2000).

A number of moderating variables have been advanced as possible explanations for divergent findings in group functioning and outcomes: various kinds of differences and

¹ A second, smaller group of diversity studies are rather concerned with human resource management, focusing on the careers of individuals belonging to minority groups. Concerned with equal opportunities and/or the optimal allocation of the human potential within the organization, they often look at how formal and informal practices, such as mentoring (Kram & Lynn, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1991) and networks (Cox & Nkomo, 1990; Ibarra, 1992; James, 2000), exclude minority members from certain jobs or the higher ranks of organizations.

proportions of minority individuals (cf. Ely, 1994), time (cf. Harrison et al., 1998), and other contextual factors (Triandis, 1995) such as decision comprehensiveness (Simons, Pelled, & Smith, 1999), organizational culture (Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998; Richard, et al., 2002), national culture (Wiersema & Bird, 1993), and task design (Neale et al., 1999). Taken together, these moderating variables suggest that the context plays a critical role in determining the effects diversity onto organizational processes and outcomes.

The role of contextual factors has also been stressed in relation to saliency, dealing with the question why certain differences become visible and meaningful while others do not in a given situation. Evidence from previous empirical research indicates that saliency is negatively related to the degree of representation of a minority within a given group (Abrams, Thomas, & Hogg, 1990; Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Kanter, 1977), and positively to the visibility of the traits, with race, sex, and age being more likely to become salient over non-visible ones in most circumstances (Pelled, 1996; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). However, other studies indicate that less visible, deep-level attributes, more closely related to the nature of the task to be carried out and the job design of group members (for instance, involving more or less interdependence) (Triandis, 1995; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998; Zanoni & Janssens, 2004) gradually become more salient in longer-term relationships (Harrison et al., 1998; Pelled et al., 1999). Again, these results point to the relative importance of contextual factors such as time and work processes in natural settings, where individuals usually have longer-term relationships. Here, however, they are considered as determinants of the saliency of specific socio-demographic differences rather than as moderators. Despite multiple indications of its importance, the context remains understudied in diversity research (Milliken & Martins, 1996).

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Research project 2: Creating workplace inclusion through diversity management

Objective:

To increase our understanding of how different diversity management practices of organizations with low educated, culturally diverse employees impact employees' inclusion

Methodology

To facilitate theory building, we rely on a qualitative study of six organizations: a hospital, a call centre, a logistic company, a fruit and vegetable wholesale, a transport company and a construction company. We gathered similar types of data in all six settings: archival material and interviews. Interviews were conducted with HR manager or manager responsible for diversity, line managers, majority and minority employees. We will analyze the data, adopting a modified grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Locke, 2001), whereby we constantly compare data and emerging categorization schemes in order to build theory.

Description of the research field

Over the past two decades, many organizations have implemented diversity management programs that are described and commented on by management academics who tend to endorse the importance of managing diversity. As a consequence, much of this management literature is normative. Studies have identified best practices of companies that aim to maximize the potential advantages of diversity and minimize its potential disadvantages (Cox, 1991; 1993). Eager to prescribe organizational systems and practices such as training and mentoring, they, however, have ignored the lack of empirical evidence that demonstrates the success of managing diversity initiatives (Cassell, 2000; Prasad & Mills, 1997). Additionally, their language tends to be overly positive, focused on celebrating differences. With the help of evocative metaphors such as the melting pot, the cultural mosaic or the rainbow (Prasad & Mills, 1997), this literature has ignored the underlying economic rationale for such approaches (Dickens, 1994) or the problematic nature of universalistic notions of managing diversity (Jones et al., 2000). Recently, scholars (e.g. Cassell & Biswass, 2000; Dick & Cassell, 2002; Prasad & Mills, 1997) have argued that this largely atheoretical approach prevents an adequate understanding of inequality and discrimination in the workplace. Similar to the plea of Nkomo and Cox (1996) to theorize the concept of diversity, they aspire diversity management to be a serious research area.

This study intends to contribute to a more rigorous and theoretically grounded conceptualization of diversity management. In this qualitative study, we examine how different diversity management practices of organizations with a low educated, culturally diverse workforce influence employees' inclusion in an organization. It is our aim to develop a framework for conceptualizing the process through which the inclusion of culturally diverse employees is facilitated or inhibited.

