

The Orientations to Work Approach: A Review.

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the orientations approach's capacity to explain people's understandings, commitment and motivations regarding work. It traces the approach's origins to problems in class theories of understandings, showing that, initially, it fails to solve these problems due to retention of problematic aspects of these theories. It is shown that early uses of the approach stressed values attained away from work, and a single determining principle; inconsistency and contrary evidence indicate this was a mistake; greater explanatory and evidential consistency is attained when the possibility of multi-faceted orientations is allowed for, and theories are reworked to eradicate inconsistencies. Orientation is conceived as a concept, whereby it defines an understanding of work, and as a model, where it is composed of the interrelationships amongst a range of related concepts, e.g., of wants, expectations, rewards, perceptions, preferences, satisfaction, salience, etc. This paper examines what these interrelated concepts reveal of an orientation, and thereby of understandings, commitment and motivations in respect of work.

Key words: Orientations, rewards, expectations, preferences, salience, satisfaction, routinisation, commitment, motivation.

概 要

オリエンテーション・アプローチを用いて、労働に対する考え方や義務感、モチベーションを明らかにする可能性を評価する。この中で、当該アプローチは階級論における観念解釈の問題から発生したものであり、それゆえに、当初は階級論由来の問題点が残っていたため、観念解釈の上での問題が解決できなかったことを示す。初期においては、労働に所以しない価値や単因主義に重点をおいた形で用いられたが、いくつかの不整合や矛盾を示す証拠によりその間違いが指摘されたため、多面的なオリエンテーションの要素を取り入れ、よりの確な解釈や客観的証拠に裏打ちされた整合性を獲得することとなり、また、理論面における矛盾点を取り除く修正作業が行われた。オリエンテーションは労働観を定義付ける概念として、および欲求や期待感、報酬、認識、志向、充足感、重要性などの関連概念が相互に関係しあうモデルとして理解されている。ここでは、これらの相関概念がオリエンテーション、ひいては労働に関する考え方や義務感、モチベーションを説明することを考察する。

キーワード: 労働、雇用、オリエンテーション、報酬、期待感、志向、重要性、充足、習慣化、義務感、モチベーション

Introduction.

This paper reviews the orientations approach which was developed to facilitate research and explain people's understandings of their work activity, and to surmount some of the shortcomings of class theory. Unfortunately, the initial strategy of this approach, of adding social supplements to economic and class underpinnings, did not produce coherent explanations; this was due to retention of explanatory assumptions and concepts which were highly problematic. It will be shown that the layering on of additional explanatory factors side-stepped, and did not resolve the fundamental problems, nor did that of giving work a minor position in people's lives compared to other activities. That such produced incoherent explanations, and evidence which did not fit the theories proposed to explain it, and resulted in the attribution of the conditions of the explanatory failure to the subjects.

It will be shown that the initial orientations strategy, while correctly arguing that people arrived in their first job with expectations, were incorrect in, a) expecting these to endure for all subsequent work life, and b) expecting these to derive from values and contexts little connected with the work sphere. Through illuminating these errors, a more accurate perspective will be presented, which points out that orientations are the products of total life experience, and that for understandings of work, work experience itself is critical. From here, the concept of orientation will be detailed, showing that orientations defined as determined by a single reward were unable to comprehend the breadth a person's understanding, evaluation, commitment and motivation in respect of their work. The evidence in attempts to so determine an orientation painfully showed this to be incorrect, that people expected more of their work lives than a single reward, and revealed dissatisfaction where rewards were inadequate, regardless of the amounts of any single one, even where that is

money.

In determining what people desire of employment, there is a danger that questions elicit what respondent's consider reasonably possible given their circumstances, and not true wants, a danger that single reward determined orientations are more liable to fall foul of. Addressing this danger, orientations theorists model the interrelationships of related concepts, of rewards, wants, perceptions, expectations, importance, salience, satisfaction, total satisfaction, commitment, motivation, to determine true evaluations and understandings. It will be shown that these concepts and how they interrelate reinforces the evidence that orientations are accurately conceived as multi-faceted and that peoples' ongoing work experience is critical for determining their understanding of that work. Further, it will be demonstrated that there is no compensatory orientation, whereby large amounts of any single reward compensates for inadequate amounts of any other, on the contrary that high levels of any single reward heightens the salience of increasing other rewards, in other words, it heightens the dissatisfaction with those rewards thought wanting. In terms of satisfactions, the strongest contributors to total satisfaction are promotion and intrinsic job rewards, the first because it promises more of all rewards later. Lastly, it will be shown that in many of the orientations studies there was a curious lack of appropriate measures of a sense of achievement, even recognised as promotion, for example, the promoted worker's sense of achievement was frequently not considered, a woeful omission, which needs be repaired. By taking into account such concerns, with proper development, and through reconstruction of its basic assumptions, the orientations model can offer a very fruitful approach to accessing and explaining people's understandings of their work, career, commitment and motivation.

I. Sources of Orientations

Classical economics viewed labour two-fold as a source of value and as a cost (a cost to be reduced by increasing productivity), and ascribed to labour a similar conception of work, as a cost endured for wages received¹. The resurgence of neo-liberalism in economics and politics reinforced this view of labour as a cost, to be made flexibly disposable to enable economic restructuring, shows this to be an enduring view, at the heart of which is the notion of an effort bargain, of wages paid for effort received, determined by market forces².

Criticism of this view contended that for people work was more than a cost, indeed that it was a central need for their reproduction and the expression of their humanity; that their understandings of themselves and of society at large could only be explained by reference to their social location in respect of productive activity. Intractable difficulties with this very ambitious sociological theory led, not to its abandonment, simply to attempts to modify it by adding explanatory layers onto its conceptualisation of society. What classical economics, class theory and subsequent modifications of class theory shared in a common was classical economic's conception of free and determinate market forces, despite recurrent explanatory failure and evidence that markets are far from free and determinate.

Formulated to overcome the problems encountered by theories which located social understandings within the social-economic relations of production, orientations were presented as supplementary explanatory factors. Social-economic factors remained crucial, however, in addition people brought understandings and values with them which shaped and qualified the meaning of work, rather than social-economic locations determining all understandings. Determinants of social understandings can be grouped as: 1)

Social-Economic Relations of Production; 2) Cultural Values; 3) Community; and 4) Ongoing Life Experience.

1. Social-Economic Relations of Production Determine Understandings.

Initial attempts to explain people's understandings of work looked to social and economic relations of production as the prime causal agent, which can be traced to class analysis. Class theory attempted to provide a unitary model of social understanding grounded firmly in social reality, in the class relations of modernity, where work, necessary for human reproduction, self-fulfilment, and human expression, was potentially a unity of means and ends, of conception and execution within capitalism, this unity was constantly fractured, and the social organisation of production and class positions were identified as determinants of people's understandings of their world, including their work, employment circumstances. Labour, as the sole source of value and as a recalcitrant potential, rather than a plastic determinate, capacity, imposed transformation of work from formal to real subordination³ upon capital and labour through processes of market competition, creating impoverishment and alienation that affected the workers' experiences, their consciousness, of and commitment and motivation to work, for their employers. The explanatory problems of this model are extensive and well known, particularly the shortcomings of class based attempts to explain social understandings (Holmwood and Stewart 1983, Parkin 1979, Wright 1985.), thus the turn to orientations.

