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Opportunities and hindrances of combating discrimination

Diversity in the labour market
The project Key forces

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1. Introduction

1.1 Discrimination in working life

In Sweden equal opportunities has been on the agenda for the past decade and beyond. Despite legislative acts such as the Equal Opportunities Act (1991:433), the Law on Measures against Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life (1999:30) the Ban against Discrimination in Working Life because of Sexual Orientation (1993:133) and the Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life of People with Disability Act (1999:132), people within these groups still experience disadvantages in the labour market.

During the last years the proportions of discrimination have been noticed, something that has been obvious in an increasing number of reports, especially in working life to the four ombudsmen of discrimination (Mlekov and Widell, 2003).

1.2 The laws of discrimination – a blunt instrument.

1.2.1 Extent

The laws of discrimination extend to employees and applicants for a job. Andersson, Edström & Zanderin (2002) give an account of that the entire job application procedure is included, which is a new feature to the legislation. This means that that the law can be applied to situations where the employer discontinues the process of hiring a new employee where discrimination of some sort is suspected. The discrimination laws even extend to the screening process leading up to job interviews. However, advertisements in the situations-vacant column, where single discriminated individuals can’t be identified are not included. Advertisements can however be considered as discriminating of an ethnic group.

1.2.2 The discriminating rules of the laws

The basic principle of the laws is that they prohibit direct as well as indirect discrimination. The term *indirect discrimination* includes a direction, a criterion or a procedure that may seem to be neutral but really treat persons of a certain ethnicity, handicap or sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot request a cleaner to have studied the Swedish language on an upper secondary school level. However, if the purpose of the direction, criterion or procedure can be justified, discrimination is obviously not at hand (Andersson, Edström & Zanderin 2002). When a case of indirect discrimination is tried, proof will be of special importance.
The rule states that an employee or an applicant does not have to prove that the employer did in fact have a discriminating purpose with a certain action. Instead, the employee or the applicant only has to show that he or she is a part of a protected group and that the employer has in fact treated him or her in a less advantageous manner than the employer would have treated a person not belonging to a protected group. The burden of proof is in this case turned over to the employer who has to clarify why he or she has acted in the manner at hand. 

An employee, who has reported his or her employer in any type of discriminating case, cannot be subjected to any form of reprisals from the employer. For example, the employee cannot be replaced to a less favorable position at the work place, get an increased workload or get changed and/or not receive perquisites. A special problem appears when an employee is subjected to harassments from fellow employees or from the management. The definition of harassment is not entirely clear. In general, harassments can be described as behavior that violates the integrity of an employee in reference to the employee’s ethnic background, handicap or sexual orientation. Should an employer learn that an employee consider himself/herself to be the subject of harassment, then the employer is obliged to investigate and take actions, within reasonable limits, that prohibit the continuance of the harassments. The employer’s obligation occurs as soon as he or she has learned about the problem. This kind of knowledge is mainly gathered from the subject himself/herself. However, the local employee’s representative can also take action to inform the employer. Should the local employee’s representative take action, the employees consent should be obtained (Andersson, Edström & Zanderin 2002).

1.3 Sanctions

Means of sanction against discriminating actions are firstly the possibility to declare the decision invalid. An employer found guilty of discrimination can also be forced to pay general reparations. Should the discriminated person be an employee, economic reparations to the individual can also be judged. Should there be discriminating actions against several applicants for a job, the law postulates that the general reparations should only be paid as where it only one person being discriminated. The reparations should be divided equally between the plaintiffs. However, there is no such rule in the new laws against discriminating actions. Now, every plaintiff has the right to individual reparation (Andersson, Edström & Zanderin 2002).
1.4 The Swedish legislative acts against discrimination in working life

1.4.1 The Equal Opportunities Act (1991:433)

Section 1
The purpose of the Act is to promote equal rights for women and men in matters relating to work, the terms and conditions of employment and other working conditions and opportunities for development in work. The aim of the Act is primarily to improve women’s conditions in working life.

Section 4
The employer shall carry out such measures as, taking into consideration the employer’s resources and the circumstances in general, may be recruited in order to ensure that working conditions are suitable for both women and men.

Section 5
The employer shall facilitate the combination of gainful employment and parenthood with respect to both female and male employees.

Section 6
The employer shall take measures to prevent and preclude an employee being subjected to sexual harassment or harassment resulting from a complaint about sex discrimination.