Following Pelled, Ledford and Mohrman (1999), we define inclusion as the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system. Inclusion has many aspects. Components that were previously assessed are decision making influence, access to sensitive information (O'Hare et al., 1994; Pelled, Ledford & Morhman, 1999), job security (Pelled et al., 1999), and social integration (O'Reilly et al., 1989). In this qualitative study, no a-priori component of inclusion is measured. Rather, we will rely on open interview questions to study this outcome as research has

shown that people's backgrounds tend to shape what they notice and what they perceive to be important or interesting (Dearborn & Simon, 1958; Walsh, 1988). One of the contributions of this study is therefore to identify components of inclusion that are specific to the context of lower educated migrants.

Relevant literature leads to the expectation that inclusion of a low educated, culturally diverse workforce is not very likely. First, ethnicity difference is a so-called surface-level diversity or demographic difference (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Harrison et al., 2002) which engenders an immediate impression of dissimilarity among group members. As people feel more comfortable with those who are similar (e.g. Byrne, 1971; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1964), surface-level heterogeneity prevents group members from engaging in closer interpersonal contact. Additionally, social identity theory (Brewer, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that people classify themselves and others into social categories based on attributes such as demographic characteristics. Then, in order to provide themselves with a positive social identity, they seek to maximize intergroup distinctions in favor of their own group. Thus, within a surface-level diverse work group, people's inclination to in-group favoritism gives rise to the emergence of subgroups, thereby perceiving members of another group as less likable, trustworthy and honest, and reducing inclusion. While some authors (Philips & Loyd, in press) argue that the influence of surface-level diversity is temporary and peaks at the forming stage of a work group, the question remains how and through which organizational practices the negative consequences of ethnicity difference can be decreased or de-accentuated.

Second, the negative relationship between dissimilarity and inclusion is especially likely to hold for a difference that is perceived as lack. In their study on HR managers' discourses on diversity, Zanoni and Janssens (2004) have shown that differences that are visible and hearable tend to be constructed as lack. Employees whose appearances do not match the aesthetic criteria of work or whose language skills prevent smooth communication with colleagues are judged to hinder the attainment of organizational goals. Often, the 'reasonable' conclusion of management is that employees with such differences lack fundamental competences and need to be excluded.

In contrast, dissimilarity that is perceived as value may help inclusion. Pelled and colleagues (1999) found that being different is likely to help organizational inclusion if

the difference reflects job expertise as in the case of tenure and education. They argued that this type of dissimilarity is a ‘task-related’ difference, i.e. more directly associated with the objectives of a work-unit; not a ‘relations-oriented’ dissimilarity type, i.e. type that primarily form the context for social relationships in the work unit (Jackson et al., 1995). It is a task-related difference that is likely to be viewed as a valued task resource, increasing an employee’s inclusion. While tenure and education are generally considered to be task-oriented and race, gender and age to be relations-oriented (Jackson et al., 1995), the latter dissimilarities may also entail task-oriented differences. For instance, the study of Zanoni & Janssens (2004) showed that migrants and women showed behaviors and attitudes such as flexible availability and loyalty which were constructed by the HR managers as a valuable contribution to the work system. This suggests that job expertise due to tenure and education is not the only valued task resources; also the willingness by migrants and women to take jobs that require great flexibility, are badly paid and socially devalued can be a valued contribution to the organization.

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Research project 1. Understanding concepts of diversity management

The overall aim for this part study is to answer the following two questions: How is diversity constructed/conceptualized? How is diversity governed? The first question addresses the ways in which diversity is constructed and examines the impact of context, relations and power on the construction. The second question addresses the ways in which diversity is governed or managed. The question is addressed at the organizational level by studying diversity management in public service and companies.

Background

In recent years several new laws have been made in Sweden with the aim to counteract discrimination. An increasing variety of measures are also taken to manage problems of discrimination in practical contexts of everyday working life. In Sweden, diversity is closely associated with anti-discrimination efforts, which is partly explained by the fact that action against discrimination is put down in law. One of the questions this study addresses is what kind of perspectives these measures entail and what kind of knowledge about diversity management and discrimination they produce. How is diversity constructed/conceptualized and how is it governed or managed?

