

CONTRADICTION BETWEEN WORK LIFE AND NON-WORK LIFE WITHIN SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Based on the impacts of Industrial Revolution, sociology focused heavily on the macro structure of society especially in earlier times of modernization process. Because of strong desire for explaining newly established society which appreciated fairly different from former way of human living, social scientists began to create theories about this urban-based new societal life. While they were trying to determine new society by using macro concepts, they (un)consciously neglected the importance of micro societal issues of the phenomenon and the concept of everyday life. However, particularly in the later period of modernization, social scientists became aware of the inadequacy of the grand theories, and they began to turn into micro approaches by which they believe to explain macro societal issues like everyday life.

From hunter-gathering period to the modern, literature gives us much examples that everyday life was not so separated into two parts as the place of home and the place of work before Industrial Revolution as it would be in the following period of modern societies, one of the most material outcomes of Industrial Revolution. In a manner of speaking, early impacts of Industrial Revolution should require differentiation between the place of work and home. So, not only work life but also non-work life became valuable in explaining everyday life especially in the later period of modern societies.

As known, in the following periods of Industrial Revolution, one of the fundamental instrument to explain explicitly the phenomenon of everyday life became the concept of work in special and of work life in general since nearly almost of individuals, groups, and mass as well as social classes who had not any property neither inherited from their predecessors nor they made by themselves forced to earn daily bread by selling their physical talent to maintain livelihood of their households. In fact, appearance and spread of the phenomenon of wage by which social classes have to earn their living and therefore by which they form their everyday life may find within this context. So, the meanings of work life which not only means earn living but also means whole everyday life at the same time found out by social scientist who particularly focus their special interest on the concept of work and its problems. As discussed above, the main approach of this writing trying to examine the reality of everyday life may point out that there is close relationship between work life and non-work life in human mind despite making differentiation between them at the aspect of time and place qualifications in everyday life seems fairly easy at first.

1. THE CONTEXT OF EVERYDAY LIFE

For a long time, classical sociologists like Saint-Simon, Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber respectively used to forming grand theories and as a result of this macro concepts by which they made themselves sure to determine, explain, and interpret the structure of modern societal life just with macro concepts in sociological analysis. As generally known and condemned particularly by Wright Mills, grand theories appreciated individuals, groups, mass and also social classes etc. as only outcomes of the macro structure. However, especially with the period of globalization, sociologists began to aware that grand theories were not adequate especially in explaining micro concepts like everyday life in sociological studies any more. Thus, they began to turn towards micro approaches giving individual active role in creating, experiencing, recreating, and effecting everyday life. As known, these approaches, including phenomenology and ethnomethodology are launched and run by both Husserl and Shultz. Micro approaches generally highlights two main points: The first is that everyday life could not be explained only with macro concepts; in other words, micro concepts are required and inevitable for societal analysis. The second is that self-generating meanings shared between individuals have to be taken into account as well as social life as just one part of the social structure (Holstein and Gubrium, 1994: 262–265). In the light of these approaches, first of all it is necessary to make differentiation between work life and non-work life before determining the relationship between them particularly in analysing the phenomenon and the concept of everyday life.

2. WORK LIFE

One of the most significant concept of social sciences that philosophers have been focused their interest on may be estimated as the concept of work life stemmed from maintaining life via benefiting from nature throughout human beings (Hall, 1994: 2–3; Miller and Form, 1964: 6). Differences in the ideas of philosophers about the phenomenon and the concept of work is a significant indicator that the meanings of work changed from negative towards positive especially with Industrial Revolution throughout the concept of work which had not only meant just earning daily bread anymore but also meant meeting several needs of workers (Alix, 1995: 423; Tolan, 1996: 146). In this sense, it is must keep in the mind that the word of work containing the meanings of boredom, pain, exhausting, and agony in German and in French as well as in English before Reformation *by which the meaning of work became the holy and short way to reach God* (Febvre, 1999: 104–112; Gamst, 1995: 2).