Section 7
The employer shall, through training, skills development and other suitable measures, promote an equal distribution between women and men in various types of work and within different categories of employees.

Section 8
The employer shall endeavour to ensure that both women and men apply for vacant positions.

Section 9
When at a workplace there is not, in the main, an equal distribution of women and men in a certain type of work or within a certain category of employees, the employer shall, in respect of new positions, especially endeavour to recruit applicants of the underrepresented sex and shall seek a gradual increase in the proportion of employees of that sex.
Section 13
The employer shall each year prepare a plan in relation to the employer’s work for equality. The plan shall contain a survey of the measures pursuant to Sections 4-9 which are required at the workplace and shall indicate which of such measures the employer intends to commence or to implement during the coming year.

The plan shall also provide a summary report of the plan of action for equal pay that the employer shall implement.

1.4.2 The Law on Measures against Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life (1999:30)
The purpose of the Act in regard to work, employment conditions and other work-related conditions as well as development opportunities in the workplace is to promote equal rights and opportunities without regard to ethnic background.

Section 2
Employers and employees shall co-operate in order to promote ethnic diversity in working life. In particular they are to work against all forms of ethnic discrimination.

Section 3
In this law the term ethnic background refers to the fact that a person belongs to a group of persons who have the same race, skin colour, national or ethnic origin or religious faith.

Section 4
Within the framework of her or his activities an employer shall carry out a goal-oriented work in order to actively promote ethnic diversity in working life.

Direct discrimination
Section 8
An employer may not unfairly treat a job applicant or an employee be treating him or her less favorably than the employer treats or would have treated persons with another ethnic background in a comparable situation, unless the employer shows that the less favourable treatment has no connection with ethnic background.
Indirect discrimination

Section 9
An employer may not treat a job applicant or employee less favourable by using a rule, requirement or procedure that seems natural but which in practice is particularly disfavourable to persons with a particular ethnic background. This does not apply if the purpose of the rule, requirement of procedure can be motivated by rational reasons and the measure is suitable and necessary for achieving the purpose of the issue.

1.4.3 The Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life of People with Disability (1999:132)

Section 1
The purpose of this Act is to combat discrimination in working life of people with disabilities.

Section 2
Disability means every permanent physical, mental or intellectual limitation of a person’s functional capacity that as a consequence of an injury or illness that existed at birth arose thereafter or may be expected to arise.

Direct discrimination

Section 3
An employer may not disfavour a job applicant or an employee with a disability by treating her or him less favourable than the employer treats or would have treated persons with such a disability in a similar situation, unless the employer demonstrates that the disfavour is not connected to the disability.

The prohibition does not apply if the treatment is justified having regard to such ideological or other special interests as are manifestly more important than the interest to prevent discrimination in working life of persons with disabilities.

Indirect discrimination

Section 4
An employer may not disfavour a job applicant or an employee with a particular disability by applying a provision, a criterion or a method of procedure that appears to be neutral but which
in practice disfavours persons with such a disability when compared to persons who do not have such a disability. This applies unless the purpose of the provision, criterion or method of procedure can be justified for reasonable reasons and the measure is appropriate and necessary in order to achieve the purpose.

### 1.4.4 The Ban against Discrimination in Working Life because of Sexual Orientation (1999:133)

**Section 1**
The purpose of the Act against Discrimination in Working Life because of Sexual Orientation is to counteract discrimination in working life because of sexual orientation.

**Section 2**
The term sexual orientation means a homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual orientation.

**Direct discrimination**

**Section 3**
An employer may not treat a job applicant or employee less favourably than the employer treats or would have treated persons with another sexual orientation in a comparable situation, unless the employer shows that the less favourable treatment has no connection with the sexual orientation of the plaintiff.

**Indirect discrimination**

**Section 4**
An employer may not treat a job applicant or employee with a specific sexual orientation less favourably by using a rule, requirement or procedure that seems neutral but which in practice is particularly disfavourable to persons of a particular orientation. This does not apply if the purpose of the rule, requirement or procedure can be motivated by objectively justifiable reasons and the measure is suitable and necessary for achieving that purpose.