2. Orientations from Cultural Values.

Weber shifted the analytical emphasis from productive, economic causality due to the failure of class theory to explain social understandings and capitalism; social class and economic factors remained central, Weber added causal elements and stressed meaning as complimenting causality. His Protestant Ethic exemplifies this, as an ori-

entation to economic activity derived from cultural values; it is a value rational, ideal type that, Weber argued, oriented people's understanding of their life and work, unintentionally facilitating the creation of capitalism. The Ethic, an ascetic orientation⁴ to productive activity, is the main source of later orientations to work approach in sociological theory. For Weber the Ethic was, in effect, the social value orienting actors in value rational action (*wertrational*); for cultural values to function as explanada for capitalism's origins they could not have been other than value rational; they could not have been instrumental rational action (*zwekrational*) because the ends themselves become rational in terms of the means and capitalism explains its origins in terms of its own rationality of existence.

In consequence, orientations became prior conceived value rational attitudes brought to work. The turn to prior 'out - of - work' factors was to explain response variations to common workplace conditions; as such orientations were considered applied to, not acquired through, actual work experience which, therefore, was necessarily made less important for individuals. Chinoy's American Dream, for example, is a work orientation derived from extrinsic cultural values which, like the Protestant Ethic, positioned work, productive activity as a means to 'get-on' in another sphere of life. The American Dream provided values that required hard work and unlimited ambition to climb the ladder of occupational and business success; the initial orientation derived from a cultural context with little relevance for his subject's opportunities within the social structure. Regardless of their ambitions, as Chinoy stressed, the educational and financial resources of his semi-skilled industrial worker subjects, further, severely constricted their advancement opportunities. Experiencing this, he argues, leads them to reinterpret, not abandon, the American Dream using alternate extrinsic values of consumption and leisure, and to displacement of their work lives.

Their reinterpretation provides little more than wistful ambitions and plans with little chance of success, especially those for a small business, with the only 'solid' outcomes of their discontentment and ambitious plans being aspirations for, occasionally the achievement of, steady-paying jobs, and the accumulation of commodities which 'furnish them psychological' palliatives:

"...talk of leaving the factory, particularly when focused upon the traditionally sanctioned goals, serves to reinforce the worker's identification with the dominant values of American culture. Even if he recognises... the emptiness of his talk of buying tourist property or a turkey farm... In his own mind he may appear to be persevering and hopeful, ambitious and hard working just as he is encouraged to be..."

Without a 'life-plan' which commits them to follow a series of more or less recognised steps, workers simultaneously entertain goals, or they continually shift their attention from one goal to another, usually without investing much hope or effort in any particular one." (Chinoy 1955 p.95, & p.118)

Thus, the workers' factory lives, the costs they bear and the financial rewards they receive have substantial consequences for their lives beyond the factory, but are of little value to them otherwise and, therefore, yield from them little commitment or motivation to stay or leave. Consequently, their attributed orientation is dislocated, without practical substance; the writer has come to attribute an orientation to his subjects, the American Dream, that has little apparent practical substance for their actual social situation and behaviours.

3. Orientations from the Community.

Another strategy introduced community to explain orientation (Cohen 1987, Goldthorpe et. al., 1968, Gouldner 1955, Lockwood 1982. Salaman 1974, Tunstall 1962), however, by not tackling with the original explanatory problems this strategy compounded them and did offer their solutions. Identifying a geographically, culturally, socially cohesive, bounded group who share common 'unique views', particularly of themselves, their

activities and world has proved problematic and telling, especially where the said unique communities are located within larger, modern societies, have mobility, mass communication facilities, and are interdependent with, supposedly external, unlike cultural and social-economic structures. The problems with this strategy are tangible in the commonplace explanatory slippage to and from community; where behaviours and/or understandings do not conform with expected standard processes, unique community features are drawn on to explain the exception, where these do conform supposedly standard processes are said to apply.

These difficulties and explanatory slippage are apparent in Gouldner's study (1955) of a gypsum mining and production plant. Gouldner attributed an unexpected common orientation, the indulgency pattern,⁵ to managers and workers and contended that it derived from the common small, traditional community where the managers and manual workers lived, sharing informal community and family, not formal bureaucratic and industrial, ties and values. However, the indulgency orientation underwent alterations which were uneven as they affected the managers, surface workers, and underground workers; the manager's orientation changed towards the surface workers, whose orientation changed, but remained unchanged towards the miners, whose orientation remained unaltered. Confronted by such change, Gouldner argued that the standard model of bureaucratic, capitalism partly applied; he attributed the change to the parent company, and its partial application to the particular requirements for efficient surface and underground work. However, community was added as an explanatory factor only where expected processes and structures of market and bureaucracy, of distinct management and worker orientations, appeared to be absent, and as soon as they seemed to conform with standard theoretical expectations, community as an explanatory factor was dropped. Such inconsis-

tencies, imply that the first orientation had little to do with community, and was more due to production requirements in compromised safety conditions and the organisational and bargaining capacities of the workers, with management realising the weakness of the surface workers. Gouldner's difficulties derived from his theoretical expectations of an impersonal bureaucratic, fiscally calculating, plant, not matching the indulgency pattern. Thus, what he took to be unique and inconsistent with existing theory, and what might not have been so unique as he thought, he attributed to what he thought novel also; the shared community of the managers and workers, not considering that features of the indulgency pattern could be found where these groups did not share a common community; the explanatory problems encountered were inherent and fundamental, yet remained unsolved by the ad hoc addition and abandonment of community.

Cohen's study (1987), of Whalsay, Scotland, attributed a traditional orientation to Whalsay fishers derived from the community. However, finding clear, cohesive evidence of a unique Whalsay community with the unique consistent values necessary for such an orientation, proved impossible. Rather than re-consider his thesis, Cohen preferred, due to granting his subjects incorrigibility, being unable to produce a satisfactory explanation, and of the possibility of later being shown to be misplaced in his analysis, to adopt post-modern theory, whereby requirements for integrity in the evidence are supplanted by expectations and need for vagueness and contradiction, whereby the identity of insider and outsider, the meaning of traditional and modern, are required to be uncertain and conflicting in their manifestation in the subjects' thinking and practices. (c.f., Sutherland 1993). Goldthorpe et al., (1968) put a unique twist to this by proposing lack of community, due to geographical mobility; they advanced life cycle position, downward social mobility and subjects' geographical mobility, which is a lack, a lack of

community, as sources of orientation. Ultimately though, all factors only predisposed people to adopt the orientation they attributed to them, even in their cumulative effect, and did not fully account for its adoption.

4. Orientation from Ongoing Life Trajectory.

Shifting explanatory emphasis from internal to external factors created explanatory inconsistency, an inability to clarify source factors, and orientations of little practical worth. Moreover, classical economic conceptions of work as a cost and the class model, as well as their shared understanding of market dynamics, remained largely unreconstructed. The original models were left largely intact when circumstances could be fitted, and supplemented where not, as though their explanatory problems were particular, rather than general; an inadequate response. Furthermore, evidence indicates that work remains a formative experience for the individuals concerned, not as a sole determinant of their world view, but as a critical determinant of their understandings of, and responses to, work.

