

**The future of the welfare state: paths of social policy
innovation between constraints and opportunities**
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**The Change of the organisation of the state - The case
of care work. The debate on New Public Management
and social inequalities**

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Since the 1980ies far reaching public sector reforms are on the way in nearly all OECD-states¹. These processes are internationally discussed under the umbrella of the concept of the New Public Management, which means that new policy measures were introduced which are based on market principles and the idea of 'consumer choice', like cash-for-care schemes and the strengthening of the role of for-profit providers of care. This discussions are aiming at a more efficient, more effective and more decentralized organization of public services. The New Public Management concept is not build on a coherent theory of modernization of public sectors. Instead of that, it is based on a set of economic and business management instruments, derived from corresponding macro and micro economic theories. In practice, the combination of the instruments of the New Public Management tool box differs significantly from country to country. While Germany is considered by the OECD as a late-comer in this area, countries like New Zealand, the UK and different Nothern European Countries are often classified as pioneers of market and efficiency oriented public sector reforms, with two decades of experiences.

Nowadays there are hints, that the a comparatively radical implementation of the New Public Management concept, in New Zealand is actually aggravating social inequalities and processes of disintegration, affecting people, whose situation does not correspond to the model of the male, white employee without any responsibility for care work. A more moderate implementation of the New Public Management tools in Sweden seems to result in a more equal distribution of public goods. Finally, the vehement debates in Germany on tensions between economical and ethical considerations in view of Public Management reforms demonstrate that these processes are producing new social inequalities in this country too.

The first part of the contribution at the ESPAnet Conference resumes the different roads of public sector reforms in specific country and the corresponding impacts on the distribution of public goods and resulting new social inequalities. On this background I discuss findings on the implementation of New Public Management-Instruments in Germany and demonstrate, how efficiency oriented reforms reinforce clients' oriented social services in the area of care work. Finally, I analyse emerging patterns of dealing with new social

¹ This paper is the resultat of the fruitful cooperation with my colleague Prof. Dr. Brigitte Aulenbacher.

inequalities in this context.

1. New Public Management and Social Inequality in the International Debate

The changes in societal frameworks, such as globalisation processes, demographic alterations, growing social tensions, especially in large cities, or financing limits within the public sector are leading to an increasing reorganisation of the core sectors of the welfare state in the OECD-countries following the principles of the New Public Management (Naschold 1996; Nolan 2001; Wegener 2002; Pollitt/ Bouckaert 2004; Hood/ Peters 2004; Clerke 2004; Christenson/ Læg Reid P 2007; Aulenbacher/ Riegraf 2008). Meanwhile the New Public Management is encroaching upon the organisations of the so-called third sector. This concerns social organisations, like churches, which are taking over social and care work. This sector is stronger in Germany than in most other OECD-countries. The New Public Management is aiming in four directions (Naschold 2000; Riegraf 2005, 2005a, 2007): **First**, there is a cut-back of governmental guidelines in favour of an extension of freedom of choice for individual members of society and the private sector individual responsibility is stressed compared with the redistribution of the welfare state. **Second**, there is a reduction in the scope of state responsibilities. Governmental duties and services are either delivered completely to private enterprises or to the organisations of the so-called third sector or the services are increasingly generated under market conditions or the principles of private enterprise. **Third**, management instruments, where implemented in the public administration, are expected to perform services more cheaply, with greater output and with higher quality. **Fourth**, the decentralisation of governmental duties and responsibilities is intended to break up undemocratic spin-offs, bureaucratic incrustations and the lack of transparency of the bureaucratic apparatus.

Aims and instruments of New Public Management in this context are: privatization programmes, construction of quasi markets, creation of competition between private, governmental and semi-governmental institutions, output-related payment, flexible human resource allocation, human resource management, contract management, cost and performance accounting and so on.

The literature on different welfare-state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999; Lewis 2002; Theobald 2008a) has documented that countries differ considerably in the extent to which they offer their citizens social services such as elderly care and also very much in the way such services are provided. In Scandinavia, such services are extensive and publicly funded and provided, whereas in Continental European countries such services are less extensive, publicly funded, but generally not publicly provided. These differences have implication for the Debate on New Public Management and the consequences of the implementation. New Public Management reforms must be analyzed within the broader welfare-state context. But one result seems clear: In comparative studies there are findings, that in those welfare states where the state and the public administration repel radical in favor of marketisation, individualisation and privatisation the social inequality increase along the categories of race, class and gender (for example: Fultz 2002; Fultz/Steinhilber 2004; Theobald 2008b).

2. New Public Management confronts Social and Care Work: The concepts of Human Beings and of Work

The assumed positive connection between market-efficiency and the quality of services doesn't work out in the sector of care work. There are contradictions: This is becoming clear at the level of the concepts of individuals (or human beings) that underlies New Public Management and its occupational concepts. The concepts of NPM have on of their roots in Microeconomic Theory and in Public Choice Theory. The concepts are in opposition to the occupational concepts and the professional self-concepts of employees in social and care occupations.