The approach for this study is to scrutinize the views of participants at specific courses about diversity management often connected to anti-discrimination. A number of courses are organized with the aim to instruct participants about current legislation on

discrimination in working life and on issues of diversity management. The views and perceptions of instructors and participants will be researched.

Objectives

My objective is to outline and examine what conceptions these actors have of diversity management and real or simulated offences. How do the participants and course leaders at “diversity” courses talk about diversity management and discrimination? How do they express their ideas about diversity and discrimination? How is diversity management (and connection to discrimination) constructed by the course leaders and adapted by the participants? Do the constructions differ between different social groups as participants working with every day life at elderly care centres and civil servants in responsible positions? (Is it feasible according to the collected data to explore if there are any differences in understanding of diversity and discrimination in relation to gender and ethnicity? What kind of impact do these courses have on cohesion at workplaces according to gender, class and ethnicity?)

Theory, method and data

The collected data will be analyzed in terms of a social theory of knowledge perspective (Fleck 1997, Berger & Luckmann 2003, Douglas 1986). Data will be collected in the setting of courses on diversity management and discrimination mentioned above. Since different categories of civil servants, officials and employees are recruited to these courses comparative studies of different socioeconomic backgrounds, professions and sectors of working life are possible to pursue. Participants targeted in this proposal are on the one hand civil servants in responsible administrative positions, and on the other hand employees working in the services of care for the elderly. However, other professional categories are also conceivable.

The study is based on written documentation such as descriptions of courses, questionnaires used at the courses (often embedded in a larger project) and some of the courses outcome as participants planning for further diversity management at their work. Another source of information will be through interviews carried out with instructors and participants as well as participant observation at courses. The collected data will be treated by means of discursive methods of text analysis.

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Övrigt

Jämställdhetslagen (1991:433)

Lag (1999:130) om åtgärder mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning.

Lag (1999:132) om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet av personer med funktionshinder.

Lagen (1999:133) om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av sexuell läggning.

Research project 2: Presentations of diversity in advertisement

The purpose of this study is to increase our insight in how "diversity" is constructed and presented in the business advertisement. How is diversity presented in photos and texts by multinational and national companies in daily magazines, advertising brochures and television? (Hall 2002, Cottle 2000)

What are seen as diversity? How is difference created - and sold - in the ads? What is a difference? What kind of difference is seen as important, what becomes salient? - and in relation to which products and services? (Kondo 1997)

How is difference (diversity) materialised in advertisement? What kind of pictures, symbols, texts etc is in the pictures - how are these commented by a text (Halter, 2000).

Discourses of new economy serve as a context. Diversity is constructed within the discourses of economy. It gets its meaning through and it is limited by these discourses.

The discourses of new economy highly value consumption. Customers are presented as a key factor in the production line (Bauman 1998) and the images of the company having a great effect on the consumption. It seems important how the company is being viewed by the consumers; they are buying the picture of the company just as much as the product (Micheletti 2003).

Consumption is presented by the companies as something that gives everyone equal opportunity to consume (as if it placed everyone on the same level). There is a notion that consumption is emancipatory (Landsberg Norrbacka 2005, Landsberg Norrbacka 1999). To be seen as a strong consumer gives the "immigrant" empowerment. This way of looking at power raises the question: How is the notion of immigrant constructed - in what way is the immigrant seen as oppressed and liberated by the consumption?

Diversity is used by economic reasons, to embrace a larger market. Diversity is something the company is able to "use" to gain a profit (which shows a power relation). This study further examines how the advertisement - and the reasoning of advertisement - has changed the last decades. To follow one or few companies "history" of advertisement, for instance how is Body Shops and L'Oreal's core values expressed in their advertisement. How did it change - or did it change - when L'Oreal bought Body Shop? How are Body Shops CSR (corporate social responsibility) expressed in the advertisement?

If advertisement is an external way to speak to the customers - the yearly stakeholder meeting could be seen as internal way to speak to the owners of the company. Is diversity presented - and how is it presented - for the stakeholders?