External and internal factors are more clearly conceptualised as background factors, of the social background, and foreground factors⁶; of the immediate work location. Blackburn and Mann (1979), and Prandy et al., (1982), examined their relative impact on orientations, and found that while easily stated this distinction is not so straightforward in reality; e.g., some factors commonly considered background are given market force by employers as indicators of employee qualities, also occupational status brings into consideration the status of fathers and friends, also discussed as background factors despite having foreground force, Prandy et al., wrote:

“...in addition to those factors, such as the respondent’s father’s status or his own educational experience, which are clearly and temporally in the ‘background’ there are also factors related to work but which are in the past the respondent’s first job, for

example and those which are in the present, but not directly part of his work experience such as the occupational experience of his friends.” (1982 p.44)

There are factors related to, in the past and not of, the immediate work experience, moreover there are sources of work experience which do not derive from the subject’s work situation either, but from that of their friends. Prandy et al., continued:

“...there can be no doubt that systematic factors in particular the associated rewards and perceptions, play an important part in the explanations of orientations. it is misleading to think of priori orientations. To do so entails an artificial division between work and non-work life which is just not supported by the evidence. Orientations to work are not just something brought into work from outside; they derive from the individual’s total experience. Background factors certainly have an influence but present work experience is of crucial importance in shaping these orientations. Once this is allowed for the continuing direct effects from social background are very limited.” (1982 p.112)

Thus, foreground factors were intervening variables which became dominant, that the causal effect of background factors on orientation is superseded by current circumstances. Background factors, critical in locating a person in their first job, receded in importance over time, especially where careers yield improvements in employment conditions. The subjects can be said to have transcended the social background, but not the ‘present circumstances’ of their orientations which remain more reasonably located in the context of their application.

Blackburn and Mann concluded that background factors had a stronger influence on orientation than Prandy et al., a difference that can be attributed to a, Blackburn and Mann’s perceptions of orientation (to be discussed later), b, to their belief that having background influence offered some guarantee as to the longevity and extensiveness of the orientation, and c, experience of promotion, as their subjects were manual workers

with little promotion experience, whereas Prandy et al., studied white collar workers with who the effect of background factors on orientation receded with promotion.

It would seem that social research of work has come almost full circle, although with a narrower focus; from work activity and the benefits it provides being crucial for the full spectrum of social experience and understanding, to their being critical for the experience and understanding of work. Rather than looking to social background factors to explain why class location does not account for social understanding, and stressing that subjects willingly conceive of work as a cost for the more desirable consumer rewards that it brings, stronger explanatory possibilities are afforded by taking proper account of people's assessments of their employment circumstances and reconstructing explanatory concepts and theories to fit.

II. Orientation as a Concept and as a Model.

Now it is necessary to look more closely at orientation by examining how they are perceived and postulated as operating. Confusingly, in the literature, orientation itself is both a concept and a model; as a concept it is defined both as understanding and as inclination; as a model it is conceived as a set of relationships amongst other, related, concepts.

Orientation as a Concept.

As a concept orientation is given either a singular or plural definition: as the former, it is conceived as an inclination sharply determined by a single factor; as the latter, it is conceived as multifaceted, composed of multiple features. Weber's Protestant Ethic orientation was multifaceted, and in Parsons' view actors have a system of orientations that:

"...is constituted by a great number of specific orientations. Each of these 'orientations of action' is a

'conception' (explicit or implicit, conscious or unconscious) which the actor has of the situation in terms of what he wants (his ends), what he sees (how the situation looks to him), and how he intends to get from the objects he sees the things he wants (his explicit or implicit, normatively regulated 'plan' of action."

(1976 p.54)

What Parsons details here, is implied by theorists of a work orientation; that it is in some way integrated with people's total life orientation. Goldthorpe et al., defined orientation as:

"...a particular orientation which workers have taken towards employment from the wants and expectations that they have of it, and thus of the way in which they define their work situation and rather than simply respond to this."

(1968 p.8)

For them orientations are the definition of the situation individual actors bring to any social context, here it is brought to, and composes their wants and expectations of, their work. This definition can be singular or plural, but when they construct their ideal type orientation to work it is singular: their instrumentalist orientation is dominated by one reward, money.

Blackburn and Mann quite astutely criticised Goldthorpe et al's emphasis on a single, instrumental, orientation characterising all workers, however they defined orientation as:

"...a central organising principle which underlies people's attempts to make sense of their lives." (1979 p.16)

Thus, an orientation is given a single organising, value rational principle. There can be many varieties of these singular orientations that different groups of workers could adopt, which would beneficially sustain them in non-competing relationships in the labour market. Blackburn and Mann are unhappy with this singular conception and are unable to overcome severe problems; a. of connecting people's reports to a single reward or feature; b, finding evidence showing workers pursuing a single reward, regardless of cost in other rewards;

and c, of the holder's need to confine their opportunities to fulfilment of any single reward. This leads Blackburn and Mann to differentiate strong and weak orientations:

"...in the strong sense... concern is with one type of work reward to the exclusion of all others, so that the worker may be characterised by his orientation, for example, as an 'instrumental' worker.... There is, however, a weaker sense of workers having orientations. Rather than a single dominant concern, the worker may have a whole set of expectations and relative priorities. Such an orientation profile would rarely if ever be consciously expressed by the individual but would nevertheless underlie his actions and judgements about work life."

(Blackburn and Mann 1979, p.145)

This suggests that orientations are composites not determined by a single reward, yet:

"In this sense it is still a 'central organising principle', though a less simple one." (ibid. p.145)

The problem for Blackburn and Mann's strong orientation is lack of fit to the understandings and behaviours of their workers to who they attribute them; weakening the orientation acknowledges its explanatory frailty, it does not strengthen its explanatory power. Seeing orientations as composed of bundles, as multifaceted forms, while making them more complex in their application by their holders, does strengthen their explanatory power. Rather than solve this problem of lack fit of the replies to their single reward orientation constructs, they prefer to blame their subjects for their own theoretical inadequacy, and hope no one will notice that they are weakening the evidence criteria⁷. Indeed, their search for, by interpreting which features would be compatible with a specific identifying feature of, any of their weak orientation, in the responses of their subjects proved largely fruitless. An obvious question points to the interpretation process, but there is also another of the concurrence of identifiers in responses which may indicate orientation constructs quite unlike those they coalesce around the singular

identifiers that they seek. They do not sufficiently allow that the variations revealed through their questions might indicate constructs that constitute a composite orientation. They state:

"Here we arrive at the major flaw in the orientations model, or indeed in any rationalistic model, of the labour market. It appears that, for the most part, workers are not able to choose employment according to some of their most important priorities. The most important element of work enjoyment is not even part of the employer's offer of work... And the factors which induce positive feelings about work are not necessarily those which influence job choice. Now we are not saying that these intrinsic aspects of work are of greatest general importance to the worker just because they induce 'good feelings'. Nor are we saying that they do not have a significant influence on labour market behaviour, particularly in decisions about staying or moving. Our argument is that different aspects can come into play with varying degrees of force in different situations. This does not mean that workers cannot have orientations whose relative priorities are called up according to circumstances, but it does cast doubt on the possibility of strong orientations, and on any model of the labour market solely in terms of worker's choice." (Blackburn and Mann 1979 p.155)

A strong single factor determined orientation does make life easier for someone job hunting or evaluating their circumstances, but in this weakened form it produces an indifference curve of other features being trade against the weakly dominant orientation identifier. Also, it is not clear what brings any particular feature into weak dominance, how motivating it then is for the worker, or what sustains its dominance thereafter, none of which should be ignored.