**Section 5**
The bans against discrimination in Sections 3 and 4 apply when the employer
1. Takes a decision to employ, decides to take in a job applicant for an employment interview or undertakes other measures during the employment process,
2. Makes a decision concerning promotion or chooses an employee for an education that will lead to promotion,
3. Applies salary or other employment conditions,
4. Leads or distributes work or
4. Dismisses, terminates, lays off or undertakes other intrusive measures against an employee

1.5 The concept attitude
Secord and Backham (1969) defined attitudes as "certain regularities of an individual’s feelings, thoughts and predispositions to act toward some aspect of environment". Feelings represent the affective component of an attitude, thoughts the cognitive component, and predisposition to act the behavioural component. Attitudes are evaluative; that is, they reflect a person’s tendency to feel, think or behave in a positive or a negative manner towards the object of the attitude. Attitudes can be held about the physical world around us, about hypothetical constructs and about other people. The general point is that attitudes refer to a particular target for example person, group of people, object or concept. This is one way in which attitudes differ from personality, since personality reflects a person’s predisposition across a range of situations.

The affective component of an attitude is reflected in what the person says about how he or she feels about the object of the attitude. The cognitive component refers to a person’s perception of the object of the attitude, and/or what the person says he or she believes about the object. The behavioural component is reflected by a person’s observable behaviour toward the object of the attitude and/or what he or she says about the behaviour. In practice, the term "attitude" is usually taken to mean the cognitive and/or affective components. Behaviour is most often construed as an outcome of attitudes. Attitudes are almost assessed using self-report questionnaires. In other words attitude measurement depends upon what people say about their feelings, beliefs and/or behaviour towards the particular object in question.

1.6 Diversity
The noun “mångfald” is a describing word meaning “a large offer, characterised by variety” (Svensk Ordbok, 1987). Consequently a number of objects have been brought together and looked at. The verb “mångfaldiga” (manifold) means to multiply “making more or bigger”. Duplicating texts implies making copies, meaning that a new perspective can be visible; namely the similarity between the different elements (Svensk Ordbok, 1987).
According to Svensk Ordbok the adjective “mångfaldig” (diverse) refers either to similarity or difference. Therefore diverse could imply something that occurs in a large number but also consists of a large number of different types.

The English word corresponding to “mångfald”, “diversity”, is commonly translated with “differences” even if the concept in the English language has a slightly broader sense. (Kärre et al., 1965). Within the research area researchers are looking for a broader concept, that will make us see each other as of the same sort as others but also as different human beings. Jansens and Steyart (2002) propose the English word “alterity”, a word translated as “variety”. Regarding humans’ differences as natural variations will positively develop an attitude based on the view that all people are equal.

Loden and Rossner claim that human diversity could be seen as two dimensions; the primary dimension and the secondary dimension. The primary dimension refers to characteristics that are difficult or impossible to change such as sex, ethnicity, physical ability and sexual orientation. The secondary dimension of diversity refers to changeable differences, for example education, professional experience, religion, place to live, social status, income, citizenship, language, how to communicate etc. These qualities are changeable and develop gradually depending on individual actions and experiences in life (Loden and Rossner, 1991).

In Sweden “diversity” and “diversity management” are relatively new terms. Originally these concepts developed during the eighties in the USA. Diversity could be seen as a large and various offer, while diversity management could be put in relation to leadership, an American attempt to find new ways taking advantage of human resources in enterprising. It was not until 1990 that the term “diversity” emerged in Sweden, partly in discussions about integration policy and partly concerning strategies for development of workplaces (Westin, 2001). Diversity seen from the perspective of society deals with the condition in society and on the labour market, how it should be arranged and organised. It also deals with preferable conditions such as equality and justice. This perspective could be expressed in goals within the integration policy. A political ambition is that immigrants, disabled, women and men, people with a homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual orientation, elderly and low educated shall be integrated on the Swedish labour market. Unfortunately this political ambition does not yet correspond with tangible actions in working life.
Diversity seen from an organisational perspective focuses on business strategies. It deals with different elements, such as age, gender, ethnicity, disablement etc. and the effects that these factors have in a working team. Another question of vital importance is which effects such elements have on power and influence within an organisation.

Diversity as a strategy of management could be seen as managing and taking care of human resources in an optimal way. The point of departure, according to this perspective, is that diversity deals with leadership and development of organisations, stressing the variety of differences in background and competence with significance for work, quality and customer-orientation (Abrahamsson, 2000).