In public choice theories for example, analyses and assumptions about individual behaviour in decision-making processes that are modelled on the economic sector are assigned to the public sector (Buchanan/ Tollison 1972; Self 1993). Public choice theories follow Rational Choice Theory in presuming the rational, advantage-seeking and egoistically acting individual. The individual of Public Choice Theory is detached from any social context. In a situation where the individuals have to make decisions, they choose the alternative that seems to be most advantageous for themselves. In this concept of

theories, an action orientation, which is target on motives beyond the immediate self-interest is rejected as naive.

Citizens are conventionalised as consumers. They can co-determinate the public structure of supply if they get the choice different services provider. The implementation of the mechanisms of choice and the expansion of the mechanism of competition both aim to strengthen the egoistic and self-oriented–individual. In public choice theories, this approach leads to increasing common welfare. Continuative questions, such as those of social justice, will be answered by this logic - if they are even accepted as a social problem - with reference to the mechanisms of the market.

The orientations of the professions of care work aim in the opposite direction. Since the 1970s, the concepts of care work have followed a holistic view and a holistic design in their work (Mühlum et al. 1997). Furthermore, this could be legitimating - despite and even because of the low pay (in any case in Germany) - a high social reputation. On the conceptual level of ethical images, the auxiliary and selfless character of the work is stressed. For example, ideas and images such as: the "existence and work for the need of other people", to "be there for people who need care ", "be aware of people's social situations and contexts ", "having time for people and being able to waste time for people's requirements" or to "be supportive in all situations and needs of life" - to refer only to some of the concepts of the sector.

The leading methods and concepts refer to individuals in all their psychic, physical and social belongings and take the social context into consideration. There is an acceptance of the necessity to reform the public sector, but the discussion stresses the necessity of public care of the client.

These ideas, which up to now have been discussed on the level of concepts and ideas, instruments and methods, will now be further analysed with the focus on the requirements of work.

3. The Reorganisation of the Public Sector as Marketisation, Delimitation and Subjectivisation of work

From the perspective of the sociology of work and industrial relations, the reorganization of the public care of life, which up to here has been discussed within the framework of research on New Public Management, can be understood as the marketisation of organizations (Sauer/ Döhl 1997). Marketisation means, that real or fictive markets are implemented in social relations or processes, which had been organised otherwise before – for example, personally or bureaucratically. Marketisation applies to relations and processes between organisations, between organisations and persons and between persons. In this way, market-oriented efficiency becomes, more than in the past, a regulating effect on demands of organisations and work. And it becomes a direct or indirect point of reference in daily work and agency. This importance is mediated, for example, by budgeting, objectives, numbers of cases, calculations of work, time and costs. (Moldaschl/ Sauer 2000)

The marketisation of organisational and work relations is accompanied by two further processes: The delimitation and the subjectivisation of work. The topos “delimitation” means – from an objective perspective – the deregulation of work. Previous demarcations between work and further parts of life – by fixed yearly, weekly or daily work time as well as work volumes and tasks – are declining. Collective bargaining tends to be replaced by individual negotiations and arrangements. More and more, employees are obliged to limit demands by their selves. (Kratzer/ Sauer 2003; Kratzer/ Sauer 2007; Sauer 2006) The topos “subjectivisation” of work describes how the delimited work – from a subjective perspective – is managed by a new access to the employees’ potentials. Market-efficient forms of rationalization do not only aim at the formal, professional and further extra functional qualifications. They also try to mobilize the whole person, the creative and innovative potentials as well as the ethical and moral orientations to cope efficiently and in cost-saving ways with the flexible and therefore very complex adaptation to the markets. (Arbeitsgruppe SubArO 2005; Aulenbacher 2005; Lohr/ Nickel 2005; Moldaschl/ Voß 2002)

All these topos are based on empirical research on economically and technologically advanced sectors and occupations and, by that way, especially on men's work and the kind to regulate it in Fordism (Kleemann/Matuschek/Voß 2002). The public sectors as well as women's work are neglected in this research. Therefore we first have to mention two critics of the debate: Although marketisation has to be seen as a more general tendency, it is accompanied by further processes like the privatisation of work. Such processes until now are widely ignored caused in the described bias of research (Aulenbacher 2005, 2007). Concerning the other two topos the described economical, technological and male bias suggest us to understand the delimitation and subjectivisation as something new. But it is new only compared with the strict division of paid and unpaid work and free time in men's lives (Jürgens 2006; Becker-Schmidt 2007). And it is new only compared with the informal challenge of subjectivity in segments, where the fordist mode of rationalisation formally was intended to eliminate it (Kocyba 2000). If we add women's and care work (vgl. Wendt 1995), than it can be recognized, that the delimitation and subjectivisation of work are very well known modes of rationalisation. They are inherent parts of the personal and professional concepts of work mentioned above. But they now – and there we meet the debate on delimitation and subjectivisation of work again – are changing in the framework of market-oriented rationalisation.

