

Reexamining our assumptions about diversity and inclusion

A journey into ourselves

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Aims of this reexamination

Insights

1. You are part and under the influence of the dominant discourses about migrants.
2. Dominant discourses and their consequences are self-enforcing social processes.
3. Discover ways to resist and change 1 and 2.

Outline Workshop

- Introduction (30 min)
- Discussion in groups (30 min)
- Collecting results & discussion (30 min)



Introduction: facts and figures migration

1945 - 1970

- Temporary labor migrants Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, etc.
- No governmental policy and no social welfare services, action groups.

1970 – 1990

- Earlier migrants' family reunion, permanent stay.
- Suriname independent colony, flow of immigrants.
- Categorical policies: institutions, social work, integration, assimilation, etc.
- Self-organisations.

1990 – present

- Refugees from Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Afghanistan etc.
- Repressive and restrictive measures, but also support organizations.

2000 – present

- Preference for educated migrants from Europe and Asia.
- Since EU increase of labor migrants from Eastern Europe (esp. Poland).
- Policies: further restrictions, but not for highly educated migrants.

Introduction: facts and figures migration

Impression labor market 2013

- Unemployment among non-European migrants is three times as high compared to citizens from Dutch origin.
- Especially younger Moroccan migrants (15-24) almost four times as big compared to Dutch youth.

Possible explanations

- Crisis: lack of jobs
- No suitable jobs: language, education & skills
- Unintended exclusion mechanisms (= discrimination)
 - HRM with no affinity with the applicants' culture
 - Disinterest of employers in applications with the 'wrong' name
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Introduction: facts and figures migration

Quotes from current newspapers

- “Nowhere in Europa the opportunities for migrants on the labor market are as bad as in the Netherlands.”
- “Unemployment is not always due to inadequate education, motivation or experience. With equal qualifications migrants and refugees have much lower chances to find a job.”
- “Applicants with Dutch names have a 60 % higher chance to receive an invitation for a job interview than applicants with an Arabic name.”
- “In the old West of Rotterdam, the final stop is the unemployment benefits.”
- “Half of the Somalians are on unemployment benefits.”
- “Do we have discrimination in our genes?”

Introduction: a fragment from 'Our colonial hangover'

What do you see?

What do you recognize?

Who would act the same as these passers-by?

Which one?

Who would act differently?



Introduction: assumptions → prejudices



Media:
Underprivileged
presented as
costing money

Tax payer:
They should
work as we do

Media:
All underprivileged
are unsuitable to find
work

Underprivileged: :
But, ok I will try.
Can I please have \$
to survive?

Self-enforcing

Employers:
Underprivileged are
unsuitable to work

Social welfare: :
You have to accept
any job ASAP!

Underprivileged:
We are not good
enough to find work



Introduction: escaping dominant discourse

Ziba (Halleh & Ponzoni, 2014)

- Job interview
- Refugee background
- Anti-migrant sentiments
- “Henk en Ingrid pay for Mohammed and Fatima.” (Wilders)
- “Holland is fuller then full with non-Western migrants.” (Wilders)
- “Tsunami of Islam” (Wilders)

Question from the job committee:

‘Who do you detest most in the Netherlands?’

Introduction: escaping dominant discourse

- Uneasy situation
- Instead of 'going along' passively, turned the question around
- Ziba said that she preferred to name the person who inspired her most
- She named the Dutch Crown Princess Maxima
- The job interviewers unintentionally confirm the dominant discourse, and the stereotyping ideas produced by it, by asking her how she relates to it.
- It frames the position of migrants from Islamic countries as either loyal to their own country or to the Netherlands.
- Ziba refused this choice and chose to engage in a positive discourse.
- By turning the negative question into a positive one, she also opened a 'space' for the committee to look at her from a different perspective. She got the job.

A concrete case from practice

Practice

- “Vluchtelingenwerk” (Dutch refugee council).
- Master research focuses on the barriers that refugees encounter whenever they try to enter the labor market..
- Aim is to get clear what kind of support they need to be able to find a job.
- Came across a social worker, working for the local government, his job is to provide social welfare benefits to refugees.

A concrete case from practice

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A concrete case from practice

Background of the case

- Welfare state → Participation society
- Policy changes and changes of laws in social work context since the 1st of January 2015.
- People on social welfare are now abided on a stricter law; the so-called “Participatiewet” (Participation law).
- In principle, the Participatiewet encourages people to find a job as quickly as possible.
- In reality, every available job within a distance of the maximum of 3 hours must be accepted.

A concrete case from practice

Background of the case

- Ahmed and Hanan Shantibi (32 and 30 years old) fled from Syria.
- Confronted with war and threats concerning their political activities.
- After receiving their residence permit based on asylum, they moved into their apartment, signed their selves up for school to learn the Dutch language and applied for social welfare.
- Tim, a social worker at the local government talked to them about the conditions of the application.
- Tim spoke in Dutch during the conversation but also used some English words.

A concrete case from practice

Tim:

“You will have to start working as soon as possible! The social benefits are only temporarily, understand? And you better remember from now on; it does not matter what kind of work it is. Even if it is cleaning work, you will have to accept it. Did you work in Syria? (looking at Hanan, without waiting for an answer) this is not Syria, you’re in the Netherlands now and you will have to work, you can not stay at home.”

Questions for group discussion

About the case

1. Tim - as a person, a professional and part of an institution - what kind of conflicts of assumptions might he experience?

Related to your work or internship context

2. In what situation have you caught yourself being steered by a stereotyping assumption?
3. What kind of stereotyping assumptions did you encounter in your work context?
4. What could you do to influence assumptions on professional and institutional level?

Recap for the group (please use big characters!)

5. What are the most striking/revealing topics you have come to talk about?

Aims revisited

Insights

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THANK YOU!

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