1.7 Working with diversity in Sweden

Demographic changes in Sweden are shown in various studies (Ds 200:69). Consequently, organisations try to adapt strategies to these new conditions. The most important reason why companies and organisations decide to work with diversity could probably be attributed to globalisation. Globalisation can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. A tendency of today is that nations are declining in importance. Developing economical limits are instead in focus. The rapid change in technology and market in the global economy have created new conditions for producing goods and services in many companies. As a result, personnel competence has begun to be appreciated as a most crucial resource in companies for their competitive success and capacity for renewal. A key issue for today’s managers is, therefore, to organise and manage their personnel in such a way that the competence of their organisation is developed and maintained. A primary task will be to formulate strategies and principles for developing and maintaining competence in companies (Bauman, 2001).

The mobility of labour force has increased and the 2000th century will probably be a century of migration. During the post-war period the number of immigrants have increased considerably in the Western World. In most of those countries the immigrants amount to 5 to 20% of the population. Swedish calculations show that in the year 2015 there will be 27% of the working population will be of foreign background. Predictions concerning the structure of the labour force also show that the working population will be reduced already year 2008.
While the number of elderly persons will increase heavily, the part of the population in working age will grow relatively slowly (Ds 200:69).

As a result of the Swedish demographic changes new and changed circle of customers and markets could be described. This concept implies a great demand for companies and organisations to employ a workforce that reflects the entirety of the population. There are many companies in Sweden stressing that the market is diverse which for instance means that the products must be functional for disabled people, both women and men etc. Having a diverse workforce and understanding the needs of the customers could be the strength of every successful company (Mlkov and Widell, 2003).

Working with diversity in the labour market is a question of equality. The fact that every person irrespective of origin and personal characteristics, has the same opportunities in the labour market is a question of justice. To summarise the conditions in working life is of importance for vital necessity in other respects.

2 The project Keyforces
Equal is a European Community Initiative with the objective of combating discrimination and inequality on the labour market. This initiative is related to the treaty of Amsterdam, which expects the European authorities and the authorities of the European Union member states to take appropriate actions to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The project Keyforces in the Swedish County of Blekinge is included in the Equal programme. The project aims to counteract prejudices and discrimination, at the workplace, due to gender, ethnicity, functional disabilities and sexual orientation. The project hopes to enhance lifelong learning and develop routines for the counteraction of social exclusion at the place of work. One goal is to encourage recruitment and help discriminated groups to enter and remain on the labour market.

2.1. Aims and specification of problems
Initially there was a research part included in the project Keyforces, which aimed to empirically study and describe different workplaces regarding groups submitted to
discrimination. Another point of departure was to understand the mechanism of how attitudes
develop over time.

2.2. Methodology
The research study was planned to understand opportunities and hindrances working with
diversity at the places of work. The method adopted was quantitative as well as qualitative.

The empirical objects of study were twenty-two diversity consultants focusing their attitudes
towards diversity in society with a special stress on working life. The attitudes of the diversity
consultants would be compared before and after they had participated in diversity education
and carried out gatherings at work places for discussing attitudes and prejudices against
gender, ethnicity, functional disabilities and sexual preferences (work place consultations).
The empirical objects of study would also consist of 10-15 informants from various public
and private workplaces in Blekinge.

The research was planned to involve four main methods:

- Data collecting through mapping the workplaces within the project regarding diversity
- Data collecting through personal interviews
- Data collecting through studies of literature and of documents such as policy programmes
- Data collecting through a questionnaire, which aimed to map the diversity consultants’
  attitudes towards groups submitted to discrimination

After having carried through the education in diversity management only four pupils, a
number that later on would further decrease showed interest in working as diversity
consultants. This reason, combined with a heavily deteriorated economy and disagreement
within the development-partnership (UP), resulted in a commission given to the School of
Management at Blekinge Institute of Technology. The assignment, which was initiated in
August 2003, was to evaluate the part of the Equal Project Keyforces that deals with the
training of diversity consultants and their accomplishment of workplace consultations. At this
phase of the project the research part was not of current interest and consequently “put on ice”.

3. Evaluation of the theoretical and practical training of diversity consultants and the accomplishment of workplace consultations within the framework of project Keyforces

The evaluation started when the diversity consultants, who at that time were only two in number, carried out their first workplace consultation (rådslag) in November 2003 and completed in March 2004. The result of the evaluation was meant to provide a foundation for a decision on the continued existence of the project.