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Core theme of the project: The Diversity issue in the oil and gas sector, a case study.

Objective

The aim of this study is to provide an in-depth insight on the diversity issue within a sector under great public scrutiny such as the oil and gas. The analysis will be conducted on an Italian company, with a leading position in the sector and a strong international profile.

In particular the analysis is intended to shed light on how diversity is theorized and constructed within the company and to answer the following research questions:

- what parts of the traditional formula used in dealing with diversity, and deeply rooted in the corporate culture and historical background of the company, are still effective now,
- do they have any reflections on current practices and policies or do they have faded away because of globalization
- what the impact of globalization on that formula,
- how is diversity governed and managed within the company
- how is diversity presented/marketed towards external stakeholders

The ethnographic study will allow for a comparison between past and present practices.

Methodology

The questions previously mentioned will be answered placing the analysis within the boundaries of the stakeholder view of the firms theory (Freeman, 1984), according to

which the capacity of a firm to generate sustainable value over time is related to its relationships with critical stakeholders² (Donaldson, 1995),(Post, 2006) whom corporate social responsibility (CSR) is one of the building blocks (Freeman at al, 2004). In this view the issue of dealing with cultural diversity, emerges as one of the pillars of corporate social responsible policies aimed at achieving sustainability of business in the long term. As an axiom of corporate responsible conduct, the issue of diversity can be presented in a twofold perspective. On the one hand an inner dimension dealing with the increasing multicultural composition of the workforce due to increase in migration waves and cross – borders relations which is strictly linked to diversity management; on the other an external façade dealing with the diversity expressed by a wide range of stakeholders the company find itself in connection with, and related to the topic of stakeholder engagement and CSR across cultures.

Thus addressing the needs and expectations of an increasingly cultural diverse workforce population and managing the possible challenges deriving from operating in a wide range of places throughout the world, has become a challenge companies are called to face in the new century (Werhane, 2000) aiming at the achievement of a new paradigm of corporate responsibility recently labeled as *Global Business Citizenship*³ (Wood, Logsdon, 2001), which offers a way to multinational managers to think about and plan for social responsibility and ethical conduct within and across nations and cultures (Wood, 2006).

The research will consist of 3 phases, leading to a case study construction and is composed by a:

First Phase: reconstructing the leader’s formula of dealing with cultural diversity going back to its historical roots

the historical background of the company’s and of his leader construction of diversity will be reconstructed through:

- Insight study of historical and corporate documentation.

² Primary stakeholders: namely any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievements of an organization’s objectives such as employees, costumers, suppliers, communities

³ the current definition of *Global Business Citizenship framework being “ A global citizen is a business enterprise (and its managers) that responsibly exercises its rights and implement its duties to individuals ,stakeholders and societies within and across national and cultural borders”*

- In–depth interviews with managers and key actors who had leading roles in company (such as retired managers) aimed at reconstructing the historical roots of the diversity issue.

Data will be collected through means of ethnographic analysis and will undergo a qualitative analysis.

The Second Phase: back to the present

In order to answer the question on how diversity is currently constructed and governed in relation to the twofold perspective previously mentioned:

- A set of interviews will be conducted with a sample of HR executives and CSR and stakeholder relations managers, new hires coming from different cultural backgrounds and with people with an expatriate experience to assess current view and conceptualization on diversity.
- Assessment on the issue of diversity related initiatives will allow the identification of ordinary practices, best practices and limits of actual policies.

Third Phase: how is diversity presented to stakeholders:

- Moreover a documentary analysis will be conducted on corporate reporting and documentation such mission, business principles, sustainability and social reports, annual reports and self- regulatory tools such as codes of corporate ethics and codes of conduct and corporate web site in search of diversity related statements and related initiatives..

