

Abstracts

Social dumping – a particular problem for the construction industry?

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The construction industry is often identified as particularly vulnerable to social dumping. Social dumping is a sensitive issue in the administration of public construction projects, as is the case with the current Metro construction project in Copenhagen. Jobs in the construction sector in Denmark increasingly go to foreign workers, while there remain many unemployed Danish construction workers. At the same time, the prevalence of work injuries in construction is high, and foreign workers are overrepresented in the statistics. In the public discourse these problems are increasingly associated with social dumping. However, it is unclear what social dumping actually covers.

The overall objective of this article is to clarify the concept of social dumping. A definition of the concept of social dumping will be used to explain the perceived problems with social dumping in the construction industry. The definition of the concept also serves the purpose of providing a meaningful framework to discuss initiatives addressing social dumping. We explore whether social dumping in the construction industry is a particular problem with observable consequences for wages and safety. The empirical data are based on participation in the coordinated effort of the police, Tax authorities, and the Work Environment Authority.

We show that social dumping has its source at the structural level and in particular places the regulation of salaries in the construction industry under pressure. Similar developments might be seen in other sectors as well, for example farming, cleaning industry and restaurants. We also conclude that it is difficult to distinguish between observable consequences of social dumping and the impact of other factors that can lead to poorer working conditions. Our concept of social dumping also visualizes that the Working Environment Authority's special social dumping action primarily limits the impact of social dumping, but only slightly affecting the underlying mechanisms of social dumping.

'Not exactly by the book' – an ethnographic study of how carpenter apprentices handle safety issues in their working environment

Regine Grytnes

The completion of a construction project presupposes planning, overview and project management, albeit in the experience of apprentices in the industry, work in construction is to a great extent contingent, ad hoc, and uncertain. The construction industry is also one of the industries with the highest numbers of accidents at work. Efforts to address this challenge are numerous, and regulations related to the working environment are a cornerstone in these efforts.

Based on ten months ethnographic fieldwork among carpenter apprentices in Denmark the article contextualizes the experiences of the apprentices in relation to the work environment issues that they face in their daily work. The article illuminates how the apprentices handle the challenges in their working environment by negotiating formal safety regulations in relation to situated and embodied ways of establishing trust in their ability to do the job and finish their tasks.

The analysis shows that in the experience of the apprentices, rule-following does not per se guarantee a safe working environment. Instead of trusting compliance with regulations to keep them safe, they apply a strategy of practically ignoring risk and dangers in an effort to concentrate on the actual task at hand. In this way they aim to build trust in their own ability handle the job, and thereby establish a feeling of security and confidence doing the job. In their experience the work they do can be dangerous, but if they focus on dangers and risks that will create and enhance insecurity and ultimately make the job unsafe. The article points to the importance of integrating bodily and tacit forms of knowledge related to health and safety in the effort to prevent accidents in the construction industry.

Danish construction sector collective bargaining in the shadow of foreign labor

Jens Arnholtz & Søren Kaj Andersen

Collective bargaining and collaboration between the social partners in the Danish construction sector has long been characterized by good cooperative relations. However, since EU-enlargement in 2004 and 2007, an increasing inflow of foreign workers and firms from the new Central

and Eastern European member states has generated debate about underpayment, unfair competition and social dumping. During the collective bargaining rounds in 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2014 foreign labor and social dumping were the dominant themes in the construction industry. An analysis of these bargaining rounds shows that the parties have managed to create several actor-driven innovations in the collective agreements that address sector-specific issues arising from the presence of foreign labor. At the same time the analysis also indicates that the theme of the foreign workers has created tensions between the parties. In addition, EU judgments, the economic crisis, pressure from workers, employers and politicians has increased the demand for the social partners to act while limiting their room for action.

User participation in childcare services – a dispositive analysis

Hilde Aamodt

User participation, i.e. active client participation in shaping a particular help effort, is seen as rudimentary in securing that the help which is offered, is in accordance with clients' needs. Little research has been conducted on the topic of user participation within childcare services. Nevertheless, certain findings are clear. In spite of the ideals and aims of user participation, studies show that the childcare services have had limited success in involving their users (here understood as parents) in defining their need for help. Parents often experience that they are neither listened to, nor able to affect outcomes when meeting with childcare services. This article has its origin in the perplexity of this overall tendency and examines why user participation, despite its declared benefit, remains

difficult to secure. The article demonstrates that limited parental influence is associated with the adherence of childcare services to an overarching logic that predefined children's needs and interests, thus delimiting the room for negotiated solutions.

The empirical material is video films of conversations between employees and users within the childcare services, and interviews with parents and caseworkers. The article makes use of Foucault's 'dispositive' analysis, with the aim of identifying the directives that form the meetings between users and employees. The article shows how employees and parents are subordinated a 'dispositive' that instructs practise. The 'dispositive' that seems to be active here is "the consideration for the child" or "the best interest of the child". The notion of "The best for the child" appears as a general superior

force that sometimes disregards recognition for the uniqueness of each child and their situation. In this way, the freedom to exercise user participation is limited for both employees and users. Ironically, as both parties are governed by such overarching directives, there is a risk that the very purpose of the directives, which is the best interest of the child, is undermined.

Through the analysis we can see what sort of actions or practices are being preferred. The article shows how work practices are governed by an overarching logic that cannot immediately be seen, but requires extensive analysis to be discovered. The article aims, through its 'dispositive' analysis, to inspire further research that might understand how superior patterns regulate and give guidelines to work practices.