The evaluation consisted of six parts:

A. Evaluation of the diversity consultants’ theoretical and practical education seen from their own perspective. Data was collected through group interviews.

B. Evaluation of the diversity consultants’ theoretical and practical education seen from the perspective of the development-partnership. This part focused on those members who participated in the diversity education. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews.

C. Evaluation of the diversity consultants’ theoretical and practical education seen from the co-ordinator’s perspective. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews.

D. Evaluation of the diversity consultants’ workplace consultations. The very same day or at the latest the day after having carried out a workplace consultation, the diversity consultants were interviewed by telephone. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire with open alternatives for reply.

E. Evaluation of the workplace consultations by observations. Data was collected through unstructured observation method.
F. Evaluation of the workplace consultations seen from the participants’ perspective. Data was collected through structured questionnaire with open alternatives for reply.

4. Education in diversity

4.1 Theoretical part
The training programme consisted of 56 weeks. During the first 17 weeks the education in diversity management represented 60% and the paramedical education 40%. For the following 36 weeks the proportions were 25% training in diversity and 75% paramedical education.

The education in diversity management was carried through in four blocks. The first dealt with the Equal programme, the labour market in the county of Blekinge and labour legislation. The second block focused on legislation against discrimination in the labour market. Techniques for meetings, presentation and information as well as social treatment were also parts included in this block. The third block contented sexual orientation, gender equality, ethnicity, disability and bullying in the labour market. Block four, finally, was a summary of the training programme and a final exposition of the diversity concept.

4.2 Practical part
The practical part of the training programme took place within labour market employment training, upper secondary adult education, upper secondary education and sheltered activities. On these occasions some members of the development-partnership participated. The task that was given to them was to support and evaluate the work of the diversity consultants.

4.3. Workplace consultations
After the practical part of the diversity education only five pupils were interested in carrying on with the work of a diversity consultant. During the period 2003-11-17 to 2004-06-30 the two remaining pupils were employed full-time.
5 Methodology
Evaluation means systematically gathering information in purpose to value and give a verdict about an activity. Three different main-patterns can be discernible within evaluation. Evaluation of goal and results principally focus on quantitative, measurable results. When the main purpose is to evaluate methods of working, a process-oriented evaluation is recommended. An interactive evaluation, finally, lays stress upon how different groups actually interpret an activity. Mostly the different methods of evaluation are applicable simultaneously and in that way they complement each other.

Triangulation defined as two or more methods of data collection has been adopted. This means that the evaluation was based on questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, structured interviews and observations.

5.1 Data collection through a questionnaire
The questionnaire aimed to map the workplace consultations and the work of the diversity consultants. This research technique was answered by those employees who took part in the workplace consultations about diversity held by the diversity consultants. The introductory four questions were contextual and dealt with sex, age, education and workplace. The following questions focused on content, disposition and the way the diversity consultants carried through the consultation.

5.2 Data collection through semi-structured interviews
Personal, semi-structured interviews were chosen since the purpose was to arrive at the complex of problems of the Keyforces project. This meant that the subject area included in the interviews was largely determined beforehand. The interview/discussion focused on three main themes, which formed the basis of the interview. These themes were theoretical and practical education within diversity management and the future role of the diversity consultants. The main questions corresponding to each theme were written down in an interviewer’s guide. The exact formulation of the questions however was not decided in advance. This was rather done on an ad hoc basis depending on how the conversation developed. The following informants were interviewed:
Lars Adriansson, responsible for the education in diversity management combined with an para-medical education, member of the development-partnership (UP) and representative of the municipality of Karlskrona

Leif Ottosson, member of the development-partnership (UP) and representative of the employment office, Blekinge

Björn-Åke Pettersson, member of the development-partnership (UP) and representative of the National Association of Sexual Equality (RFSL).

Bo Engdahl, member of the development-partnership (UP) and representative of the Swedish Central Organisation of Salaried Employees (TCO)

Inger Alfredsson, member of the development-partnership (UP) and representative of the Swedish Central Organisation of Salaried Employees (TCO).