Besides, Industrial Revolution offered individuals, groups, mass, and classes the opportunity to meet psychological, social, cultural, and political needs as well as material ones that even could not put on agenda by serfs especially in the system of feudalism (Ciulla, 2000: 4). To put in a differently way, not only earn living but also meeting several kinds of needs mentioned above become more important and gain value with Industrial Revolution in general and throughout extended possibilities in

working opportunities of working classes named serfs in feudalism (Pascral, 1972: 36). So, the concept of work began to contain further meanings not independent from whole everyday life. (Ciulla, 2000: 9). In such a manner that, as work life take part at the center of modern everyday life, job lose does not mean losing only wage but also losing whole everyday life (Oskay 1983: 130; Pascral, 1972: 33). At least, the meaning not being easily neglected by sociologists is that people enter work life not only just meeting material needs but also with several expectations (Rothman, 1987: 188). Although the basic answer of the question ‘why work?’ is ‘for earn living’ for most people in reality, finding an answer to this question in sociological point of view is not so easy as it is supposed. This reveals that the meanings of work may not limit with material needs (Alix, 1995: 426).

Paying attention to the characteristics and meanings of the concept of work may be beneficial in work life conceptualization instead of trying to make the concept of work clear. In fact, dating back to the tenth century, the word of work firstly derived from old English noun ‘woerc’ and the verb ‘wyrcan’ may be seen. Using both as a noun and as a verb, make the word of work complex as well as extraordinary. Actually, we are not only “do work”, “go to work” but we “have work” as well. In a manner of speaking, work is something “we have”, “we make” and “we own” (Ciulla, 2000: 28).

The concept of work which is definitely different from other concepts in point of involving several characteristics and implying in the previous paragraphs, are divided in two main category by sociologists as “individual” and “social”. While individual category put forward the characteristics of work as regards giving an opportunity, earn living by achieving special tasks, producing useful goods, and therefore meeting several needs (Pascral, 1972: 26–27), social category requires workers’ relationship and also highlighted the importance of work life in examining non-work life (Hall 1994: 3; Miller and Form, 1964: 6). In this way, the social category of the work is appreciated that work is not only a kind of physical activity which could be easily restricted within work life but also it is a different set of ideas and values closely linked with several physical activities. As this point make the concept of work complex, sociologists should pay more attention to the social category of work than individual category (Miller and Form, 1964: 5; Alix, 1995: 418; Hall, 1986: 13).

Some universal patterns of work involves knowledge, allocation of time and place, incentives and motivations, interaction with nature, transmission to the next generation and expenditure of energy; requiring set of rules, organization, control, leadership, prestige, instant discipline, identity, and worth; offering material and non material rewards. As seen, all of these patterns are not independent from the notion of value, at least. On the other hand, all of these universal patterns revealed that the concept of work have to require difficulty, restriction, and unwillingness. In the terms of other words, work is a kind of concept “telling us what to do”. (Applebaum, 1984: 19–29; Applebaum, 1995; Ciulla, 2000: 7–8). However, work has also a communal dimension which easily lead to occupational communities in which work life and non work life may not easily separate from each other.

3. NON-WORK LIFE

First of all, it is useful to pay attention to the correlation between production and consumption, between wage level and spread of technology, on differentiation between work and non-work activities in order to analyse the concept of non-work life. As seen explicitly even in nowadays societies, the phenomenon of wage is not definitely independent from the process of production and patterns of consumption. Moreover, contradiction between work life and non-work life greatly depends upon the balance between production and consumption. So, sociologists who focuses on investigating the phenomenon of everyday life have begun to put their effort and time into defining the concepts of production and consumption equally for explaining the concept of everyday life. Actually, consumption patterns forming non-work life depend upon wage level, and wage level depends on production forming work life.

It is generally believed that not only non-work life but also non-work activities gain importance with the later impacts of Industrial Revolution. In such a manner that, Industrial Revolution accelerated the spread of technology that might be easily and individually used in everyday life. In this context, refrigerator, television, and automobile represented three material and crucial indicators especially in developing progress of everyday life. Actually, as a result of invention of refrigerator, television, and automobile, the role of non-work life everyday life definitely increased. In such a manner that, in point of storing several foods for a long time, refrigerator created additional time for non-work life. People began to obtain several information from unknown regions with television. Automobile provide an opportunity for the individuals to go to long distances, and to encounter several way of living (Lauer, 1991: 170).

Durkheim, Marx, and Weber as well known classics sociology put their effort and time into determining the role of leisure in everyday life, with using the effects of Industrial Revolution. So, in the later period of modernization process, the importance of the leisure increased. Initially, more value began to create on non-work life in sociological studies in 1950s. Later, increase in unemployment rate all over the world made the concept of leisure more important in 1980s than in 1950s (Alix, 1995: 432). However, this does not mean that leisure can easily replace with work as it is put forward in several approaches (Roberts and Olszewska, 1984: 2).

