THE JANUSFACE OF ACTIVATIONPOLICY

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Introduction: The subject of the paper is to illustrate the Janusface of activation policy as an including and excluding force in relation to immigrant women’s inclusion into the Swedish labour market. Janus is in the Greek mythology a guardian divinity reproduced with two from each other turned faces, where one is symbolising the beginning and the other the closed door. The background to the paper and the study it is based on is the double segregation of immigrant women in the labour market. There are both a segregation between immigrants and Swedes and men and women.1 Furthermore to be included into the Swedish labour market also means to be included into the Swedish universal welfare system. For them not included into the universal insurance schemes there is only the selective social assistance to support them. Immigrant women are in this respect a vulnerable group. Activation policies has been introduced due to the rising unemployment in Europe the last decade and could be seen as a way to include even immigrant women into the labour market. A paradigmatic change in welfare policies has taken place with the shift from welfare to workfare or activation policies. Some researchers claims that activation policies is the only way to inclusion in the labour market and the society, for them excluded from the labour force. Other researchers claims that only a universal welfare state could lead to that result.2 The “new” trend of activation policy can be seen as a new way of redistribution which also includes some kind of recognition of them not included. But can the new activation policy support immigrant women’s inclusion into the labour market and the social insurance schemes? This paper is based on the presumption that activation policy contains the possibility to both support an inclusion and to further marginalize. The outcome will be related to the implementation and the locally administration of the activation policy. But before we are getting closer to the subject of the paper I would like to discuss some theoretical outlines that do matter for the analyses.

The complex relationship I: between redistribution, recognition and rights: Principally a universal welfare state could lead to inclusion in the society through social rights. The meaning of the universal welfare state in terms of citizenship rights has however been challenged by among others feminist researchers. They quote that the universal welfare state does not include everyone in terms of

2 Andersen J G et al 2002
especially political and social rights. The new activation policy could be a way to include new groups into the social insurance systems that means that their citizenship tends to be more substantial, and there social rights more fulfilled. The new politic means a redistribution of resources to minority groups, but does it means a recognition of what they want? Fraser has created a model that especially deals with the question of redistribution and recognition. She means that we analytically can recognize two kinds of justice, the socio-economic and the symbolic justice. When the later tries to make specific groups visible, the first is demanding a fare distribution which is in danger of getting undermined by specific economic arrangement for specific groups. There is two ways to handle the dilemma considering social political models, the affirmative model and the transformative model. Though the first is associated with multiculturalism and leaves the group differentiation intact, the later is connected with deconstruction. I mean that it is in the contact between the organisations that administrates the activation policy and the citizen that the possibility to inclusion via recognition and restructuring of resources takes place.

In a wider aspect the symbolic and socio-economic justice is related to social rights. Social rights could be related to three elements of citizenship rights: Who has a legitimate claim to welfare rights, on which conditions, and which institutions should provide welfare services and benefits. In some aspects you are entitled to benefits and services, like school and medic care even without a formal citizenship in Sweden. However, in order to make the citizenship more substantial you have to be included into the social security system. The activation policy that is meant to make this inclusion come true is administrated on a local basis and is also conditioned, the partakers has to be “active”, which as I shall show later in this paper could mean a lot.

Fig 1 The affirmation and the transformation model

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<th>Affirmation</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
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<td><strong>Redistribution</strong></td>
<td>surface reallocations of existing goods to existing groups; supports group differentiation; can generate misrecognition</td>
<td>deep restructuring of relations of reproduction: blurs group differentiation; can help remedy some forms of misrecognition</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recognition</strong></td>
<td>surface reallocations of respect to existing groups; supports group</td>
<td>deep restructuring of relations of recognition; blurs group differentiation</td>
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3 Lister R 1997, Lister R 1998
4 Fraser N 1997
5 Dwyer P 2000
Considering the relations between redistribution, recognition, social rights and the outfit of activation policies, what influence on inclusion in the labour market and thereby a more fulfilled citizenship has the local administration of the policy, the models they choose, the degree of conditionality and the distribution of resources for immigrant women? In order to understand that we have to discuss another complex relationship, the one between integration, inclusion and differentiation.