Prandy et al., define orientations to work succinctly as:

"...the expectations and priorities, that people have in regard to the rewards available at work. (1982.p.78)

Responses no longer need reveal a single central organising principle; Prandy et al., do not create and search for single facets, instead they examine the appearance and causes of variations within

orientations. The idea that bundles of features of work are critical for conceptualising orientations allows orientations to be seen as a whole:

“Looking back over both expectations and salience together, although there is general evidence that the different rewards are related, in such a way that increases in some lead to greater emphasis on others, it is impossible to point to any simple relationship, such as a progressive ordering of rewards. While we find, for example, that those earning more tend to put more emphasis on an improvement in the way they use their abilities, we find also that those who see their jobs as providing them with more control and use of their abilities give greater weight to improvements in income. It is of course possible that a more detailed analysis might reveal a pattern, especially if it involved a consideration of development over time, but none is indicated by our results.” (ibid. p.112)

In this sense, orientation can be seen in a more realistic, multifaceted, way. Rather than orientations simply being conceived in the negative, of all else having to be constantly compromised to optimise returns of the determinate reward or feature, there is reason to see them as more considered constructs revealed gradually throughout an interview. Rather than orientations necessarily having a single determiner that is prioritised in a trade-off with other potentially obtainable features, there are reasons to expect that more of one reward or feature may be associated, not with the acceptance of less of others but with the expectation of, and a greater importance given to, obtaining more of others, and that there is some satiation point with factors. Consequently orientations are more likely to be to a variety of rewards and features, except in conditions of severe and enforced privation.

III. Orientation as Model.

Here the concepts commonly used with orientation to form a model to (a) identify which concepts have been used to access orientations, (b) examine how writers have elicited information from subjects relevant to these concepts, (c) determine

what researches reveal of the relationships among these concepts, (d) assess what they reveal of an orientations, and (e) select which constitute the optimal orientation model.

Rewards and Motivation.

All studies of orientations evaluate rewards, but, as Prandy et al., point out:

“It is scarcely novel to treat human beings as reward-seeking, but a major problem has always been that such an approach has tended to lead either to tautology, in that any goal pursued can be understood as a reward, or to vagueness, in that no simple formulation can cover the wide variety of goals and rewards that people pursue, or both. The present treatment attempts to avoid these problems by specifying in advance a limited range of rewards that individuals seek at work...” (1982 p.4)

However, along with possible problems created by overly limiting the range of rewards, there is another problem; of restricting intentions in work to the rewards it is imagined to provide. Work and the occupation pursued are projects, that can be successfully accomplished or not, can accomplishment here be regarded as rewards, does this transform these into tautological goals? Nonetheless, in approaching goal seeking there is a specific difficulty: that of,

“...specifying the relationship between general motivation and the rewards sought in employment... Attempts to demonstrating the over-riding importance of one particular reward as a motivator in the employment situation have the advantage of conceptual economy, but they have failed. Indeed, the partial success of each has made it clear that a variety of rewards must be considered. Those writers who have recognised this fact have tended... either simply to suggest several, perhaps with some indication of their relative importance but with an assumption of homogeneity of motivation, or to hypothesise about possible differences in motivation.... A far more promising approach... has been to accept that workers may differ in the kinds of reward that they seek at work. However, if vagueness and circularity are to be avoided, it is essential that some attempt is made to explain these differences in the relative importance of various rewards and differences in the actual level of ex-

pectations regarding those rewards." (ibid. pp. 4-5)

If there is such heterogeneity of motives then it should be that some patterning in them will be observable consistent with different occupations and work situations, providing some basis for explaining motivations respecting that occupation, especially when expressed within the context of the range of alternative, available occupations.

Rewards, Perceptions and Preferences.

There is evidence to support the conclusion that subjects' reports of their employment circumstances relate to actual objective phenomena, some of which, such as income levels, are thought more accessible than others. Nevertheless, income levels are most commonly used as an objective indicator of rewards that an occupation offers; this is so with Goldthorpe et al's study, for example, although they also consider the classification of occupations and their skill requirements. Blackburn and Mann attempted to map the local labour market and the objective job features characterising their subject occupations in each firm and tested the accuracy of their subjects' perceptions and knowledge of the quality and wage rates of the jobs available within that market, which they found to be accurate, agreeing with the evidence of such accuracy found in study of Turner and Lawrence (1965).

Goldthorpe et al., obtained and proceeded to neglect some of their workers' perceptions of rewards and preferences. Preferences were measured by workers indicating their preferences, and the reasons for these, from among their present job, any other job that they had held in the same firm, and any other job they regarded as available to them. These preferences were interpreted as indicating satisfaction levels, which interestingly, these preferences indicated that high satisfaction were due to high perceptions of immediate work task, and promotion. The workers also revealed dissatisfaction in that they experienced monotony,

lack of absorption, and an excessive work pace. The responses to these varied amongst occupations, but they revealed that all of their subjects experienced deprivation and dissatisfaction. The curiosity in these perceptions and preferences is why the subjects remained attached to their jobs? Questions probing attachment yielded a broad spectrum of multiple responses, with the single most frequent being the level of pay,⁸ thus Goldthorpe et al., concluded money was the prime goal and defining work orientation as instrumentalism.⁹ The degree of attachment and prioritisation of money varied amongst occupations, resulting from their having experienced promotion, and high skill levels producing lower attachment. Curiously, their subjects' attachment was considered unaffected by their having a preference for any other job:

"In seeking to become 'affluent workers', the machinists and assemblers in our sample have, no doubt with varying degrees of self-awareness, given primacy to extrinsic satisfaction from work, and therefore have chosen jobs of a kind which would enable them to come near to maximising the economic returns from their labour. In consequence of this, they frequently experience deprivation in relation to some of those aspects of work they have devalued... they... have low job satisfaction. But... their relatively high degree of attachment to their present employment, and the explanations they give of this attachment, indicate that their major wants and expectations relative to work the kinds of satisfactions which in their case have priority are being generally met.... Nevertheless... notwithstanding the variations in orientation to work... the instrumental aspect of employment is very strongly emphasised by all groups of workers within our sample. In all groups... considerations of pay and security appear most powerful in binding men to their present jobs... in [their] having left previous, and otherwise preferred, employment..."

(Goldthorpe, et al., 1968 p.36, pp. 37-8)

The authors contended that their subjects had chosen to forgo the better intrinsic rewards, greater skill or educational requirements of previous jobs for ones offering less of these money rewards. Even were this true, it is not possible to regard this

outcome as wholly satisfactory for their subjects given the broad spectrum of the evidence. It is not true, as Blackburn and Mann say, that Goldthorpe et al's model is revelational; much of what their workers revealed is disregarded, whereby current occupation and the one most frequently reported reason for current job attachment are prioritised. It is a misfit model; their workers are described as willing, but dissatisfied occupational misfits. What the findings of Goldthorpe et al., reveal is that workers, theirs included, are likely to have a number of facets to their orientation to work and that one, the satisfaction of, one single facet cannot fully replace these and generate substantive commitment and motivation.¹⁰

Blackburn and Mann obtained their subjects' reasons either for, or not, wanting to work for different firms¹¹ which they interpreted to generate 17 expressed work preferences. However, as they point out, there is some uncertainty whether these are discrete entities; a) some are vague and general and may not be alternatives, but may include, other preferences; and b) as occupations are structured hierarchically, whereby low or high levels of one factor tends to be found concurrently with similar quantities with other factors, it is possible that a preference describes coexisting factors. To tackle the descriptive problem, these preferences were analysed to see if they revealed any persistent preferences expressed of the firms. They concluded that only 45% of their sample had meaningful persistent preferences. The preferences were correctly taken to be a direct measure offering prospects of a more concrete conception of orientations. Persistent preferences were checked against responses to questions of complaint concerning work experiences; specifically, for example, those with a persistent wage preference were checked against their hypothetical willingness to change firm for more money, to rank a really good wage as a high priority, being more likely to have knowledge of local wage rates, and those with a persistent intrinsic job preference against ranking

enjoyable work highest. While producing some re-inforcement of the persistent preferences as a whole, examination of the respondent's job history and reasons for changing firms revealed different factors again from those found in the persistent preferences.

