MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY POTENTIALS FOR ORGANISATIONS: THE CASE OF GERMANY

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ABSTRACT

A successful integration of migrants in the society as well as of older employees in the organisation is getting more important based on demographic changes. The central aim of the investigation is to deal with problem fields of the Human Resource Management, which arise by demographic changes regarding migration and the ageing society. Therefore, an explorative qualitative study with human resource managers and diversity representatives of the large DAX companies was conducted. The views of leaders and employees with and without an immigration background regarding diversity potentials in organisation are compared in this study. The results indicate that diversity is important for organisation. Employees have recognised the importance of diversity. Managers have not recognised the seriousness and urgency of cultural diversity and diversity actions. Human resource managers are not able to assess the additional stress of migrants correctly and to consider them in their day-to-day management and diversity actions.

KEY WORDS

migration, diversity potentials, intercultural competence, human resource management

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1   DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The process of globalisation as well as the European Integration increases the need for action of societies and organisations to adapt their structures and processes to demographic changes. The issue of diversity has high priority in Germany but also in other European coun- tries. It will be difficult for companies to win young people for their own company, because there are less young persons of working age at the labour market compared to the ageing people of working age. In the EU average, 77% people of working age are between 55 and 64

years and work in fulltime (German Federal Statistical Office, 2016). The ageing population has not only effects on the companies, but also on individuals, e.g. regarding the cooperation of teams.

To ensure the employees' and leader's performance, organisations have to select appropriate staff, who bring required diversity-competences like intercultural competence, social and digital competences, to address effectively the challenges of the 21st century. The interaction of people from different cultures is no longer an exception, but part of the professional life (Fantini, 2009).

People from different cultures and migrants are often discriminated in practice. Also their competences are undervalued and are evaluated worse. But these competences can also be used – they are important potentials for organisations. Research as well as practise showed that diversity is only working if organisations promote proactively, especially, ageing employees, women and persons with an immigration background (Fuchs and Dörfler, 2005).

The strong interest of society and economy regarding Diversity Management can be explained by the fact that the society has changed due to demographic processes and strong migration flows in the last two years, 2016 and 2017, in Europe. The result is a greater heterogeneity in societies and organisations. A successful Diversity Management is seen as indispensable for organisations in the long term. Since this challenge is realised many measures for the promotion of diversity are conducted.

More than 2,600 companies and institutions are signatories of the Diversity charter of German companies. However, by considering the national cross section of organisations in Germany, it is shown that around two thirds of the companies are not active regarding diversity and did not implement diversity management (KfW Research, 2017). Diversity has to be organised and consciously integrated in the respective organisation, when it should be used as a chance (e.g. Thomas, 2003; Franken, 2015). Migration delays the process of ageing society, but cannot solve it permanently (German Federal Statistical Office, 2015).

Diversity management describes the personnel diversity in organisations (Becker, 2006) and the commonalities and differences of individuals (Krell, 2003). It indicates both the obvious and barely perceived and salient characters like age, religion, sexual orientation, cultural values as well as barely obviously changing characters like language und competence (Milliken and Martins, 1996) and the values of equal opportunity and fairness.

Diversity management tents to create diversity in organisations and to change the values, attitudes and behaviours of organisation and working groups (Ashikali and Groeneveld, 2015). The prerequisite for an organisation for the success of diversity is the appreciation of employees and their different individuality (Vedder, 2011). Persons should be treated equally, except of their cultural individual characteristics and should use their skills free from norms and stereotypes (Vedder, 2011).

Diversity of employees can have different effects in an organisation. Especially, it depends on the extent to which diversity is respected. If the variety refers to status, negative effects for the organisation's performance are shown. If employees bring experiences, e.g. based on their different cultural background, it can have positive effects. An active promotion of this kind of diversity can contribute to an improvement of organisational results and can procure strong innovations. (Garib, 2013). Diversity can be enriching for organisations and individuals, if they value the diversity. (Page, 2007). Studies pointed out that individuals with a pro-diversity belief describe multicultural groups as better and more innovativ, precisely by the fact of the group's diversity. People with a pro-diversity belief identify themselves stronger with the group and have a positive social identity (van Dick et al., 2008). Wolf and van Dick (2008) illustrated in their study that people, who see migrants as an enrichment, have more contacts to them and express less racism than those, who do not see migrants as enrichment for the society. Stegmann (2011) pointed out in his meta-analysis that pro-diversity beliefs as well as a positive diversity

culture result in beneficial results for groups and individuals and increase job performance.