The complex relationship II: Between integration – inclusion- differentiation on different levels: Integration is in many aspects a complicated concept. It has been used in many different meanings and could describe both a structural dimension and have an actors perspective. Also it is often used to describe integration into society generally, and then you might ask, integration into what, and in relation to what.6 The widespread use of the concept makes it hard to use in an exact meaning. So instead I use the concept inclusion. Inclusion is the other part of a pair, where exclusion is the contrast. Inclusion is about individuals or groups integration in relation to a special part of the society or in a more specific meaning a “subsystem”.7 Exclusion is a development of the poverty concept, from absolute poverty, over relative poverty and finally social exclusion. Poverty is not seen solely as a state of economic scarcity, but also as a question of citizenship rights and what relations that affect them.8 The binary concept is however a bit static, and could hardly capture important empirical findings. Instead the concept of marginalisation is better shaped to analyse the process between inclusion and exclusion.9 In order to understand inclusion however you must also discuss differentiation. Differentiation always comes before inclusion, though inclusion (or integration) should not be necessary without a preceding differentiation. Differentiation could be structural, in terms of a functional, hierarchical or segmentary differentiation,10 but is also actual on other levels. In this paper the differentiation in the organisations that administrates the activation policy is in focus. In order to describe this differentiation I use “The new paradigm” for welfare research, which is established out of a criticism of the “Old paradigms” focus solely on the structural level and quantitative data,11 to sort out the differentiation process in the organisations. The researchers behind “The new paradigm” distinguish between four levels to investigate when doing welfare research, that I have used as a basically structure in my study. The fourth level that the researchers identify, the level of the dynamics of economic and social change I have paid less attention to although this describes the structural level and lies behind the reach of the study. The levels of the welfare- subject, the distribution of risks,

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6 Horneman - Möller I 2002
8 Silver H 1994
9 Mortensen N 2000
10 Mortensen N 2000
11 Williams F 1999
resources and possibilities and finally the institutional and discursive context of the policy and implementation on the contrary is central in the analyses of the empirical findings.

**The case-study:** The paper is based on a completed case-study in four districts in a Swedish city. The empirical study enclose about hundred interviews with administrators and men and women in immigrant families. The four districts are characterized by a high level of unemployment and social assistance. A majority of the inhabitants are immigrants. The districts are therefore part of a stately policy named “The big city investment”, which is aiming to integrate immigrants into the society. A part of the “investment policy” has been to introduce organisations that deals with activation policy. In these organisations takes the administration of the policy place in the contact between the men and women in the immigrant families and the administrators. At least ten nationalities is represented among the interviewed men and women in the immigrant families, they are also in different ages, between 22 to 48 year, and have different kinds of education and experience of work behind them. However, generally the men had higher education level and more work experience than the women. A documentary study completes the empirical interview material.

**The differentiation patterns:** Three patterns could bee distinguished in the study, the pragmatic, the stereotypical and the professional differentiation pattern. These patterns are established on the level where the distribution of resources and possibilities but also obligations takes place. However they are affected by the institutional and the discursive context and in their turn affect the welfare subject i.e. the men and women in the immigrant families. In practice the following described process is intermeshed, but you can try to distinguish it analytically. In the organisations that distribute the activation policy an order for how to sort the clients, “The order of the cases” firstly is established based on the institutional context i.e. the politics and the law, but foremost the structure of the organisations. This order can differ in the models so in some cases the individual must pass up to seven locks before the distribution of resources takes place. When an order is established the individual must bee transformed to a case. The relationship in focus here is the one between the individual and the administrator. This takes place on the level for distribution of obligations, resources and possibilities and is affected by time and room dimensions, the dialog between the actors and the relationship between control of and cooperation with the client. When there is an “order”, and a “case” the sorting begins. The administrators have to sort the “clients” into categories in order to decide how to distribute the obligations, resources and possibilities. This distribution is in turn affecting the positions of the men and women in relation to the labour market and

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could contribute to an inclusion or to further marginalize them. The analytically relationship between the levels could be described as in figure 2.