As Blackburn and Mann note, questions such as these probe the reality of a worker's situation. In an attempt to extract some of the ideal elements of an orientation they asked their respondents if they did or do not enjoy their jobs and if so why, and what they liked about the best job they ever had; this produced another reordering of priorities amongst the factors found in the preferences. Faced with this reordering, they suggested that orientations are for bundles and that variations occur with change in the context:

"One implication is that we cannot have a simple view of 'importance'. What is important to the workers depends on the frame of reference within which the work is being considered." (1979 p.156)

At this stage, faced with little evidence of strong orientations, they are troubled that their subjects might possess no orientations. It is, however, a mistake to expect the same answer to questions regarding multiple firms and jobs, unless they are indistinguishable from each other. What is bewildering is why they did not follow their own insight that orientations were bundles, whereby they should have expected composite variations across responses.

Prandy et al., focused on subject's perceptions of five rewards (income, status, social relationships, intrinsic job rewards and security); comparatively perceived with those obtained by their own occupational group, by typical manual workers and by top managers, with each comparison made for within the respondent's employing organisation and with wider society. They found such perceptions to be interrelated and that several shared determinants, of which income and status

were the most important:

"...income and occupational status, are themselves rewards, and naturally have a major influence on the respective perceptions.... The individual's perception of his own status in the company and the wider society, is determined more by his income than by our measure of occupational status. Furthermore, it is the single most important factor in perceptions of intrinsic job rewards both control and use of abilities, and even of social interaction. Only in the case of perceived security compared with other groups is it not significant, but here occupational status has some effect.... [Also] it is clear that there is a tendency for the different rewards to vary together.... there is little indication of any complementarity, such that less of one reward is compensated by more of another."

(Prandy et al., 1982 pp. 75-7)

As income and status levels, due to the occupational structure being hierarchical, probably stand for other facets also, what they are calling here the main determinants are not the determinants, but are perhaps theyco-determinants, of which they are indicators; the covariation of perceptions of rewards that they find is conducive with such a view. Perceptions of income and status levels, then, relate to general features of occupational positions without adequately accounting for the influence of specific ones of these general features. Thus, the orientation here is found to be to, and influenced by, composites of facets and the causal effect, due to the hierarchical nature of occupations, is from concurrent higher or lower levels of rewards.

This section examined the concept of rewards finding that that concept alone was inadequate for constructing and analysing an orientations model because there were factors that could not be encapsulated within it without the concept losing meaning. It was shown that rewards and other features of work were closely related to their occupants reported perceptions of them, and that no single feature of an occupation could sufficiently account for an orientation, due to a variety of, not unconnected, reasons: Attempts to explain an orientation

by prioritising one facet as the determiner of the orientation inevitably encountered problems which should, perhaps, have been expected and which point to a multifaceted conception of orientations as being more adequate to the task. Preoccupation with the concept of reward, with what could be considered common facets, neglected distinguishing facets of productive activities that gave each some uniqueness; distinguishing as well as common facets inform orientations and need to be accessed.

Expectations; Realistic and Ideal, and Salience.

As orientations are necessarily intentional, socially located, and require the expression of desire and the exercise of choice, this yields a crucial distinction between wants and expectations: If an orientation constitutes understanding of the social world, of work, it determines what is wanted of it, however, if the orientation is continually and thoroughly constrained by social reality it does not express desires and choices exercised, it is simple cognisance and acceptance of what is, and, therefore is incapable of accounting for wants and behaviours as these are not the outcome of the orientation. This problem of distinguishing the wanted from the possible given the restraints of circumstances led Blackburn and Mann to distinguish between reasonable and desired expectations:

"It will be useful to distinguish between 'reasonable expectations' and 'desired expectations' or 'wants'. The two are not independent because both are constrained within the frame of reference of what seems possible. However, the first is what is reasonable in relation to the available possibilities, and so what is fair, while the latter may entail the maximum possible. Our evidence suggests that the two cannot be very different for non-skilled workers, but they are not the same...." (1979 p.177)

They consider that reality constrains wants and expectations, particularly non-skilled workers who are, and experience themselves as, more constrained, and are consequently less ambitious in

expressing their wants. Similarly, Prandy et al., noting that expectations were both conceptually problematic and difficult to operationalise, attempted to introduce an element not entirely constrained by reality by distinguishing expectations from wants:

“The crucial problem lies in trying to distinguish empirically between what might be called wants and our concept of expectations. Wants would refer to what individuals would want in some ideal sense, whereas expectations are what they realistically desire, given the situation in which they find themselves. The difficulty is that the idea of expectations clearly argues against individuals being too ‘realistic’... ‘Reality’, that is, would completely constrain their expectations, and perhaps even their wants as well... If individuals are not being completely ‘realistic’... then their expectations will not perfectly match their actual rewards.” (Prandy et al., 1982 pp. 81-3)

Thus, wants are something desired if the existing situation could be improved. While neither wants nor expectations can be completely severed from their social context; they are to different degrees constrained by the location of their application. In another sense, complete severance is undesirable, as it would lead to irrationality and not to efficacious understanding. Nevertheless, the issue of satisfaction, for example, relates to this problem with wants and expectations; expressed satisfaction is meaningless unless there is some honest evaluation of rewards against wants and expectations.

Blackburn and Mann’s difficulties with expectations are compounded, in part, from their not affording their subjects any evaluation of their future, thus, there is no conception of change, development or progress, or impression or lack of it, in the circumstances in which they are acting and working, at most they search for evidence of a promotion orientation. In contrast, Prandy et al., asked respondents about their expectations for future living standards, based on past experience and life cycle effects. Perhaps Blackburn and Mann assumed that their subjects had little

prospects for promotion, so little expectations for improvement, which would ignore the more general anticipation of annual salary increments. Chinoy saw future ambitions as expressed in the hopeless desires for owning a business that became simply desires for expanded consumption. Goldthorpe et al’s questioned their subject about what they aspired to ten years later. These sorts of questions go some way to overcome the problem revealed through the distinction of wants and expectations, unfortunately not entirely.

Importance, General Importance and Salience.

Another concept that arises in the orientation model is that of importance; the importance of work or of its particular rewards and conditions, however, difficulties arise in trying to access what actors consider important of work or anything else. Productive activity, for Marx, was the basis of human social life, critical for every aspect of social life, however, faced with explanatory problems regarding objective processes and subjective responses, theorists (e.g., Chinoy, Dubin, Goldthorpe et al.,) downgraded the importance work to that of facilitating consumption; this was neither novel, nor did it solve the explanatory problems respecting the relevance of work. Furthermore, such problems are not solved by proposing individual heterogeneity either; any such individual diversity requires to be connected to the common processes within which they are situated.