Research Field

Globalisation, European integration, mergers and acquisitions, changes in business practices, impact at many levels. At the same time a new workforce, customer and supplier base is emerging. Profound demographic changes, mobility and migration are all having an impact across European society. The expectations of employees and the wider society are changing as new generations and groups enter the marketplace, as employees, customers and suppliers. These challenges have also been identified by the last year's European Commission Green Paper which refers to diversity as a potential

business opportunity: *“A major challenge for enterprises today is to attract and retain skilled workers. Therefore relevant measures could include greater workforce diversity, equal pay and career prospects for women, management of employees who are off work due to disabilities or injuries, and non-discriminatory recruitment practices.”* In this scenario, the oil and gas industry’s fundamental role in society is being redefined and enlarged as oil companies face increasingly pressures to becoming more active players in issues such as economic development, poverty alleviation, environmental remediation, while being at the same time drawn into complex issues involving human rights and national sovereignty. This has made the oil and gas, one of the leading sectors in terms of commitment to corporate social and environmental issues. Within the sectors involvement into sustainability, the issue of diversity have risen, assuming a particular perspective. As a matter of fact oil companies are generally facing a major loss of experienced personnel over the next years as more than 25 percent of the technical workforce are about to reach the retirement age. To fill the gap, oil companies are increasingly pushed to a more culturally diverse workforce, fostering inclusion of minorities and promoting local employment both within managers and workers. As global actors oil companies are called upon to deal with cultural diversity on external bases, such as dealing with a wide range of stakeholders (contractors, suppliers and local governments and communities, indigenous people) whose expectations and need vary across cultures. The aim of this study is to shed further light on the historical and corporate evolution of a major Italian company’s conception of cultural diversity. Starting from the charismatic figure of its leader and founder framed in an historically relevant period, passing to the team of actors he assembled with the aim of pursuing an internationalization strategy and ending up to current vision and practices within the framework of corporate social responsible policies.

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Research Project: Shifting conceptualizations of diversity and diversity management: The discourse on immigrant associations in Sweden (1968-2005)

Objective

The general aim of the study is to explain how the organizational field of “associations” (*föreningar*) is structured, institutionalized and constructed in different periods of time and place. The specific aim is to understand how the field constitutes an arena for defining diversity and similarity (imitation) in organizational policies (ideas, discourse) and programmes (plans, practices, products), with a focus on immigrant organizations (*invandrarföreningar*). The general aim is connected to theoretical development of what has come to be known as New Institutional Theory (Czarniawska and Sevón, 1996, DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Forssell, 2002). The specific aim applies this theoretical framework to the field of immigrant organizations in the context of Swedish discourse on the topic for the last few decades. The study places organizational level analysis at the centre of attention rather than an individual level.

Capitalizing on the concept of organization field, the study aims to answer some of the following questions. How is the field of ‘immigrant associations’ constructed? How do organizations in a field *imitate* (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991, Sahlin-Andersson, 1996) each other, or converge (Forssell, 2002)) towards each other? How are change and stability explained in the field of immigrant associations? Which changes can separately be located at the internal level in organizations and at the wider institutional level, and

which changes can be identified in the interaction between levels? To what extent do immigrant associations converge to, or diverge from demands and values of strong institutionalized actors such as the state? Under what conditions do they diverge (more diversity) or converge (social cohesion) (Forssell, 2002), or show both at different periods of time and at different levels in their lives? Does divergence mean diversity at the expense of social cohesion (integration, stability)? What trajectories of diversity can be sustain, augment, or weaken social cohesion?

Methodology

Before describing the method, perhaps it is useful to clarify some concepts. Immigrant associations (*invandrarföreningar*⁴) are also referred to as ethnic associations (*etniska föreningar*) or sometimes classified with cultural associations (*kulturföreningar*). Until the late 1990s, no formal distinction was made between immigrant associations and minority associations (Dahlström, 2004) and the terms were used interchangeably⁵ in studies about integration and segregation. In order to explain how the field shapes organizations, and how organizations also can shape a field, a historical construction of ‘immigrant organizations’ is used. This requires combination of methods. In this study, three qualitative methods are used: documentary analysis, interviews, and participant observation.

Documentary analysis. The study will be based on *documentary analysis* of the Swedish state immigrant policies and programmes for their implementation between 1968 and 2005. The reason for the limitation in the analysis is because Swedish immigrant policy is traced from the 1960s (Westin 2004). This is augmented by accounts of how certain national and local level immigrant associations – the targets of state policies and programmes - responded to, or acted upon, the shifting immigrant policies and programmes of the state (Borevi, 2004, Dahlström, 2004). Basic official documents, such as the Swedish Government Official Reports (*Statens Offentliga Utredningar*, SOU), Ministry Publications Series (Ds), government directives, rules of associations

⁴ Immigrant associations and immigrant organizations will be used interchangeably in the project.