Different reasons exist about the organisations' causes and normative convictions for integrating diversity in their company strategy and culture (Ely and Thomas, 2001; van der Zee and Otten, 2014). Diversity research has different approaches from individual, organisational and economic perspective. Organisations develop different measures for the promotion of diversity that are depending on the approach which is chosen.

The main approach for diversity promoting is the discrimination-and-fairness approach. The equal opportunity of everyone is of central importance. By fairness the individual differences are valued and so every employee gains recognition for its own competences and performance. To achieve this, organisations insert different diversity policies and tools.

Quotes like anti-discrimination laws can be mentioned as examples.

The second approach for the promotion of diversity is the access-and-legitimacy-perspective. This approach understands diversity in the organisation as an access to new markets and is seen as an added value by the organisations (van der Zee and Otten, 2014).

The third approach is the integration-and-learning-perspective. Diversity is seen as a resource for learning, changing and renewal. Managers appreciate diversity on every level and encourage the exchange of different opinions.

All three diversity's approaches are successful to motivate managers to diversify their staff. But only the integration-and-learning approach leads to reach sustainable advantages in the daily business (van der Zee and Otten, 2014).

Although research varies greatly in different cultures it concludes in the some result: Diversity can only be successful if it is established as a top-down-process and if the members of the organisation have strong pro-diversity beliefs (Genkova and Ringeisen, 2017).

Leaders take an important role in diversity management. They have an influence on the satisfaction, health and performance of employees (Franken, 2015). Managers take over different roles in their function as a leader and are between role model function and performance pressure (Franken, 2015). Especially, managers take over a central role by initiating diversity management (Wildermuth and Gray, 2005).

Top managers take over the role of developing the diversity strategy. Leaders of the middle management implement the strategy. Therefore, the middle management plays a key role and demonstrates variety. They carry responsibility for a successful implementation of diversity management and are supporter of diversity competences (Thomas, 1990). The task of the leaders is to convince employees of the issue of variety (Dreas and Rastetter, 2016).

All studies have one in common. When organisations do not implement diversity actions in their company, the effects are negative and impair the working conditions for heterogeneous and homogeneous organisations. It is shown that diversity is a competitive advantage, but at the same time, it can be a source of conflicts and cumbersome behaviour. A diversity fair personnel selection and development are important for organisations because it gives organisations flexibility and additivity (Kersting and Ott, 2016).

2   MIGRATION AS DIVERSITY CATEGORIES

The employment of persons with an immigration background and ageing persons can have advantages for organisations, but can also lead to difficulties. Every communication with a member of another group is connected with stress experience and may lead to many misapprehensions. Employees are confronted

with different challenges by the international cooperation, which can lead to stress (Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

This is also highlighted by the actual social processes: In 2015, around 4.7 million people have immigrated in the EU-states, whereby around 2.4 million people were from third

countries. The highest level of immigration is recorded by Germany, followed by the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy. The consideration of the migrant population shows that around 35.1 million people, who were born outside of Europe live in the EU. 19.3 million people, who were born in another EU-state, live in the EU (Eurostat, 2017). Romanians, Poles, Italians, Portuguese as well as Englishman belong to the five biggest groups of EU-citizens, who have lived before in other EU-state (Eurostat, 2017).

Migration and cultural differences became more dominant in the public opinion as well as for economic and social processes.

The migration research has developed between the 1950 years and the 21st century. Three main approaches were thereby considered: intercultural learning, stress approach, social identity as well as acculturation. All approaches were considered based on economic changes. Regarding diversity, the stress approach is predominantly in the research. The reason is that short-term and long-term intercultural communications are characterised by stress (Eggerth and Flynn, 2013).

The extent of the experienced burden is high, when the coping behaviour is ineffective or the number of appearing stressors is high (Eggerth and Flynn, 2013). Experienced discrimination, profound stress events as well as social isolation, e.g. by colleagues, can have an impact on the well-being of persons with an immigration background (Bozorgmehr and Razum, 2015). In this way, migrants have an additional burden and difficulties to show their performance. They become low performer and show sanitary and social problems. By these social problems the probability for discrimination is boosted as well as stress and challenges for people with immigration background.

The stress level increases through at the daily cooperation between people with and without an immigration background. The interpretation of unclear cultural patterns and the questioning of the organisational processes and structure cause many conflict situations. Not only persons with an immigration background can feel stress, but also persons without an immigration

background because habitual and firmly social established perspectives change. Persons with and without an immigration background have to adjust to new working methods and views (Asbrock et al., 2012). This means for employees and managers to acquire intercultural competences to be able to work in multicultural teams and to fulfil the working challenges of the 21st century effectively.

