

# Translating a Management Concept: Diversity Management in Denmark - and Beyond

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# Diversity Management in Denmark

- To understand how the concept of diversity in management is translated and adapted into the Danish societal context.
  - To what extent do larger Danish companies experience a need to practice diversity management?
  - Do they have specific diversity policies
  - How do these Danish companies discursively construct and manage diversity?

# Experienced DM need and diversity policies

- Some companies experienced a need, but were reluctant to introduce diversity policies
  - “We do not need policies, we hire the best no matter what.”
  - Focus on ethnic minority groups – seen as a problem rather than a resource
  - Danish companies are still not very diverse in terms of ethnic backgrounds

# Discourses in Danish

## Diversity Management documents

- Inspired by Ely & Thomas (2001), Kamp & Hagedorn-Rasmussen(2004), Boxenbaum (2006)
  - Anti-discrimination & equal opportunities
  - Social responsibility
  - Competition for talents/ employer branding
  - DM as a business case (diversity as a resource)

# Discursive construction of diversity

- TDC

A social responsibility discourse strongly based in a business case discourse aiming to use diversity in the organization as a resource for the company in regards to improved recruitment, better management, finding new market segments, and fulfilling specific customer needs

# Discursive construction of diversity

- Novo Nordisk

A social responsibility discourse (sustainability, equal opportunities for men and women, various ethnic groups) is intertwined with a business case discourse.

Cultural diversity is viewed as an asset: fostering an international mindset, enhancing innovation and ability to work across borders and expand into new markets

# Is the focus on social responsibility typically Danish?

- Other studies indicate this is a European trait compared to the traditional US approach.
- Social responsibility seems to build on Danish corporate practices to safeguard the weak and vulnerable in the society
- A way to translate DM to a local societal context.

## ... and Beyond

- Diversity Management in practice – Annette Risberg
- Cultural Intelligence as a Strategic Resource – Anne-Marie Søderberg