⁵ Since 2000, five ethnic groups have been officially recognized as ‘national minorities’, and the policies and programmes directed to ethnic groups or Association have now started to be distinguished (Borevi 2004). This has implications for the shifting construction of ‘immigrant associations’ because it was assumed that all minority groups had similar features until that time.

formed by cultural/ethnic associations, and the evaluations on diversity consultants are also used to put the discourse of diversity in its public context. While the documentary analysis may provide the historical construction of shifts in immigrant policies and programmes, and the corresponding discourse on immigrant associations, it may not adequately account for how the actors view themselves and are viewed by others in the current context.

Interviews. To provide an answer to the latter issue, ten *interviews* will be held with national level and some of their respective local level immigrant associations, located in Stockholm and Umeå. The interviews will be carried out with current and former leaders of the National Federation of Ethnic Associations in Sweden (*Samarbetsorgan för etniska organisationer i Sverige*, SIOS); The Finish Club in Umeå, which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year; The Cooperative Organ for Ethnic, Cultural and Language Associations in Umeå (*Sammanslutningsorgan för etniska, kulturella och språkliga föreningar i Umeå*, SIUM); The Polish Association, Somalia African Welfare Association in Sweden; the Ghana Union in Umeå. Interviews will also be conducted with diversity consultants (*mångkulturella konsulenter*) both in the Stockholm and Västerbotten counties.

Participant observation will be done in conferences, workshops and formal meetings on and about migrant issues and immigrant associations, integration, diversity, cultural diversity and multicultural events.

In the following section, a broader background of the project will be discussed, followed by the theoretical framework that will be used to analyse the study.

Background and research field

Previous research and discourse on ‘immigrant associations’ focused on different themes in different periods of time. In Sweden labour market migration dominated since the end of the Second World War until it was halted by early 1970s. During this period, immigration was characterized as temporary and the question of refugees, asylum seekers, or family re-union was not major phenomenon to be a target for policy studies.

Labour market migrants were not considered as posing equal demands as for Swedish citizens (Borevi, 2004, Dahlström, 2004). They were treated on temporary basis and diversity issue was of a different character than it later developed. However, due to the increasing number of migrants in all parts of the world, migration has become one of the great challenges worldwide, which required different policies and adequate programmes to govern. There have also been different explanations to the shifting policies and programmes.

The literature on the historical construction of “migrant organizations” in Sweden is described as following different phases, with shifting conceptualizations on diversity. According to Westin (2004), the gradual shift of the discourse between adaptation, assimilation, multiculturalism, and integration can be explained by looking closely on how global and regional developments impacted on the national level discourse on immigrants and their organizations in the Nordic countries. In a state-sponsored evaluation study on *Associations, Power and Integration*, several researchers argue that the discourse on immigrant organizations in Sweden can be summarised as passing through several major phases: Establishment (1970s), evaluation (1980s), re-evaluation (1990s), and the current phase of ambiguity and diversity. The focus is on how national level discourse shaped the establishment and institutionalization of certain forms of organizations but not others. The description of different phases makes it easier to understand how ideas of organizing and organizational practices, with respect to immigrant organizations, can be said to travel in time and place (Czarniawska & Sevón 1996, 2005). However, as useful as this might appear, there is still confusion as to how and why the discourse on the role of immigrant organizations *shifted* during the different phases, and where the causes or origins of such shifts lie. In the new institutional theory, change and stability are located in the dynamics of the organization field.

According to DiMaggio and Powell, *organization field* consists of:

Those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognised area of institutional life: key suppliers, resources and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce service and products. The virtue of this unit of analysis is

that it directs our attention not simply to competing firms, as does the population approach (...) or to networks of organizations that actually interact as does the interorganizational network approach ... but to the totality of relevant actors". ...The idea comprehends the importance of both connectedness and structural equivalence (1983: 148).