Discrimination cannot be made only by individuals but also by organisational processes and structures which makes it difficult for migrants to get access to the labour market and to work in their key qualification. This is called structural discrimination. Only a structural integration can support persons with an immigration background to work in their key qualification. This processes are connected with cultural insensitive selection of personnel, which do not consider the cultural variance of personality traits. For example, if an organisations search for an extroverted employee on the German labour market all candidates from Italy would gauged as being too extroverted and inappropriate. The trend also occurs by social competencies which are strongly bound to cultural aspects (Genkova and Ringeisen, 2017). From the sociology perspective, the structural integration in the labour market is an important prerequisite to develop a national allegiance for persons with an immigration background.

In most of the organisations a structural discrimination is found. This means that the labour market chances of persons with an immigration background are smaller compared to persons without an immigration background.

The foreign graduation of persons with an immigration background is often not recognised and, therefore, they cannot work in their primarily qualification and work below their qualifications (Badura et al., 2010). Studies have shown that there is a negative relation between the education and the psychological integration. This phenomenon describes that higher educated migrants abandon from the host society (De Vroome and Verkuyten, 2015).

The so called glass ceiling effect is a phenomenon regarding gender and discrimination. This effect is stronger for persons with an

immigration background. The frustration and the disappointed career expectation lead to a critical consideration of the host society (Genkova and Ringeisen, 2017).

To see diversity not only in a negative way, in the research and in practice, it is always tried to determine whether direct positive effects of diversity management exist regarding the economic success. The results of the investigation are heterogeneous and depend strongly on the cultural specific relations (e.g. Genkova and Ringeisen, 2017).

The advantages of diversity management for employees and companies are getting more important. The effects of diversity actions are in great demand in practice and measurably quantifiable successes are expected. The research results indicate, that diversity beliefs are predictors for the success of diversity management and the economic success. The attitudes changes of employees are carried out by top-down actions. The role of the leadership is mostly important for the implementation and acceptance of diversity actions, than alone the diversity beliefs (Dreas and Rastetter, 2016).

For this reason, this study focuses the role of top-down actions and leaders in regard to the implementation of diversity.

Because the diversity research is strongly influenced by the political development, significant differences between the implicit and explicit attitudes are determined. The implicit attitudes purport the actions – but often in a negative way in regard to acceptance of diversity. The explicit attitudes rather include 'modern prejudice'. Outwardly, persons assess diversity in accordance with the public meaning and in a positive way. But in a protected area they remark negative meanings against diversity. To shape successful measures for diversity it is important to change the implicit attitudes.

This study is part of a bigger research project that focuses on the interactions of individual, group-oriented and organisational variables that require successful diversity management. In this study successful diversity management is associated with positive diversity beliefs, less discrimination and a fair promotion of persons with different cultural background.

The research questions of the study are: Which context variables seen as important for a successful diversity management? Which barriers obstruct the implementation of the diversity measures? Do manager and human resource managers realise the problem areas in the implementation of diversity management? To answer these questions, the differences of attitudes between managers and employees with and without migration background are compared. Aim of this comparison were to determine to what extent managers are presumed to be promotors of diversity.

3   METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This study deals especially with the key issue of the Human Resource Management's challenges regarding the demographic change. The study is a small part of a big project. Aim of the study is to determine with a qualitative survey which implicit attitudes occur by managers and employees with and without migration background. This implicit attitudes shall be used to generate quantitative hypotheses and to obtain specific measurements for a quantitative questionnaire.

Diversity, especially persons with a migration background are important potentials for organisations. For this purpose, explorative qualitative interviews were conducted. The aim was to analyse which role have managers regarding diversity and which competences are important to ensure equal opportunities in the personnel selection and to be diversity competent.

Migration background is defined according to the typical definition of the German society: a person with migrant background has at least one parent without a German background that immigrated to Germany after.

Therefore, 63 telephone interviews with managers ($N = 17$) and human resource managers ($N = 13$) as well as employees with ($N = 15$) and without ($N = 18$) an immigration

background from different organisations were asked about the issue of equal opportunities, especially equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background employees. To answer the central aims of the study, following hypotheses were generated:

Explorative hypothesis: Managers and employees assess the need of diversity actions as equivalent.