Marie Klang, co-ordinator of the Equal project Nyckelkrafter

Group interviews were carried out with following informants:

Gunvor Pettersson, Carina Åkesson, members of the development-partnership (UP) and representatives of the Associations for Disabled, Blekinge

Ylva Olsson, Nusreta Korac, diversity consultants

An ambition during the interviews was to establish a subject/subject relationship between the interviewees and researchers. Hopefully this would allow the former to feel sufficiently confident to describe their experiences faithfully. The interviews endeavoured to focus on the subjective experiences of the interviewees and their definition of the situation. The hallmark of the qualitative semi-structured interviews was to learn about what seemed to be important in the minds of the informants; their meanings, perspectives and definitions, how they viewed, categorised and experienced the subject under investigation.
Another point of departure was in trying to construct a situation that resembles those in which people naturally talk to each other about important things. Therefore the interviews aimed to be conversational, since this is how people normally interact. The relationship that developed between the interviewer and informant was the key to collecting data. Certainly there were differences between the interview situation and those in which people normally interact. The interviewer held for instance back from expressing views, the flow of information was largely one-sided as well as the conversation was understood to be confidential. Another essential ambition was that the role of interviewer was primarily concentrated on increasing the interviewees’ desire and ability to focus interest on a particular area as well as to reflect on and evaluate their experience.

5.3 Data collecting through structured interviews

After every workplace consultation the diversity consultants were interviewed by telephone. These interviews were structured, implying that the content and procedures were organised in advance. They also were characterised by being a closed situation. The sequence and wording of the questions were determined by means of schedule and the interviewer did not make any modifications. The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions to be answered concerning content and disposition of the consultation in question.

5.4 Data collecting through observations

The researchers also participated when the diversity consultants carried out workplace consultations. These observations were primarily, though not solely, of the non-participatory type. The method was very much in line with the unstructured observation method. During the observations extensive notes were made in order to make descriptions as comprehensible as possible. The starting-point was that everything that happened was potentially important. This meant that even events that may appear unimportant were written down since it was impossible to decide what to select beforehand. The field notes contained descriptions of people, events, conversations, verbal- and non-verbal communication, activities and descriptions of what was happening in the situation. The sequence and duration of events and conversations were noted as precisely as possible. In short, the field notes represented an attempt to record on paper everything that could possibly be recalled about the observation.
6. Analysis

6.1 Qualitative analysis
The analysis consisted of four phases. The first started with reading the whole of every interview and every observation several times. While doing this the researchers marked in the margin the immediate experience of the written text. The purpose of this first reading was to obtain a coherent picture of the empirical material. In the second phase such parts of the text concerning the diversity education were marked. Phase four meant that a list of quotation was formed. The last phase involved an analysis of the entire empirical material. In this phase the researchers were searching for patterns, meanings and deeper understanding.

6.2 Method for processing quantitative data
Initially the data was descriptively analyzed. To obtain an additional dimension out of the material, three mean value indexes were created, namely the categories structure, substance and usefulness of the workplace consultation for the individual participant. Within the index of structure, five variables are included; the participants perception of the workplace consultation’s planning, practices, educational material, the time devoted and the opportunities to discuss and express opinions and ideas. This index has a Cronbachs Alpha at .72, which indicates its reliability. The next index concerns substance based on four variables; understanding of the workplace consultation contents, the diversity consultant’s ability to convey a message together with the diversity consultant’s basic knowledge and ability to engage and create dialogue. The Cronbachs Alpha for this is .79. The third index deals with the workplace consultation’s usefulness to the individual according to four variables; whether the participant’s expectations were met by the workplace consultation and the validity of the workplace consultation as a forum for spreading knowledge. The two final factors illustrated whether the participant felt that a particular part of the workplace consultation moved them and the perceived usefulness of participating in the workplace consultation. The index from this analysis came out as .64 on Cronbachs Alpha.

A linear regression analysis was carried out using the three indexes together with the contextual variables. In this analytical method, each variable is arranged, and the variables that have no significant effect on the dependent variable are sorted out. The remaining factors are those that have an effect on the dependent variable. This is accounted for in a standardized Beta. The standardization is chosen in order to make the indexes compatible.
7. Result
The main result of the evaluation is the lack of structure as well as disposition and adequate content in the diversity education. Contributing causes to this are probably the limited knowledge that the members of the development-partnership possessed about the complexity of diversity. Another cause was a far too optimistic view regarding the students’ abilities to assimilate the education. At the same time however, it is important to emphasise that each representative within the development-partnership had unique knowledge, with the exception of ethnicity, the specific knowledge of which was missing.