In this view, it is the environment which constructs organization. Organizations in a field continuously influence each other at the same time as they also construct that field (Czarniawska, 1992). By belonging to the field, organizations get the legitimacy they need to get competent labour power as well as other resources, which they require for survival. It is not a question of organizations looking to be independently acting but that they reflect the features of their environment and by doing so, look primarily for getting legitimacy from the field. A consequence of organizations belonging to the same organization field will become more similar to each other. The new institutional theory has been used to illustrate how public institutions tended to imitate the structures and models from the business organizations, and the extent to which this imitation remained at the rhetoric level rather than leading to fundamental changes (Brunsson 1989). New institutional theory has also been use almost in many other fields in which norms, values, rules and regulations became important dimensions for the cyclical behaviour of organizations in terms of change and stability (Czarniawska and Sevón, 1996, 2005, DiMaggio and Powel, 1981, 1991). As far as we know there has not been any study applying this theory new institutional theory in the field of immigrant associations. DiMaggio and Powell (1991) distinguished between three forms of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic/imitative and normative isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism comes from strong organizations that require weaker organizations to follow their rules, regulations or structures, such as when the state demands immigrant organizations to follow certain regulations in applying for a financial support and defining their projects. The state also may demand immigrant organizations to contribute to its policy of integration and social cohesion (Westin, 2004). Mimetic/imitative isomorphism results from feelings of uncertainty. When an organization adopts a technology that it fails to understand or has ambiguous consequences, it usually imitates the technology used on what is perceived to be a successful organization in order to avoid criticism or just to tend to appear up-to-date. Normative isomorphism originates primarily from

professionalization, in the sense that organizations employ employees with similar education and with career network developments that show similar trajectories. They maintain their skills and similarity through their network and spread new ideas within their own groups.

Nevertheless, although the basic framework remained rather the same, since its inception as an important explanation of organizational isomorphism and imitation, the new institutional theory has developed a bit different in different professional fields such as sociology, political sciences, and organization theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). In the Scandinavian version of New Institutional Theory (Brunsson and Olsen, 1990, Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996, 2005, Johansson, 2002, Røvik 1996, Sahlin-Andersson, 1996, 2005), organizing, rather than organization field becomes the centre of analysis. Organizations are not merely structures and actors in a field but also consist of change and stability at the same time (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996). It focuses (i) on processes of organizing rather than organization field, (ii) on both rule making and rule following, (iii) processes and identity formation but also (iv) on the processes through which rules are broken and institutionalized practices are de-institutionalized. According to Oliver (1992) and Røvik (1996), de-institutionalization is the process through institutionalized norms; values and rules become denigrated and eventually lose their status from the context of organizations. Dahlström (2004) argues that the modern immigrant policies and programmes are decoupled from each other because of their use in different levels. In policy level, what Brunsson (1989) calls, rhetoric or talk dominates. At the other production or programme level, efficiency matters more than rhetoric or talk, leading sometimes to contradictory or opposing results. Yet, these studies do not specifically focus on the field of immigrant organizations. The project thus aims to contribute to that literature from the new institutional point of view.

The question of why change is difficult in institutionalized environments also gets a new approach. Brunsson and Olsen (1990) provide the answer to the question of why change, viewed as a norm is difficult to implement? In the traditional, rational model of organization and organization change, plans and their implementation are taken for granted as unproblematic. Goal, coordination, implementation, leadership, rationality, order and control are taken for granted as if they would naturally lead to both stability and change. Forgetfulness, stability, and change bring the conditions for continued

reforms and demands for transformation in spite of the organization remaining ‘unchanged’ (Brunsson and Olsen 1990). Other important concepts in the Scandinavian discourse on new institutionalism are translation, which is defined as “to place something from one context to another - by imitation (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996), and editing (Røvik, 1996). Ideas, practices and products change as they travel from place to place, settle for a while or permanently, and then leave for another context but always with local editing or imitating. Thus, change as planned innovation and its diffusion in time and place occurs simultaneously in many different places with different localized ‘translations of the original idea, practice or product. The concepts of *fashion* and *institution* are also used a bit differently in the Scandinavian discourse on new institutionalism. Although a popular idea, practice or product takes its own life and trajectories (fashion) for the time being, it may also constitute an institution, such as an administrative reform, or ‘social cohesion’ (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005). Thus, change occurs when organization adopt ideas that have become fashionable for the time being and solve their problems by translating them into local demands and language.