Figure 2 The analytical levels

![Diagram of analytical levels]

The pragmatic differentiation pattern: The pragmatic pattern is characterized with few locks in “the order of the cases” and few categories. The categories are defined in relation to the individuals resources and actual competence and structural hindrances. A bureaucratic discourse is used to sort clients into categories. The obligations to be active is strong for everyone, and no difference is made between women and men or in relation to minority groups. The same is true for the distribution of resources. They are all leading to a progress towards the labour market. The focus is on cooperation and a dialog with the client, and this leads to a relative autonomy for the client.

The stereotypical differentiation pattern: The stereotypical differentiation on the other hand is based on an “order of cases” that incorporates seven locks or more, which means that the clients have to meet at least seven administrators before the resources is distributed to them. In every stage they are sorted into a new category. And there are a lot of categories and subcategories that are based on stereotypical presumptions about ethnic minorities, and gender differences. Especially Muslim women tends to be defined as low educated house wife’s and they have no obligations to be active, nor do they take part of any resources which could led to a progress for being included in the labour market. The very fact that they are Muslim, and could be wearing a veil, is seen as a reason for excluding them from even passing the first lock, where the target group is decided. The following quotation from one of the administrators interviewed describes this standpoint.

“We also has veils from Macedonia, the Albanian and…but else it is mostly Afghans, Arabs and Somalis. But they are you know.. I should not even consider to receive them here. It depends on which kind of veil you have. If you have a little light veil…..but if you should have one that covers you with long arms and cover the legs and things like that, you can forget to enter the labour market. (Administrator 1)"

The stereotypical presumptions about Muslim women could be recognised as a way of defining individuals that is marked by an “absolute ethnicity”. This means that all members of an ethnic or in this case a religious “group” is seen as the same. No differences according to specific life experiences or conditions, except for gender differences is noted in this case. If you belong to a specific “group”

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13 Lewis G 2000
you are also marked with specific signs. The quotation from an administrator below is an example of the presumption about all Muslim women being low educated and ignorant.

The last time I was at the employment office I saw such a funny picture. A woman with a veil was sitting there by a computer and picked up a mobile phone. I don’t expect that because she has a veil. But she could both handle the computer and the mobile. I mean I could barely handle the mobile and I am not so good with the computer either. (Administrator 8)

The differentiation of men and women and especially Muslim women has complications when it comes to the distribution of resources. When Muslim men could be introduced to educations that give competence and in a longer run could lead to inclusion into the labour market the Muslim women often is excluded from the start and don’t get any resources. The obligations to be active is only for the men but even they have little possibilities to influence what resources should be distributed to them although a normative fostering attitude is dominating the discourse about the area that is seen as a subculture. The administrators should according to the documents strive to make the people living in the area seen “employment as a normality”.

**The professional differentiation pattern:** The last differentiation pattern is the professional, which is dominated by a professional discourse. This influence both the “order of the cases” and the way resources are distributed and to whom. The “order of the cases” is built on a model that reminds about the treatment models for alcoholics, for example the “Minnesota model”\(^\text{14}\). The organisational structure is built up in stages like in for example the twelve step “Minnesota model”. The criteria for being accepted is that you are fit to pass through the treatment model. This is also used to decide into which category you belong to. And how quickly you should pass the steps. The resources are distributed according to which step you attend and there is a stress on resources as an “occupational therapy” on step one and two. Though the outcome of the model could positioned the client with strong emphases, the opposite is also possible though the administrators strive to cooperate with the clients.