The structural conditions of the diversity education were made concrete by an educational plan, constructed by the municipality of Karlskrona, who had overall responsibility for the education. The evaluation shows however that this document did not work as guidance and that only few of the teaching members of the development-partnership actually had seen it. Studying the educational plan it is clear that the education organiser lacked basic knowledge about diversity. This was obvious when inadequate terms frequently were used in the text. “The situation of handicapped people in society”, “the situation of sexual minorities in society”, “equality between men and women in working-life”, “the situation of immigrants in society” and “harassment in the labour market” are examples of such expressions. All of them are incorrect conceptions contributing to giving ambiguous signals.

A conclusion of importance is that two different pictures were given regarding conditions for organising and performing the diversity training. The education organiser claimed that freedom to influence and form the education, combined with a good financial position, were explicit when planning and carrying out the course in diversity management. Those members of the development-partnership who were responsible for different educational parts had quite another opinion. Regarding to their view they did not even know that they were supposed to have the main responsibility for their part. Another view was that they were given different directions and that they did not know the budgeted cost for the education. The conditions described combined with difficulties in communication, role conflicts, differences in status, struggle for power and exertion of power within the development-partnership certainly contributed to the anxiety and at times almost aggressive attitudes shown by the pupils towards the education organiser. These attitudes were strengthened by contradictions and promises, which were not kept.
The opinion of the diversity consultants and the members of the development-partnership did not notably differ. The two consultants stressed that there was an obvious lack of coordination between the different parts of the education, a fact that meant a lost comprehensive view.

According to all informants the practical part of the diversity education was necessary for giving those who intended to be diversity consultants opportunities to practise. A weakness is however that these consultations did not take place at workplaces but in upper secondary adult education and sheltered activities.

Workplace consultations seem to be a suitable way of getting access to different workplaces and thereby spread information about diversity. During the evaluation period only eight workplace consultations took place, which must be considered as far too small number regarding the activity as defensible. The conclusions that could be drawn about the workplace consultations are therefore limited. To summarise the judgement is that the contents of the workplace consultations do not aim at working life. Further more active steps in purpose encouraging diversity must be emphasised during the consultations. This goal could be achieved by letting the participants work with diversity issues related to their own workplaces.

8. Conclusions

The participants understanding of the workplace consultations

Are there any reasons why there are so many who chose not to answer several questions? Why are there so many respondents who claim that they do not know what they think about exercises and material? This is most likely due to the introduction to the questionnaire, i.e. lack of information on the significance of really answering all the questions, or that their importance of the same was undervalued.

That the participants to such an extent as up to 50 % describe their experiences of the workplace consultation’s substance as negative would seem to indicate discontent. This is evident principally in questions of content, choice of educational material, opportunities for
discussion and the diversity consultant’s ability to communicate the intended message together with the perception of the diversity consultant’s basic knowledge. One interpretation is that the result shows displeased participants. With the basis in this descriptive report of the material correlations were sought through a regression analysis, in which three indexes were created. These indexes connote the participants’ perception/understanding of structure, substance and usefulness for the individual participant. With the starting point in the analysis, structure was the one variable that indicated whether the individual felt that the workplace consultation was useful or not. The model below is explained through notions of effect and correlation. Of all independent variables included in the questionnaire, these two had most effect for the experienced usefulness for the individual participating in workplace consultations.
The development-partnership is characterised by diversity while the constellation consists of seven organisations. However diversity has been complicated due to cultural clashes between the different representatives. Exertion of open as well as hidden power has also been evident but also elements of discrimination towards some members of the development-partnership. The result of this has been that some members have left the partnership while others have cut back their commitment in the project Keyforces considerably.

The evaluators' main impression is that the diversity education and the accomplished workplace consultations so far do not fulfil a reasonable demand for quality related to the goal presented in the project application. The standpoint is based upon following factors:
The diversity education has been too short with a lack of structure as well as disposition and contents.
The recruitment of the diversity consultants aimed towards an incorrect target group.
The number of working diversity consultants is too small.
The number of workplace consultations at different workplaces is too small.
Only 50% of the participants at the workplace consultations are pleased with structure and contents.

