

“One can probably deal primarily, or only, with what is neither completely dark (evil) nor completely clear (good) – one cannot avert one's view of evil, of darkness, or of good, of the sun. One can only contemplate the vague – a combination of both.” (Weil, 1996, s. 39).

Simone Weil (1909-1943)

“Men never live innocently, apart from good and evil. If they try to be morally neutral, not only their moral, but also their physical humanity is destroyed.” (Komárková, 1997, s. 81)

Božena Komárková (1903-1997)

Abstract

Dissertation title:

Through inequality towards equity: ethical aspects of positive discrimination (affirmative actions) with the emphasis on gender (in)equality in employment

Key words:

applied ethics, equality, equity, discrimination, positive discrimination/affirmative action, gender, labour market, employment

Abstract

The presented PhD dissertation deals with the issue of positive measures/positive discrimination (or affirmative actions) with a focus on the field of employment and, more broadly, the labour market from the perspective of the underrepresented sex/gender, with an emphasis on its ethical contexts. Its goal is a critical reception of this specific area of employment policy as for the detection and evaluation of selected ethical problems and dilemmas that relate to it in practice. The topic is approached theoretically based on the study of academic sources and current research articles carried out mainly abroad. Theoretically, the work is based on a combination of several approaches. Regarding the view of gender differences, these are approached through social constructivism and some feminist approaches such as standpoint or intersectional feminism. With regard to the grounding in ethical theories, it emphasizes consequentialist approaches in combination with situational ethics and ethics of care.

The work is divided into several subsequent and interconnected chapters. The first is devoted to the definition of the subject of the paper, the methodology and approach to the chosen topic, the second analytically focuses on the conceptualization and terminology in the field of positive measures, discrimination, or affirmative actions. In the third chapter, the above outlined theoretical anchoring of the approach to work is elaborated. The fourth and fifth chapters form a certain complement, in the fourth I deal with issues of equality, inequality, discrimination and power, in the fifth specifically the position of women and men in the labour market and in society is described, primarily with the connection to the issue of work and employment. Certain space is also devoted to the importance, possibilities, and limits of promoting diversity. The sixth chapter is one of the key ones, because based on an analysis of current research articles, it provides an overview of the main ethical questions, problems and dilemmas related to the affirmative actions in the labour market and in the context of the

meritocratic principle. The seventh chapter then presents preliminary conclusions and freer reflections on the established facts, with the aim of their deeper reflection and evaluation. This is followed by the obligatory conclusion and a list of used literature and sources.

To the best of the author's knowledge, the text of the dissertation is one of the first texts of this kind in the Czech Republic, which systematically addresses the chosen topic from the perspective of the field of applied ethics. It thus brings many stimulating findings and conclusions, which it would be desirable to follow up on and, considering the theoretical nature of this work, to include and empirically verify in follow-up research projects, as systematic interest in this topic is relatively low not only in the Czech Republic.

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Praha, září, 2023