**The positioning of Muslim women:** The differentiation of clients lead too a positioning of them which in the longer run could lead either to an inclusion in the labour market or an further marginalisation. The stereotypical differentiation tends to sort especially Muslim women into categories that means a strong positioning of them which in turn could lead to a further marginalisation. Though the women has been in Sweden for a long time, in most cases around ten years, they still has not finished their education in the Swedish language. Their progress towards the labour market is marked by a stagnation or a downward spiral. The new activation policy is not offering them any way out of this dilemma although they are sorted

\(^\text{14}\) This kind of models are built up in a way that the client has to pass several steps during the treatment
into stereotypically founded categories as low educated, house wife, ignorant, etc. in the administration of the policy and resources is not distributed to them. The Muslim women interviewed on the other hand do not see themselves as housewife’s, but prefer to work or study. The main part of them has been working in their home country and half of them has university or high school competence, or if they where young when arriving to Sweden was planning to work. They mean that if a woman prefer to work or not could differ, but in most cases they prefer to, because it is not stimulating to stay at home and you have to earn two wages to support a family in a decent way. The main reason for not working is simply because of the fact that they did not get any job which the following quotation from a Somali woman shows.

All Somali women are not the same. There are someone that likes to stay at home, but they are dissatisfied. They are dissatisfied with not getting a job. They don’t want to help us, the work and development agency.15 They don’t want to help someone living in The Rose garden.16 For example me, I did’ t like to stay at home. So I was looking for a job…… I can ’t say that Somali women prefer to stay at home. This is what I think, they did’ t get a job. I am a Somali woman and I was looking for a job in ten years and I did’ t find any. (SA)

The positions they are differentiated into consequently could be more or less in accordance with how the women apprehend their own identity and their wishes and the positions they strive for. It is important to point out that the administrators actually do not have the necessary information about the women’s former educations and employments or their wishes. Due to the relation between control and cooperation in the meeting when the distribution of obligations, resources and possibilities takes place, the outcome could differ. Even the place and room dimensions has an role to play in the distribution process. The organisations often is characterized with a high work load and this means that they simply don’t have the time to met clients. And this means there is no dialog. The individuals simply get placed into categories based on stereotypical presumptions instead. Some of the organisations anyhow have the time to meet clients. In these cases there is a choice to put emphasis either on obligations, sanctions and control of or cooperation with the client. In the stereotypical model there is at first sight no strong emphasis on either of the aspects. But on the other hand the stereotypical sorting of clients could be recognized as a kind of normative control. However there is a lacking dialog between the administrator and the women in this model. The following is a description of the experiences and wishes of an Arabian woman and the administrators interpretation of the woman’s experience.

A is a Muslim woman that has a high school exam and has for nine years been working as a secretary in her home country. She has no obligation to be active, and has never been offered any resources, but wish to get an employment within her competence sphere. The administrator that have been in contact with the family has never meet the woman or talked to her in the phone, and she don’t know about

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15 One of the investigated organisations
16 One of the investigated districts
her competence. She means that Arabian women generally are low educated and prefer to be housewife’s. And because of that she has never put any obligations on the woman to be active and no resources has been distributed.

The lacking dialogue is leading to a strong positioning where the women simply are placed into categories based on presumptions instead of facts. No dialogue means that the administrators don’t have the information about (or the interest for) basically facts about the women experience or wishes.

The problem with redistribution and recognition in doing activation policy: The activation policy is interesting because it not only compiles obligations but also is offering resources that can lead to an inclusion into the labour market. That means that it like the Janusface is symbolising maintains the possibility both to a beginning and to the closed door. And in this context also the differentiation that takes place in the local administration is central. Who benefits from the activation policy? If we are connecting this discussion with the three elements of citizenship: Who has a legitimate claim to welfare rights, on which conditions and which institutions should provide welfare services and benefits, we progress nearer the core of the question.
**Who has a legitimate claim to welfare rights:** The first question can be related to the difference between citizens who are connected to the insurance schemes and those who are not. Citizens that have to rely on social assistance are in a situation where their rights to a higher degree are conditional. They have to fulfill specific obligations to get support. One of these conditions is to take part of the activation policy. The obligation is the other side of a contract where you can get something back, resources to support you and resources in order to get included in a more substantial citizenship. You might call this a conditional citizenship, where the rights, at least part of the social rights are defined in the relation between the individual and the organization that administers them. You might also say that the “play” about their rights actually takes place in the administration of the activation policy. And subsequently in the differentiation of clients that takes place in this which leads to a positioning of the individual citizen. Two dimensions have been especially interesting in the study. The distinction between men and women and the distinction between different ethnic groups. Especially Muslim women is, as I have stated sorted away based on presumptions about absolute ethnicity, and differences between them. They don’t have any obligations to take part of the activation policy – but on the other hand they don’t take part of any resources either. These women have a long way to inclusion in the labour market and a substantial citizenship. They have no relation to the labour market or are in any education and they are for that reason really in need of that kind of resources that the local activation policy can offer. In a way they have their autonomy, because there is no obligations, on the other hand is their position weak and they could really use the resources offered by the activation policy. They simply are excluded from the contract.