Quantitative hypotheses:

- *Hypothesis 1: Managers and employees differentiate regarding the expression of the stress level of employees with and without an immigration background.*

- *Hypothesis 2: Managers and employees differentiate regarding the forms of the subjective assessment of the social competence.*

There are rarely praxis-relevant and scientific results of diversity, especially cultural diversity regarding managers and human resource managers.

A qualitative interview was chosen as a survey method because it enables, compared to a quantitative questionnaire, to present the relationships and backgrounds of the topic diversity and the challenges of the Human Resource Management from the view of managers and human resource managers. Furthermore, conclusions for diversity potentials and stumbling blocks regarding the equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background and ageing people can be drawn. The interviews were conducted with a structured interview guideline.

Through qualitative interviews, non-concerned aspects can be figured out and, in turn, conclusions can be generated. In this case, which competences are important for diversity and to what extent diversity actions are necessary (Mayer, 2013).

The questions of the interview guideline include the view of managers and human resource managers regarding the importance of diversity in organisations as well as the assessment of the subjective evaluation of lacking skills, e.g. intercultural competences. Therefore, it is examined to what extent stress has an impact on employees with and without an immigration background. The standardised interview is based on an interview guideline, which is designed deductive, theory-based (Mayer, 2013). The use of an interview guideline increases the structure of the questions as well as the comparability of data (Mayer, 2013).

In total, the interview guideline is based on open and closed questions, e.g. "How stressed are employees with an immigration background in your company at the moment, in your opinion?" The closed questions were answered on a 5-Point Likert Scale, e.g. 1= not at all stressed until 5 = very stressed. The combination of open and closed questions enables on the one hand to experience the individual views of managers and on the other hand to compare the interviews among each other. So the implicit attitudes should be determined.

The interview guideline includes different parts. One part deals with the questions regarding the issue of diversity as well as company-related questions like equal opportunities of employees with an immigration background in organisations.

Another part deals with the aspects of social competence and the impact of cultural stereotypes and prejudices regarding the personnel selection. Further questions deal with the issue of leadership and stress.

The aim is to experience whether employees with an immigration background have different stressors than employees without an immigration background. In the last part of the interviews, the respondents are asked about the issue of competence, inter alia which competences have the biggest impact on the equal opportunities in the personnel selection.

The interviews were analysed by the quantitative content analyses by Mayring (2015). The aim of the quantitative content analysis is to analyse the material of a communication (Mayring, 2015). The interviews were analysed by the frequency analysis with the aim to count the elements of the material and compare their frequency with other elements (Mayring, 2015). The transcribed, anonymised interviews were analysed with Excel.

The sample consists of 17 managers and 13 human resource managers. 17 of them are male and 13 female as well as 15 employees without

an immigration background and 18 employees with an immigration background. 20 are female and 13 male. The age average of the managers and human resource managers is $M = 40.83$ years ($N = 29$; SD $= 9.30$). The age average of the employees with and without an immigration background is $M = 35.48$ years ($N = 33$; SD $= 9.99$). The participants were composite by executives and managers form the companies with the biggest DAX in Germany. Reason for that selection were, that this companies are global players (regarding size and effectiveness) and are concerned with inter-culturalism and diversity since years. Furthermore, this companies have a diversity agent.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the following, the results of the study will be presented. Explorative hypothesis: Managers and employees assess the need of diversity actions as equivalent. The results show that managers and employees assessed highly the diversity quotas, e.g. quota of women and migrants. These quotas are not usually legally consolidated by the view of managers and there is a lack of official guidelines. Mangers claimed in the interviews that such quotas exist and are implemented as internal orientations in organisations. Further actions are a diversity department, equal opportunities officer, diversity representative, who apply actively the implementation of equal opportunities and diversity sensitization.

Most of diversity actions deal with the diversity aspects gender in Germany. Managers listed up different trainings, language courses and exchange programs, culture trainigs which contribute to the implementation of diversity.

Human resource manager listed up trainings, joining the Diversity Charter of Germany Companies and the cooperation with the Federal Employment Agency. According to the statements of recruiters "individual intercultural competence trainings are offered for employees who would like to deal with intercultural competences and to analyse their own intercultural competence." The trainings include e.g. issues like "How to recruit internationally?, which aims at the intercultural difference at the recruiting." Further issues are "anti-prejudice [...] or emotional competences."

In contrast, employees with and without an immigration background mentioned that hardly or no diversity actions are implemented in the interviewed companies at all. This shows that employees with an immigration background assess the implementation of diversity actions as insufficient and are unsatisfied with that. Most of the diversity actions deal with the communication of diversity in companies like On- and Offline platforms, diversity departments and diversity committees. Both groups mentioned that trainings are offered in the organisations.