Distinguishing non-work activities from work activities is necessary to describe non-work life activities explicitly. If these several approaches are taken into account, it is possible to be seen that non-work activities greatly consist of activities not called work (Özkul, 1997: 136–137; Roberts and Olszewska, 1984: 2). Especially in sociological perspective, it is important to make differentiation between leisure and play in describing the qualifications of non-work activities. Actually, in point of done voluntarily, giving pleasure, and has no goal other than fun make play definitely different both from work and leisure (Alix, 1995: 432). Unlike play, leisure require education, self discipline, special purposes, and aim (Ciulla, 2000: 6). In addition to this, it is crucial to divide leisure activities in two categories as active and passive.

While active leisure activities include sport, fitness, fun, entertainment, visiting, serving; passive leisure activities include reading, watching, and using other electronic devices (Alix, 1995: 437). In order to make work life effective, it is inevitable that active leisure activities are more beneficial than passive leisure activities.

4. WORK LIFE AND NON-WORK LIFE CONTRADICTION

In sociological perspective, we have to look not only at the sociology of work but also at the sociology of recreation and at the sociology of leisure. So, it is necessary to make differentiation between them first in order to determine contradiction between work life and non-work life (Alix, 1995: 419–421). However, having two main dimensions as material and social make the differentiation process fairly difficult. In such a manner that, While material dimension concerned with production utilities, social dimension concerned with workers' relations (Yasa, 1973: 26). Both dimensions of the work revealed that the effects of work life could not be easily limited within work life. So, especially for sociologists social dimension of work life become one of the most crucial problem to be solved in everyday life analysis. As a result of this, sociologists put their effort and time into explaining the contradiction between work life and non-work life, as well as defining the meanings of work life via three main approaches (Ciulla, 2000: 21): Functionalist approach appreciate non-work life as renewing our energies required in work life. With regard to conflict approach, it is not possible to take place both in work life and in non-work life in a certain time. The micro perspective suggested that the meanings of work life and non-work life vary not only historically but also vary among groups and individuals in the same society (Alix, 1995: 445).

Despite several difficulties, it is essential to describe what kind of activities can we call as work. One difficulty is that many activities initially seem work may not be work in reality and that many activities initially not seem work may be work in detail (Hall, 1986: 10). However, the other difficulty is that both concepts means different things to different members (Alix, 1995: 422–3). Consider these two examples: There are many kind of occupations not being easily restricted only within work life as an executive member, a lawyer, a project designer, a college professor, a typist, a manager, an accountant etc (Grinth, 1998: 10). Although playing basketball, painting a picture and singing a song are generally known as non-work activities, there are many persons earn living throughout these activities. Furthermore, work life and non-work life sometimes may be the same in some circumstances. Consider people prefer leisure to work: They are working for community organizations voluntarily without any expectations, including material (Ciulla, 2000: 15). On the other hand, what can someone say about these persons and/or activities, and which one is work or not, and could anyone say neither of this is work? I think it is not so easy as it seems. Though the answer is not too clear to be expected, these activities could be called work or not with regard to time and place qualifications. It is possible to say that nearly almost of these difficulties are stemmed from the multifunctional characteristics of the concept of work.

The answer “I work because I have to live” given to the question ‘why work?’ often contains non-work life qualifications. Although this answer has universal and rational characteristics (Alix, 1995: 426), it also gives people identity, self-worth, and sense. As it is seen, work relations even spread over non-work life (Gamst, 1995: 1; Hall 1994: 3). Actually, being a kind of social output and meaningful behaviour, the phenomenon of work could not be easily separated from its context and group values (Özen, 1991: 125). “What kind of work do you do?” is the other question which contains non-work life relations at least. Because this question sometimes may lead to close friendship due to unveiling several non-work life qualifications (Hall, 1994: 34). Occupational community is one of the important concepts representing a significant example to the relationship between work life and non-work life (Marshall, 1999: 110; Salaman, 1971: 55–57). In any case, members of such communities see themselves in terms of their occupational role. Moreover, they carry their work relations into non-work life. Thus, their non-work life becomes work based. As a matter of fact, several philosophers pointed out that occupational communities are one of the major indicators which differentiate individuals’ or groups’ beliefs, values, customs and emotions from general community or society (Zetterberg and Lipset, 1966: 562).