These changes express in challenges for the professionals in these fields. The employees are challenged to deal with all skills, professional as well as personal, to handle their more and more 'difficult customers' in respect to their needs and to serve the market-oriented frame, too, and therefore a frame with another main reference and abstractifying from clients' needs.

This situation, so the thesis, can be pointed out as a potential conflict and contradiction on all the levels mentioned above: between organisations, by example the insurance companies, which pay, and the institutions and organisations, which offer care work; between the market-oriented organisation and the needs of its employees' daily work, by example in budgetising work with an holistic character; between the professionals on the one hand and the professionals and the clients on the other hand to deal with organisational and clients' needs, by example in the division of work.

An obvious example in the care sector is the following: The marketisation of organisations is transformed in a neotaylorist rationalisation of work. It challenges the employees to act in a framework, which at last cannot be combined with clients' needs and obliges them to deal in a new way with their subjectivity to handle the situation (to ignore clients' needs, to compensate the effects of rationalisation, to undermine the division of work, to change the conditions of work,). In social work we also find an obvious situation: By precarisation of work and growing social tensions especially in the cities the 'difficult customers' of social work are an increasing challenge (Castel 2000, 2003). Instead of spending more time to each of the problems numbers of cases to deal with increase, time-tables become more restrictive, economic measurements of productivity are implemented (Krenn 2004, Otto/ Schnur 2000).

In both cases we find the following situation: The employees have to deal with their clients and to care for them in work forms and, concerning the organisations, in cost settings and modes of balancing, which are directly and enforced contradictory to a holistic and preventive approach (Dingeldey 2007). If, furthermore, in these work forms care instead of self-care, social justice and equal opportunity are aimed at, too, then their personal engagement, their ethical and moral orientation, their professional comprehension and skill are challenged in a new way. My thesis is, that in the market-oriented frame the employees in daily work have to find more than before their individual solutions to realize such societal and professional imaginations. Therefore I am asking in the project, how they are dealing with the daily organisational and work demands between serving markets and clients.

This question already implicates, that there is more than one way to handle the situation. And indeed, with the social theory and the work and industrial sociology I understand rationalisation and daily work as contingent (Aulenbacher 2005, 2007; Wagner 2004; Kratzer/Pfeiffer/Knoblach 2006; Sauer 2006). Therefore the next question is: How are the employees are dealing with the contingencies in the rationalisation process? This aspect seems us to be very important not only in research on the above mentioned contradictions, challenges and conflict, but also as point, where social differences and

inequalities become relevant.

4. Dealing with Contingencies in the Rationalisation Process by Reorganising Gender, Race and Class

In the question how social differences and inequalities become relevant I follow organisation and gender studies, too. As both - the sociology of work and industrial relations and gender and organization studies - point out, gender differences, ethnic backgrounds and social positions can be evoked to reduce the complexity (Pasero 1995; Heintz/ Nadai 1998; Wilz 2002; Aulenbacher 2007). This means the following: In the interaction it is unavoidable to perceive one self and each other as male oder female (Gildemeister/Wetterer 1992; Heintz 2006). The same is argued concerning differences by race and class (West/Fenstermaker 1995). But the processes of this doing gender and doing difference are not necessarily followed by the validation of gender, race and class, neither in form of differences nor in form of inequalities. Social categories can, but must not be made relevant. Whether and how that will follow has to be seen as dependent from the "context" (Heintz/Nadai 1998).

The context I am interested in is the market-oriented rationalisation. And the thesis is, that I will find a complex validation of gender, race and class in daily work, which is specifically shaped by the above mentioned challenges, conflicts and contradictions and their mediation in the demands of organisation and work, which the employees are confronted with. Referring to the ethical aim to provide benefits without regard to the person on the one hand and the latent destruction of the holistic and preventive character of the work on the other hand, I attend, that the employees establish their own priorities. These priorities should be imagined very different: in favour, or not, of especially needy or already failed people, of handicapped groups, of persons deserving aid and so on.

This form of dealing with the new demands of organisation and work are not accidentally. In contrary: Such lists of priorities are practical solutions, because they are conform to the principles of rationalisation (Siegel 1993, Aulenbacher 2005) and sanctioned by professional standards. And both can be combined with personal skills, ethics and morals

and let the space to bring subjectivity in.

Conclusions

The essence of these arguments is not to say, that the unequal distribution of benefits is caused by the way, how the social and care workers bring their subjectivity in. There is a longer way of transforming market-oriented efficiency in inequality. It starts, as shown, on the level of the models of rationalisation and professional concepts, goes through the organisations, the relations between and in them and ends in daily work and the necessity to combine markets' demands and clients' needs. The essence of the argumentation is, that at the last point I have far reaching changes to note. One of these changes is that the employees more and more are obliged to look for individual solutions for societal problems. How they handle this situation and how they reflect on it – on the quality of social and care work as well as on the reorganisation of social differences and inequalities – these are the issues of the starting empirical research.

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