Most of the interviewed employees work in organisations that belong to the Diversity Charta of German companies and have implemented diversity in their company strategy.

Employees figured out that the own professional development and the equal treatment at the personnel selection and development are important. Employees mentioned the following aspects as solutions: "Anonymous applications will not asserted. [...] Those, who have employee responsibilities and make personnel selections should do diversity competence training. They have to reflect themselves, if they are poised to hire someone, who is different than them. [...] I think that is actually the question and has to be answered by the human resource managers: Am I ready to hire somebody, who is different than I?" Following the statements of employees, also a form of benefit analysis can be helpful "[...] which hide the background of people as good as possible. So therefore, only the professional skills, social competence and media competences are measured without being influenced by the appearance of the person, e.g. gender etc."

Both interviewed groups agree that openness, cultural interests are very important regarding

the relevant competences. Social competences like tolerance and self-reflection are also important, followed by the intercultural competence and the cultural knowledge and awareness. At this point, a tendency is verified like in the previous results: the employees with and without an immigration background list up more competences and differentiate stronger regarding the promotion of intercultural competence.

Managers assess the tendency for the promotion of relevant competences for the future. They do not see the importance of the promotion of theses competences for the present. Therefore, managers do an external attribution. Interesting is, that managers mention risk tolerance as a relevant competence for diversity and associate them with risks. Furthermore, they mention emotional stability, intercultural flexibility, social identity, intercultural anti-prejudice as well as sensitisation for cultural differences. Employees mention instead empathy and openness, social competence, self-reflection, cultural knowledge and tolerance.

The research indicates that perspective change and experience exchange are stronger predictors for intercultural decision-making (e.g. Genkova and Ringeisen, 2017). The perspective change is a stronger predictor than empathy. Risk tolerance is not a relevant competence for diversity and the increasing of intercultural competence. This indicates that managers perceive diversity as a threat and assess the stress level for them as high because they are multipliers for diversity (see Tab. 1).

This shows that managers and employees consider the relevance of diversity measure as important. But it became obvious in the interviews that employees deal more with the issue of diversity than managers, based on the number of mentions and differentiation. Reasons for that can be that employees are more confronted with diversity and have more contact with it by colleagues and customers.

The frequency of citations indicate that there is a difference between self- and out-side perception of managers and employees. Both groups attribute deficits and the need for diversity actions stronger to the other group. The research and practice shows that diversity processes proceeds top-down (Dreas and Raststetter, 2016). A further result of the present research and Best Practices is that top-down processes are only successful, when the expression of diversity sensitive competences is high (Dreas and Raststetter, 2016).

Hypothesis 1: Managers and employees differentiate regarding the expression of the stress level of employees with an immigration background.

The results of the hypothesis demonstrate that the assessment of the stress level of employees with an immigration background is the same of managers and employees ($T = .035$; df 1; 49; $p = .972$). These results are supported by the qualitative analysis. The qualitative analysis showed that especially prejudices and the impatience of others based on eventually language problems as well as different work attitudes based on intercultural differences are stressing for employees with an immigration background. This is supported by statements of employees with an immigration background: "People with an immigration background have the feeling: I have to give more than 120% than my German colleagues. This is one reason why migrants feel more stressed."

Because of the small sample, this results represent just hints. But the hints are served to generate quantitative hypotheses. These shall focus the self-experienced stress relating to diversity as well as the fears and anxieties that are associated with diversity.

Hypothesis 2: Managers and employees differentiate regarding the forms of the subjective assessment of the social competence.

The results confirm that there is no significant difference between managers and employees regarding the subjective assessment of social competence ($T = -.489$; df 2; 59; $p = .628$). This can be an indication that both groups feel prepared for the challenges of diversity management. These results indicate that the need of increasing the competences is attributed to others. This is confirmed by the previous research.

The results indicate significantly that the relevance of diversity is recognised by employees

Tab. 1: Importance of Diversity

Managers/Human Resource Managers	Employees with and without an immigration background
Seriousness and urgency of diversity is not clearly recognised	Seriousness and urgency of diversity is not clearly recognised by employees without an immigration background
Incorrect assessment of the stress of migrants	Good assessment of the stress level of migrants by employees without an immigration background
No consideration of the stress level of migrants in the day-to-day management	Risk of problematisation of diversity

and managers. But it is determined that this tendency is stronger for employees than for managers. Managers have often spoken about the importance of diversity measures for the organisation performance, justice and fairness for employees in the interviews. The managers have defined these aspects as important "for the future" and see no actual need. On the way around, managers are mostly a homogeny group that has less contact to diversity groups. So this homogeny group of managers has less contact points with heterogeneity and diversity than employees. A homogeny group also has less conflicts and do not see the need for action by the implementation of diversity.