**On which conditions:** The second question is about the conditions. As stated there are no obligations for the Muslim women in the stereotypical model. For other immigrant women and for Muslim women in the other models the obligations might shift due to if the emphasis is on control or cooperation. In the pragmatic model where cooperation with the clients is seen as crucial the deliberation space is wider which means that the women could affect what resources are distributed to them. So we could conclude that the conditions differ between different models and depends on what ethnic group the woman belongs to, what differences are made based on gender, and if there is an emphasis on control or cooperation. The differentiation process that is taking place in the administration of activation policy could lead to a positioning of the woman that either lead to an inclusion in the labour market or the opposite. The outcome would be related to what group and gender you belongs to and the categorization parted with it.

**Which institutions should provide welfare services and benefits?** The local character of the activation policy submit a degree of insecurity that is not possible to neglect. Both the question about who has welfare rights and on which conditions are to a high degree varied. The local difference seems to have a major influence in relation to what kind of possibilities, in terms of resources and autonomy that is
offered to the partakers. In the beginning of the paper I was relating to Frasers two models to cope with the relation between redistribution and recognition. The activatin policy in a Swedish context can with the focus on integration of immigrants and investment in resources for these groups be seen as an attempt to such a social political guide-line. Fraser develop the affirmation and the transformation model, where the later means a profound reconstruction of both resources and recognition. Only one of the differentiation patterns in the investigated organisations could be related to the later category. The pragmatic differentiation pattern is characterized with few locks, few categories, same obligations for everyone, and resources that bring the partaker in a direction towards the labour market, and a great deal of autonomy for the partaker, which means both some kind of recognition and an redistribution of resources. The stereotypical differentiation pattern on the contrary is based on a surface reallocation of resources and recognition that does not lead to an increased recognition of immigrant women, but on the contrary reinforce the existing group and gender differentiation. This type of differentiation pattern in the organisations seems instead to marginalize the women further from the labour market. In the professional differentiation pattern finally is the redistribution of resources connected to which category you belong to. On the other hand there is a possibility to pass step one and two and reach the third level where the interesting resources are. When it comes to the question of recognition the model could positioned the immigrant women, but the opposite is also possible, although the obligations is same for men and women in all groups and the administrators strive to cooperate with the partakers. The pattern could though been described as a mix between the affirmation and the transformation model.

**Conclusion:** In the conclusion I would like to answer the initial question about who benefits from the activation policy in three ways. First; It depends on local variations that is significant. Second; Who is included is connected to differentiation processes in the local distribution of resources and obligations that takes place in the activation policy. Third; The Pragmatic differentiation pattern seems to be the one that to a high degree promote the immigrant women inclusion in the labour market due to a redistribution of resources and a recognition of the sole individual irrespective of which gender and ethnical group you belongs to. While the results of the Stereotypical differentiation pattern could vary depending on which gender and ethnical group you belongs to and therefore also promote to marginalize immigrant and especially Muslim women and strengthen the group and gender differentiation. Activation policy can as stated in the local interpretation depending on differentiation patterns in the administration constitute both the beginning and the closed door that the Janusface is symbolising, in relation to immigrant women’s inclusion into labour market.

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