In recent times, suggesting as a positive development in everyday life, some leisure scholars tend to agree that changing qualifications of work life have driven some people to seek meaning in leisure (Alix, 1995: 438). Supporting this approach, Dumazedier declared that the growth of leisure is slowly changing the characteristics of work life (Roberts and Olszewska, 1984: 12). However, it must be taken into account that the necessity of work life in everyday life does not allow for this replacement as it is claimed in several approaches. The increasing importance of non-work life does not mean that work life is not important anymore. In this sense, consider the alternative ways of earning living? Apart from work, how can we earn living?

CONCLUSION

General results of this writing may be classified in three main categories as difficulties in defining the concept of work life, difficulties in explaining the differentiation between work activities and non-work activities, and contradiction between work life and non-work life.

First of all, the concept of work is mixed within its structure as verb and noun. Secondly, the concept of work involves many things such as ideas and values, besides physical activities. Third, work does not only meet material needs but also gives identity, self-worth, and sense. Therefore, work relations even create social interactions. Fourth, anyone does not know how to spend the working time otherwise. Fifth, everyone enters work life with several expectations. All of these difficulties make the concept of work complex. After all, only a special purpose is not adequate to define any activity as work. Besides special purposes, an activity must contain difficulty, restriction, and unwillingness etc. if it wants to be work.

In explaining the differentiation between work activities and non-work activities, there appear two main difficulty. One difficulty is about the nature of restriction of the concept of work. The other difficulty is in relation to nature and content of leisure and play both of which have definitely different characteristics in non-work life. In such a manner that, leisure require education, self discipline, and aim in spite of play. Moreover, leisure activities divided in two categories as active and passive. In order to become reenergized in work life, inclining towards active leisure is more beneficial than towards passive leisure. Being taken into account that the concept of work have not any restriction in itself, it is possible to come across several difficulties in explaining contradiction between work life and non-work life activities as follow: Activities assumed work may not be work in detail, or activities firstly not seem work may be work in reality. The other difficulty is related with that both activities mean different things to different individuals. To prefer leisure to work in everyday life represents a considerable example especially to last difficulty. When these two difficulties are taken into account, it is possible to be seen that nearly allmost of these difficulties is resulted from the multifunctional characteristics of the concept of work. On the other hand, these difficulties show that it is not easy to make definite seperation between work life and non-work life especially in human mind. Instead of trying to make separation in human mind, it is rather reasonable to make differentiation between them in point of place and time qualifications. Actually, place and time have universal (unchanged) characteristics.

Two main result may be determined about contradiction between work life and non-work life. Though everyday life distinguished in two parts as work and non-work life, it is not easy to neglect that both parts have effects on each other. That there are many theories about contradiction between work life and non-work life is one of the most crucial indicator of this. In any case, occupational community which supports the relationship between work life and non-work life represents a significant example. As it is pointed out in several approaches, replacing non-work life with work life is not simple because work life take part significantly at the center of modern everyday life. Even the importance of work life in everyday life do not allow to this replacement.

Taken together, one of the main significant suggestion of this writing is that work life effects non-work life by occupational communities, and non-work life effects work life by active leisure activities. This means someone who want to empower hisself/ herself particularly in work life may seek the instruments throughout non-work life activities and this process will be able to empower him/her not only in work life but non-work life as well instead of seeking just within the context of work life. In fact, in general modernization project in special Industrial Revolution obliged particularly working class besides others to fulfill everything in work life at first. However, as time passed, working class even by themselves has become aware of fulfilling everything in work life is not adequate anymore; to put in a differently way, further creative activities, including leisure, recreation, play etc. are required for living strenghtening everyday

life. In fact, that kind of creative activities performed just within the limitation of non-work life at the same time will be able to offer working class achieved positions also in their work life. Otherwise, working class, who incline to postpone everything on account planning to make after the success of career in work life, in due season can not help themselves coping with serious problems of aging in which they could not achieve anything throughout non-work life. Indeed, the phenomenon of retirement is not independent from this point. To sum up, the suggestion of this writing despite of the obligation of the modernization project, those who want to live happily throughout not only his/her work life but also throughout everyday life have to attach equal importance both work life and non work life.

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