The problems the theorists encountered while attempting to access the importance of work are informative. Goldthorpe et al., attempted this through expressed preferences and the reasons given for them, and largely their problems were self-created; they elected to disregard the information obtained. Dubin attempted this via questions of importance, Blackburn and Mann through both preferences, and by asking respondents to discriminately order aspects of work according to their importance for them where they encountered considerable difficulty in getting sub-

jects to discriminately order features in descending order of importance. Explanatory difficulties such as these, their conviction that orientations must be singular, along with the fact that these results did not adequately correlate with the preference data, led them to interpret their results as revealing weak orientations. They are only weak, however, in their explanatory strength and such a conclusion does not conform with the idea that importance and preference vary with context which, more accurately and fruitfully, can be interpreted as composites. Prandy et al., suggested that Blackburn and Mann's approach was conceptually ambiguous;

"In the first place it confuses the issue of what might be called general importance, that is the overall significance of work in providing for various needs, with what we shall refer to as salience, that is the extent to which, given the individual's current situation, a reward acts as an actual or potential motivating force for behaviour. The second confusion is linked to the first and to the problem raised earlier in respect of expectations, of the ideal versus the constrained and realistic. This is the implicit assumption that all rewards can be pursued on the basis of wants, in our terminology, and a failure to recognise that their availability is highly constrained. The voluntaristic assumption of the existence of free individual choice thus underlies both confusions, since by ignoring the second distinction it tends also to dissolve the first."¹²

(Prandy et al., 1982 p.84)

Two questions are raised here. First, salience is conceptualised as the power of a single reward to motivate a person, later it is measured as the relative desire for a small improvement in each of five rewards by asking subjects to order each reward according to which they would first, second, third, etc., most welcome a small improvement. As a measure it is a measure of relative dissatisfaction with specific rewards and dissatisfaction can be considered the motivator. It is not certain that Prandy et al., are actually measuring importance, relative or not, by their method of excluding selections; it possible for more than one reward to be of equal or very similar importance, in which case

the differences between rewards are exaggerated. Furthermore, the restricted of range of selectable rewards, that Prandy et al., offer, might mean that the measure is not of the most important rewards or conditions.

This brings out the second issue; as rewards are offered in bundles the design and precise constitution of which actors have little control over or ability to make refined choices from amongst, according to their own personal constructs of importance, relative or not, actors are required to prioritise some rewards and conditions over others, as much according to composite availability as preference. With the structure of occupations being hierarchical rather than compensatory in terms of the rewards offered, the top jobs are rich in all, and the bottom ones poor. Prandy et al., hoped that salience, as they define and measure it, will deal with this constraint while marginally surpassing it by asking respondents to indicate their priority for improvements in rewards and the ones most motivating for action.

For salience, Prandy et al., argued that the effect of structural factors and perceptions is more complicated than for expectations because salience might result from the gap between that desired and that available. Salience and expectations differ in that salience is relative, and is obliged to be excluding, and that the salience might be greater for reducing a smaller than a larger gap between expectations and rewards because it is seen as more manageable:

"...the relationship between the two measure means that we cannot assume any simple causal ordering... we cannot easily say whether expectations regarding a particular reward are higher because that reward is important, or whether it is important to him because his expectations are higher, or rather, because the gap between his expectations and his achievements is greater. Our approach is to view both as necessarily arising out of the whole complex of circumstances in which the individual finds himself, including his various expectations and perceptions which interact with

one another to constitute the relative salience of rewards." (ibid. pp. 88-9)

Thus, their evidence indicated perceptions of rewards to be interrelated, and an overwhelmingly strong effect on the expectations and salience of each reward derived from the perception of that reward. Detecting consistency in the data, at this point, they conclude that comparing a simple model, where orientations were seen as arising prior to the work environment, with a complex model, which conceived rewards and perceptions as intervening variables, the latter was superior, however, neither adequately explained salience. As perceptions and expectations co-varied they concluded that the former were positively related to the latter. Hypothesising a model that assumes expectations determines salience shows the asymmetric effects of perceptions and expectations upon salience and provides indication of the relationship between different rewards. The results of this suggested that expectations had a greater effect than perceptions, and that higher perceptions of one reward increasing the salience of others (to be expected, as salience was constructed to relate to dissatisfaction). Many of the orientations models that displaced work as secondary to consumption advanced a compensatory conception of rewards, i.e., that more money reduced the importance and expectations for other rewards. Prandy et al., found this true only of perceptions of promotion, which reduced the current expectations for, and salience of, other rewards, otherwise high perceptions of a reward marginally increased the expectations and salience of other rewards, consequently rather than a compensatory model there is an increase awareness of lack with other features, perhaps also reflecting that that is the way the employment market is structured; hierarchically, and that the only way that we can speak of compensatory model is either where promotion prospects were high indicating greater increases tomorrow in return for present dissatisfactions, or where peoples' circumstances are constrained and

work recognised as extremely hazardous or dirty, etc., is compensated by relatively high salaries for the qualifications of the individuals so employed. Their evidence indicates that the major causal factors were in current circumstances, not past or background factors, in the levels and perceptions of rewards on the expectations and salience of factors and that a compensatory model, whereby people are content with inadequate returns of some rewards because another is, or others are, relatively high does not exist.

Satisfaction, Total Satisfaction and Commitment.

Issues of people's assessments of their employment are frequently, if not wholly adequately, addressed as issues of satisfaction, there are countless satisfaction studies whereby respondents are asked how satisfied they are with rewards, etc., afforded them in their employment. Satisfaction can be with either individual rewards, aspects of a position or occupation, or it can be total satisfaction with a position or occupation. As conceptual variable such satisfactions are measures obtained from responses to direct questions, of how satisfied a person thinks they are with either specific aspects of a job, or with a job in general, and/or to oblique questions, which are thought to reveal or reflect total satisfaction. What these are not, although they are sometimes carelessly interpreted so, are indicators of happiness with a job. Logically, total satisfaction must equal the sum of all individual satisfactions, thus the contribution of other factors needs to be through individual satisfactions, or rather, for both to be equally affected or unaffected. No study, however, has asked questions for all the individual satisfactions to sum and equate with total satisfaction.

There are, however, two problems associated with job satisfaction: First, there is the commonplace view that regardless of substantial variations in the conditions and types of work experienced by workers, satisfaction studies usually found that those workers generally report moderate satis-

faction, large variations in conditions do not produce like variations in reported satisfaction levels. Second, not unconnected, is the problem that satisfaction reports may reflect constricted expectations more than satisfaction or wants.

Blauner for example, argued the first, stated this was due to cultural bias and respondents perceiving direct satisfaction questions as challenging their personality, that questions need to be more oblique. Goldthorpe et al., concurred, addressed satisfaction through job preferences, and concluded that their subjects experienced dissatisfactions. However, claims that there is no relationship between results and conditions are false; studies that examine responses to comparatively evaluate multiple occupations commonly uncover variation in the levels and patterns of satisfactions and preferences reported relative to occupation.¹³ Satisfaction must always be interpreted relative to its context, expectations and importance.

Concerning the second problem, Blackburn and Mann argued that satisfaction¹⁴ was dependent upon the orientation which effected it through expectations and salience; uncertain how these factors affected satisfaction they, nonetheless, were sure that all causal agents were constrained by reality:

"...the level of expectation refers not to the level the individual would like but to the level at which he will be satisfied. Such... is a function of the worker's perceptions of what is possible rather than his orientations. Indeed, orientations... are themselves confined to what is seen as possible and tend to give priority to these aspects of work where 'reasonable' levels and significant variations in rewards seem possible. Satisfaction then depends on the relationship between orientations and actual experience within the frame of reference of what is perceived as possible."

(1979 p.168)

With this, they have painted themselves into a corner, no closer to solving the problems that confront them.