This means that managers deny the actual need of action and do not recognise or diagnose the stress level of employees with and without an immigration background enough, based on the diversity change.

Managers have recognised the seriousness and urgency of diversity. But regarding cultural diversity and equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background, they do not see the urgency. Human resource managers are not able to assess the additional stress of migrants correctly and to consider them in their daily management. So recommendation for the successful implementation of diversity are not realised. This is regarded as task of the diversity agents, but not as general management task. This also applies for the change of diversity beliefs.

The employees have recognised the importance of diversity. Regarding the equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background, employees without an immigration background do not see the importance in

personnel actions, in contrast to employees with an immigration background.

Employees without an immigration background assess the stress level of employees with an immigration background well. In the interviews, employees have already spoken about the risk of increasing problematisation of diversity.

The interviews have shown that in the western part of Germany, e.g. in the Ruhr area in Germany, such a concept would be superfluous because there is a high proportion of migrants and it is normal to work with different cultures together. An important diversity competence part is the intercultural and social competence. Empathy, tolerance and communicative competences, openness, self-reflection and emotional competences as well as cultural knowledge and awareness were also mentioned. Both groups have indicated the need to promote the competence by trainings and experiences abroad. This sounds partly contradictory to the results that both groups do not have significant differences regarding the subjective assessed social competence. The self-assessment is very high in addition, although the qualitative questionnaire classifies it as high.

In this study it can be positively highlighted that the sample of 63 managers and employees with and without an immigration background in total has a relative high diversification. Furthermore, the diversity aspects age and culture could be considered by different perspectives, by involved persons and managers, who develop diversity strategies for their companies and employees. The interview guideline covers many issues of diversity management. The combination of closed and open questions increases the comparability of the interviews, compared to

interviews with only open questions. But the results of structured interviews are less comparable, inter alia due to the open questions, whereby the analysis is more difficult. The results would have been more comparable, if a standardised, quantitative questionnaire was used and a higher sample could be asked. But the results would not have been so diverse like with the selected interviews. The topic diversity, especially equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background is hardly investigated. The qualitative investigation was used for generating hypotheses and delivers approaches that have to be examined in detail, in a quantitative investigation, in the future. The differences between the groups were only measured to generate specific hypotheses for a quantitative questionnaire.

There are some limitations of the study. The interview guideline deals partly superficial with some topics of diversity and does not question some parts in detail, e.g. which diversity actions are the most effective ones for elderly employees. However, other companies can differentiate from the sample due to other characteristics, e.g. size, structure, implementation of a diversity department. The interview guideline should be extended on the basis of the results of the study. Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate the category systems regarding their quality criteria.

The interviews pointed out that regional difference exist in Germany regarding the importance of diversity actions. Furthermore, the interviewed persons have answered the questions of the interviews differently in detail. Therefore, the results have to be considered critically. The interviews of the study were used for generating hypotheses for a quantitative questionnaire. Therefore, additional aspects re-

garding equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background could be measured. These aspects could not be asked in detail in conventional quantitative surveys. It was able to take a stronger focus regarding the urgency of diversity.

But there are some limitations regarding the sample: The results of the interviews give only approaches regarding the equal opportunities of persons with an immigration background and ageing people. To get a representative sample, a more comprehensive sample should be made with managers from different working fields, locations in Germany and other small, medium-sized and large organisations. The study could confirm that differences between employees with and without an immigration background exist regarding the importance of diversity concepts in personnel actions.

It has to be considered, whether the answers were given due to social desirability or deliberate misrepresentation because the survey method was an interview. A deliberate misinterpretation can be excluded because the respondents participated voluntarily and had not to expect any sanctions or other effects by specific statements. Social desirability could be minimised by the anonymisation of the data but it could still occur due to the social interaction during the interviews. This could lead to a distortion of the results because e.g. the individual responsibility or the skills of the own person were presented more positive.

To summarise: Diversity principles have to be more integrated in the company guidelines and manager guidelines. Apparently, leaders should be more sensitized, so that they are able to diagnose the present need of diversity correctly and are willing to implement the actions now and not in the future.

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