**Title:** Discourses of reablement in Scandinavian policy documents

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**Background**

In Scandinavian healthcare services, reablement is an intervention for people living at home and in need of time-limited home care support. However, in the three countries (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) the implementation and development of reablement have varied in design and development/spreading. We want to investigate how different discourses are expressed in Scandinavian reablement policy documents.

**Aim:** To explore variation in discourses of reablement in Scandinavian policy documents.

**Methodology**

The frame of reference is Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis (CDA). We analyse official policy documents on macro-level describing reablement provided in Scandinavian healthcare services. The approach of CDA is concerned with how power is exercised through language and the method consists of a detailed text analysis aiming to gain insight into how discursive processes operate linguistically in specific texts. The CDA comprises the combination of textual and social analysis. Furthermore, the analysis consists of a three-dimension analysis: (i) a spoken or written language text, (ii) a discursive practice which involves the production and interpretation (consumption) of text, and (iii) a social practice. Moreover, in the analysis we focus both on intertextuality and interdiscursivity. First, intertextuality, meaning how the texts relate to each other and to other texts, was in focus when selecting policy documents from the different countries. Through intertextuality the relationship between the policy documents helped identifying documents in the same genre and style. Interdiscursivity, a term for the articulations of different genres, styles, and language presentations in the documents.

**Analysis**

Intertextuality: Policy documents including descriptions and discourses of reablement from the three Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway, and Sweden) were searched through to find policy documents that matched each other in the different countries. We present the primary documents chosen for analysis in Table 1.

Table 1. Policy documents - primary

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Type of polical agency and type of document** | **Name of the document** | **Year of the document** |
| **Denmark** | The Home Care Commission report | Future home care – older people’s resources in the centre of a coherent intervention | 2013 |
| **Norway** | From the Minstry of Health and Care Services | Meld. St. 15 (2017-2018) A full life – all your life – A Quality Reform for Older Persons | 2018 |
| **Sweden** | The Swedish government – committee reviewing | Läs mig! National kvalitetsplan för vård och omsorg om äldre personer | 2017 |

Interdiscursivity: What were the different discourses (or use of different languages) in the texts (in the various policy document)?

Policy documents represent the governmeanl authorities’s perspective. In Scandinavian policy documents describing/including reablement, three central discourses were dominant: an activation discourse, a resource discourse, and a goal-oriented discourse. Common to all three discourses were that they had an ambiguous language-use targeting three actor groups: the citizens/ the elderly, professions or team members, and service management. However, it was interesting that according to the different actor groups – the same terminology had a different meaning.

Regarding the citizens, the policy documents described how the citizen / the elder was to take responsibility for his / her rehabilitation process. Targeting the profession, the focus was on how the professionals needed a change in their way of thinking, and there was a need for a paradigm shift from giving help to a more rehabilitative approach. For the service-management, the focus was on the freedom of choice and cost efficiency in reablement. In Table 2, examples from the Norwegian text of different discourses the policy document want the actor’s to act on are presented. An illustration and comparison between the countries will be done in the next version of the paper.

Table 2. From an authority (a governmental) perspective, three discourses – activation, resource, and goal-oriented – were identified in the documents and illustrated from the tree actor groups of the citizen / the elder, profession or team members, and service management.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Citizen / the elder** | **Profession / Team members** | **Service management** |
| **Activation**  (focus on what to do) | Reablement has shown to improve functional status, improve self-perceived performance and increase participation in daily life activities. | Everyday coping/mastering (hverdagsmestring in Norwegian) is a preventive and rehabilitative mindset that emphasizes the individual's coping in everyday life regardless of the level of function. | The reablement service should actively refer to other relevant offers in the municipality, such as training activities, offers of mental support, conversations or learning and coping offers. |
| **Resource**  (focus on resources, means or ’capital’) | Coping/mastering (*mestring* in Norwegian) can be defined as that the individual, through his or her resources, experiences being able to handle tasks, challenges and changes in the life cycle. | Everyday coping/mastering (*mestring* in Norwegian) requires that the health and care service invites and facilitates dialogue that maps the user's own resources, and together with the user ensures that these can be used. | Reablement is still more cost effective than regular care. |
| **Goal**  (focus on logic or rationality, or a goal-mean mindset) | Everyone should be helped to master their lives in line with their own conditions, goals and wishes. | It can happen/be delivered at the individual- and group level, and is about being able to understand the situation and have knowledge about and control over options of action. | The services are diverse and are systematically evaluated, but receive good feedback from their user groups. |

**Preliminary conclusion:** In this paper, we will show how all three countries varies in how they describe and desing the policy of reablement. Three central discourses were identified and they were; activation, resource, and goal-orientation. These discourses had an ambiguous language use targeting three actors: the citizen / the elderly, professions, and service management. The authorities applied the same terminology targeting the different actors – while the words had quite different meaning, for example, bodily resources and economic resourses.