9. Perspective of change

9.1 Education in diversity
The following text is a presentation of how a course in diversity could be implemented. The comprehensive goal of this course is to offer the student a broad understanding of the subject diversity/diversity management with a specific stress on diversity in the labour market. After completing the course, the student should be able to work as an informant, that is diversity consultant. For admission to the course, the student must have general eligibility for higher education.

9.1.1 Syllabus for Diversity in the Labour Market 20 credit points

The course is a separate course and could be offered both as a full-time course over 20 weeks of effectively study as a part-time course over 40 weeks. It contains mandatory sub-courses as follows:

Sub-course 1 Socialpsychology, 5 credit points

Contents:
The socialpsychologycal perspective
Socialisation
Culture and society
Elements of culture; language, norms, sanctions, values
Culture and dominant ideology
Cultural variation
Amalgamation, Assimilation, Segregation, Pluralism
The concept attitude
Understanding groups
Deviance and deviant behaviour
Methodology

Subcourse 2 Diversity in the labour market, 5 credit points

Contents:
The Equal Opportunities Act (1991:433)
The Law on Measures against Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life (1999:30)
The Ban against Discrimination in Working Life because of Sexual Orientation (1993:133)
Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life of People with Disability Act (1999:132)
Sexual orientation
Functional disability
Racial and ethnic inequality
Stratification by gender
Stratification by age
Recruiting for diversity
Working team and identity

Subcourse 3 Informant – diversity consultant, 5 credit points

Contents:
Social Sciences - Methodology
Information Technology
Media Technology
Communication
Conversation, conversational style
Rhetoric
Presentation technique
Subcourse 4 Applied diversity in the labour market, 5 credit points

Contents:
Practical exercising and implementation of diversity work

Examination and Grades
The examination varies between the different sub-courses, but generally it consists of written reports from project work, written exams and oral presentations of course work. Grades are awarded on completion of sub-course. The grades that are used in the course are: F (failed) P (passed) and (PD) passed with distinction.

9.2 Work place consultations
Taking advantage of the participants’ own experiences the work place consultations could be seen as a proper forum using the participant’s own company/organisation as a “textbook”. The work place consultations ought to build on an interactive process, where input from real life as well as theory alternates with exercises. In the following text some examples will be given on such exercises.

Exercise 1
The Law on Measures against Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life (1999:30) section 4 prescribes active action, which means that an employer within the framework of her or his activities shall carry out a goal-orientated work in order to actively promote ethnic diversity in working life. Consequently working with diversity is not an option but a legal necessity.

Tasks:
• Try to find out how working with diversity is carried out within your company/organisation.

• Who are working with diversity and what is of present interest?

• Which opportunities and hindrances can you identify when setting up goal?

Exercise 2
The aim of this exercise is to realise that humans are valued differently and to be aware of discrimination in working life.

**Tasks:**
You are working in a company and responsible for recruitment. The working conditions are rather hard, especially towards employees who differ from a stipulated standard. The task that you have been given is to formulate certain demands for a job announced as vacant. Try to formulate your demands in such a way that it is a hindrance for people with foreign background.

- Gather some newspapers and compare your specifications of demands with real advertisements. Can you find any similarities? Which are the differences?

- Rewrite your advertisement with the ambition to attract all kinds of people applying for the job. Examine the text and discuss it with other people within as well as outside your work place.

**Exercise 3**
Working with diversity in the labour market means that a primary task is to formulate strategies and principles for developing and maintaining competence in companies. The central aim of this exercise is to discuss and reflect upon this fact.

**Tasks:**
- Write down your own opinion about the competence needed carrying out your work. Then write down your opinion about some generally competencies that are required at your work place.

- Discuss how you could develop your own competencies. Is it something you are in particular need of?

- Identify differences as well as similarities at your work place
• Are the differences between groups depending on sex, professional categories or other experiences?

*Exercise 4*

The following exercise focus on a operational level and how you could work with diversity in the work place.

*Tasks:*

• Sketch out how employees consider “a competent boss” at your work place. Which characteristics and actions is the outcome of talking about bosses as good or bad?

• How can you, seen from the perspective of the boss, create an organisation characterised by diversity?

• Write down at least three actions that you can do if you want to work seriously with diversity. Everything is possible, for example a simple question raised on a weekly meeting or a planned change of strategic decisions.
Bibliography