Having not measured expectations Blackburn and Mann, postulated that if there is an inverse relationship between expectations and satisfaction that, given that an orientation is what is valued of work, there should be an inverse relationship between them and satisfaction. However, as they found no relationship, between the mean averages of satisfaction and those of preferences or importance, they argued that this may be the result of variations in rewards, or unfulfilled expectations, or constricted opportunities. They argued that satisfaction can indicate the importance, and thereby the orientation, through there being a high standard deviation in the mean value of a specific satisfaction. However, the nearer all workers were to being satisfied with an item the less the variations in the response, consequently if these deviations were to be indicative of importance they needed to be greater than expected, given the size of their mean values. They found fringe benefits, pay, hours and autonomy had such higher deviations, which generated a problem for them, as these findings conflicted with their preference, etc., results.

When analysing their data Blackburn and Mann were unable to causally or meaningfully interrelate the preference, importance and satisfaction data; the questions related to these and other factors that they put to respondents produced data sets with no consistent correlations amongst them, suggesting either that workers had no orientations, merely sets of attitudes to specific circumstances or questions, or that their orientations had not been directly tapped by the questions, or that there were problems with the way the information was interpreted. The authors thought the solution to their problems here lay in the concept of expectations and describing the orientations as weak:

"Orientations define the levels of expectation and salience for the rewards on each aspect of the job,

while satisfaction on each aspect is a function of the expectations and rewards, contributing according to its salience.... The narrower the frame of reference, that is the more the present situation is seen as natural and inevitable, the less scope is there for 'wants' to differ from 'reasonable expectations'. Satisfaction is concerned essentially with what may reasonably be expected, with fairness rather than pleasure, and fairness in the restrictive context of the 'way things are'."

(Blackburn and Mann 1979 p.177)

Thus, satisfaction is made a product of constrained reality more than of orientations. Of course, suggesting that orientations are weak is really suggesting that the orientations proposed by the authors are weak at explaining the results obtained, not demonstrating that the actual orientations the orientations of their subjects are weak.

In contrast to this apparent confusion Prandy et al., found that their respondent's satisfactions with the rewards tested interrelated with each other, and with other factors. Some satisfactions had a positive effect on satisfaction with other rewards; satisfaction with intrinsic job rewards, especially, but also satisfaction with promotion and status.

Comparing satisfaction with salience data, Prandy et al., found mostly that high salience accompanied low satisfaction, except for intrinsic job rewards, where satisfaction and salience were both high, and status, which indicated problems in interpreting satisfaction; that satisfaction did not necessarily lead to low salience, low importance, of a reward for behaviour and wants for that reward:

"...of intrinsic job rewards, there may be relatively high satisfaction and yet a relatively strong emphasis on an increase in this type of reward. Conversely, as... of status, satisfaction may be comparatively low, but improvements on this factor may be of no great importance to most individuals."

(Prandy et al., 1982 p.115)

They found that satisfaction with, increased with

perceptions of, rewards and decreased as expectations increased.¹⁵ The rewards with the strongest effect on other rewards and satisfactions were, first, perceptions of promotion and second, perceptions and expectations of intrinsic job rewards; higher perceptions of intrinsic job rewards increased all other satisfactions, and higher expectations decreased their respective satisfactions.¹⁶ The expectations, perceptions and satisfactions of these two predominate, thus they conclude:

"Promotion is easy to understand... The importance of intrinsic job rewards is less expected, and is for that reason perhaps more interesting.... almost all discussion of job satisfaction emphasise the importance of intrinsic job factors, and these results lend weight to this. It might be argued that the importance of intrinsic rewards has generally emerged because the questions of satisfaction have generally been answered within the frame of reference of the job itself, or at least the work place, rather than the present employment. However, this is quite explicitly not the case here. Not only is the individual's experience of the intrinsic aspects of his work of significance in itself, but it appears also to colour his expectations of and, independently, his satisfaction with other rewards available to him from work." (ibid. pp. 121-2)

It would seem then that the perceptions of rewards have a positive effect on satisfaction, their relevant expectations have a negative effect, and each satisfaction has a positive effect on other satisfactions. While this is generally so the strength of the effects are differential with the strongest from the use of abilities and control intrinsic job rewards. They examined satisfaction as the outcome of the balance between perceptions and expectations with salience as the resolution of competing satisfactions finding salience and satisfaction in inverse relationship except for social interaction.¹⁷

Total satisfaction, as Prandy et al., note, although usually considered an indicator of, is a determinant of commitment to an organisation.¹⁸ Thus, that satisfaction with intrinsic job rewards and promotion contributed most to total satis-

faction (perceptions of intrinsic job rewards provided the only other influence), these contribute most to commitment. The effect of satisfaction with intrinsic job rewards on satisfaction with other rewards revealed its contribution to be the most diffuse of any satisfaction. As the salience of intrinsic rewards and income was about equal this is discordant with their contribution to total satisfaction. The greater the individual's assessment of the salience of a reward the more it contributes to his total satisfaction (importance may result from satisfaction, but their method of measuring salience produces an inverse relationship with satisfaction). Prandy et al., concluded:

"The results on satisfaction indicate very clearly the importance of two major factors. One is the nature of the work task, as this is given by the two intrinsic job rewards: use of abilities and control. This aspect of work contributes more than any other to total satisfaction, and even spills over into satisfaction with other aspects of the job. This is true also of promotion... a belief in promotion acts as a means of coming to terms with the present situation because it holds out the prospects of personal change within the existing structure of the organisation leading to increases in future rewards." (1982 p.135)

The causal efficacy of intrinsic job rewards, use of abilities and control, and of promotion leads logically to their being considered important. Other studies concur with the effect from intrinsic job rewards on satisfaction and commitment, and add complexity of task to this. (Lincoln and Kalleberg 1985, Blackburn and Mann 1979 pp.174-5)

Orientations Leading to Achievements.

Orientations need to have force to be explanatory of people's evaluations of, commitment and motivation to, their employment. It is agreeable, as Blackburn and Mann stressed (1979 p.17), that orientations are required to have some enduring, extensive forcefulness, but it is incredible to argue,

as they, for orientations be weakened to fulfil this requirement. They are correct to criticise Goldthorpe et al., though not because excess emphasis of 'revealed preferences' imposed dependence on the immediate situation and lack of enduring stability on the orientation. Goldthorpe et al's problem with their orientation was not its proximity to, but its distance from, its location; their own evidence reveals that their subjects would prefer not to endure the compromises 'reality' imposed on them; they revealed their orientation, but to be largely discounted.

Certainly, orientations need to have force, explanatory force, regarding the expectations, wants, priorities, satisfactions, and behaviours of the people to whom they are said to apply; orientations were proposed to explain such understandings and behaviours which makes sensitivity to any indications of the subjects' orientations being frustrated and or compromised incumbent upon social theorists utilising the orientations approach. Divorcing the orientations from the context of their application does not enhance their explanatory power, it simply makes them a value rational, no value irrational model without any interactive feedback and, thereby, procedures of assessment of performances and outcomes. The orientations holders are then presented as socially incompetent.

Too many social theorists of orientations to work, faced with intractable explanatory difficulties, tilt in that direction. Their subjects assessments of their opportunities, the desirability of these and whether they wish to pursue them, and of successes and failures in that, and in the practice of these once obtained, alongside other desired experiences in some balanced pattern, are central parts of any orientation to work. Such assessments are integral to the process of setting goals and undertaking action for their achievement and anticipating problems and evolving methods for surmounting any problems that arise. In this the

assessment of success and failure is both immediate, as in assessing past and present performances and achievements, and projected, when assessing the capacities for dealing with problems present or in the future. Workers are involved in an assessment of their past, present and future performances in both usual circumstances and unusual predicaments. Yet, despite their social action leanings, too many of the theorists who deployed the orientations model to examine people's understandings of their productive activity tended to give scant consideration to notions of success or failure and self-assessments of performance. They usually consider the issue obliquely, if at all, through proxies such as satisfaction, advancement in standard of living, the achievement or not of promotion (Goldthorpe et al., 1968). It should be remembered that perception of success often raises confidence and leads to new levels of aspiration or ambition; success cannot, therefore, be regarded simply as satisfaction. Nevertheless, satisfaction is the approach most commonly employed, rather than success and failure, prospects, etc., as important factors, to explain actors' understandings and actions directed at their productive activity.