These ideas will be applied in the Swedish discourse on immigrant organizations (1968-2005).

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Research Project: Social diversity, integration, assimilation, dissimilation in modern history.

Core theme of the project: Cultural diversity and social cohesion in modern history: the case of Italian emigration (19th and 20th centuries)

Contents and objectives

General aim of the research is to provide an analysis of the social diversity and its dynamics in the contemporary age (19th-20th centuries) moving from a historical perspective. To raise this issue, the project is articulated in three different stages:

1. A review of the social historiography on the diversity in the modern age. The purpose of this section is to contribute and to conceptualize social diversity pointing out issues as the differences between social-economic and cultural-national approaches, those between (socially) functional diversity and marginality, the border between inclusion and exclusion and its moving during the contemporary age, the impact of industrialism on cultural diversity, etc. This task aims to develop Sori (2003)'s analysis of social diversity in the early modern age in connection with the emergence of industrialism and national State in the last two centuries.
2. Cultural diversity, globalization, globalizations. The idea is to look at the social and cultural diversity in the setting of the process of globalization of the last decades, paying special attention to the circulation of the labour force and of the work as an economic factor. At this regard, it should be stressed that many historians tend to consider the present globalization dynamics as a phase of longer run movement of integration and disintegration of the human societies, and primarily of their economies. An important turning point of this movement was, for instance, the

phase of integration of the world economies between the late 19th century and World War I, but further steps can be easily located in previous processes, from the enlarging of the commercial routes during the 16th century to the slavery and triangular trades of the 18th. Each stage of this long run movement represents, of course, not only quantitative changes, but also qualitative, so that the aim of the work is, on one hand, to single out how diversity is typically affected by integration phases, and, on the other, to stress the original impact of the present (since 1980s-1990s onward) globalization on this topic.

3. Social and cultural diversity in the case of the Italian emigration
A third part of the project is focused on the particular form of diversity resulting from the migration processes, and is based mainly on the analysis of the large literature on the case of the Italian emigration between the late 19th and the late 20th century. This field of studies provides a large set of empirical evidences to compare and verify assumptions, hypotheses, determinants and effects about the dynamics of diversity related to migration processes both on a general conceptual level and in the present processes.

A first pattern of analysis of the literature on cultural diversity and migration processes can be based on the following items throughout the three steps of the project:

- diversity: anthropometric differences; jobs, professions and social conditions; regional and international linguistic barriers, women's position as a diversity in diversity; religions and religiosity, the material culture: food, cloths, etc.
- integration devices: school, citizens' rights, trade unions, exogamic marriages, entrepreneurship, upward social mobility, success of ethnic cultures, segregation devices, ethnic districts, associations, endogamy, domestic religions, deviance and deviations: physical health, mental health, criminality.

As to the case of the Italian emigration, a first set of issues can be considered:

- aspects and characteristics of the case of the Italian emigration between the 19th and 20th century
- the position of the Italian emigrants in the production process of the immigration countries
- politics toward Italians (led by governments, companies and "middle-level institutions" like unions, churches, banks, associations)

- integration and non-integration (assimilation, emargination, alienation, successful performances like Italian eating, associations of emigrants)
- success and unsuccess of the Italian emigration in terms of social cohesion (power, relationships and contexts)

Methodology

All the different phases of the project are based on the instruments of the historical research, both qualitative and quantitative, which are able to provide a diachronic substrate and idiographic evidences to the static and nomothetic analysis. The project is thought to be run mainly on secondary sources (literature and existing case studies), although some use of the primary ones (archives, biographies, etc.) is not excluded for special issues. The work can also rely on the building of a database on the Italian entrepreneurs abroad, which has begun in the first phase of the Sus.Div program. Comparative methodology in space and time is to be used particularly in the first and the third part of the program, in this latter case for what concerns main immigration countries of Italians, such as United States, South America (first of all Argentina) and Germany. There is also the possibility to have recourse to experts and scholars outside the research group for papers and contributions on specific arguments of the program.

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