Chinoy considered his respondents self-assessments of their achievements, or lack of them, as well as their prioritising security, moves on the informal job hierarchy, progressive accumulation, and other values as achievements, sometimes in compensation:

"...to convince themselves that they are getting ahead and that they are not without ambition, workers apply to the ends that they pursue the vocabulary of the tradition of opportunity. They extend the meaning of ambition and advancement" (Chinoy, 1955 p.124)

However, he considers these re-evaluations as only partially effective, leaving the worker self-deprecating and dissatisfied:

"...the defences which the workers erect against the self-guilt and self-blame generated by limiting aspi-

rations and failure to get ahead tend to strip their jobs of meaning and to inhibit rather than stimulate personal growth and self-development. Both security and small goals in the factory (except wage increases) are essentially defensive in character. The concern with security is based upon fear and uncertainty; sought-for job improvements (again except for wage increases) entail primarily escape from difficulties. As goals... they constitute patterns of avoidance rather than of creative activity. Once gained, they offer workers no positive gratifications, no meaningful experiences." (ibid. p. 130)

Therefore, workers' reinterpretation of the American Dream is only partially successful and, while supposedly reproducing the Dream and the society which frustrates them, it leaves their goals and achievements as meaningless for themselves as it is for society. Despite essentially analysing meaning, his solution is meaningless, dislocated, activities and understandings.

Goldthorpe et al., gave minimal attention to the question of assessments of achievements. The one group that they did consider to have been influenced by their self-assessment in their employment evaluations was the machine setters who they thought were affected by their experience of promotion. The issue of assessment of achievements arose again, briefly, later when they considered their subjects' attitudes to starting their own business:

"...it may be noted that... for a number of men, yet further hesitancy about self-employment resulted from the doubts which they had (or which had been brought home to them) on the wisdom of putting in hazard their present, not unfavourable, economic position; the position that in most cases they had built up through having secured employment which afforded them higher earnings than would most other kinds of work available to them.... And... many of these men had already made considerable sacrifices in attaining their existing standard of living - particularly through enduring inherently unrewarding and stressful jobs a reluctance to jeopardise their achievements is all the more readily understood."

(Goldthorpe et al., 1968. pp. 134-5)

Their subjects achieved from, for their lives outside of, their work, but at considerable cost.

Gouldner, perceptively found that in the orientations of the miners, due to the dangerous, collective nature of their work, the miners had perceptions of accomplishment that reflected in their personalities, unlike the surface workers; the miners considered themselves competent and largely in charge of performing their jobs, which was reflected in their resistance to authority and the dispensations they demanded and achieved, quite unlike the surface workers, whose notions of achievement were thus seen more as failure.

Blackburn and Mann's (1979) considered their subject's self-assessments of achievement as failure as the concept personal suitability, which was recognition of constrained job opportunities interpreted by them as personal incompetence. Personal suitability was the recognition of the hierarchical nature of the job market and of exclusion from jobs higher up the scale than their own. It was also recognition of the comfort of avoidance of risk in staying at their current firm and position. Personal suitability was an entirely negative concept when it could equally be a positive one describing a personally desired or heartfelt objective. Sometime, though, people consider occupations, forms of work, to be especially suited to their character or personality; they conceive that they have some deep need to pursue a line of activity because it is self-fulfilling or accomplishing in some way. Personal suitability, thus, can mean more than negative assessments of self, though individuals may be ridden with some doubt, and of opportunity. It is more than living in less desirable housing or experiencing downward mobility; it may be so in some less than desirable circumstances, but it needs to be recognised that it cannot in all circumstances be only these.

Prandy et al., (1982) frequently speak of attainment in regard to individuals and their occupational positions and/or promotion in either its

attainment or anticipation. They also speak of workers having expectations connected to their circumstances that are either obtained or not and that are assessed in terms of satisfaction with the actual rewards attained. Perceptions of rewards, expectations, attainments, occupational position and satisfactions they rightly consider result in strategies whereby the individual attempt either to adapt themselves to their situation or to modify their situation to their designs:

"The problem of importance is less a matter of the level of a reward than of its significance to the individual, and one would expect that it would be a function not only of general social experience but also of the extent to which the individual has achieved his expected level."
(Prandy et al. 1982 p.83)

Achievement, then, is central to the notion of the salience of rewards obtained from work is the notion of achievement but not, alas, of self-recognition of the effort applied and the ability to achieve specific positions and bundles of rewards. The weight ascribed to achievement needs to be taken beyond satisfaction, promotion perceptions, etc., though, to also giving consideration to the subjects' assessments of their own ability, striving and achieving. This is especially important where opportunities and access are considered as constrained and requiring some effort to surmount constraints:

"Promotion occurs within social processes which are sufficiently predictable to raise doubts about the degree of effective decision-making that is possible. However, its special characteristic is that it allows just such a sense of personal choice and voluntarism within a stable system. This sense of competence is an important aspect of the experience of non-manual workers, which of course is reinforced by the very predictability of the process.... the emphasis on individual attainment tends to deflect concern away from the system itself and so also from ways of attempting to change it.... career advancement helps to maintain and reproduce the existing system." (ibid. p. 177)

Thus, assessments of competence features in the orientations of workers and is important for out-

comes such as self-estrangement, commitment to the organisation and motivation.¹⁹

The ideas contained in notions of assessment and of problem solving leads to the idea of control and have most relevance and efficacy where there is some concurrent possession of control of circumstances by the person(s) concerned. It seems most probable that people will most often engage in problem solving in areas and issues over which they have, believe they have, some efficacy and that this will be greatest where there is group/social support. (cf., Shills and Janowitz 1948) The orientations of people with some belief in their abilities and authorities, aided by social support, can possess causal force and explanatory power, for their holders and social theorist. The latter then, do not require arbitrary notions of the orientation having distance from its immediate context to stand as guarantor of its reality; proximity to the orientation possessed and used by their subjects to assess their situation and prospects is a better guarantor, offering a better chance of explaining elements like the orientation holder's motivation and commitment to remain at, or change, their situation.

Conclusion.

This paper reviewed the orientations approach, which was developed to research and explain people's understandings of their work activity, and to surmount some of the shortcomings of class theory. It was shown that the initial strategy, of adding social supplements to economic and class underpinnings, did not produce coherent explanations, due to retention of explanatory assumptions and concepts which were highly problematic; the strategy side-stepped, and did not resolve the problems, nor did that of determining that the place of work in people's lives was minor compared to other matters. Together, these resulted in incoherent explanations, with evidence which ill-fit the theoretical frameworks, and the attribution of the conditions of the researchers ex-

planatory failures to their subjects.

The initial orientations strategy, while correctly arguing that people arrived in their first job with expectations, were incorrect in, a) expecting these to endure for the remainder of work life, and b) expecting these to derive from cultural values or community location, away from work. These errors were illuminated, and a more accurate perspective presented, which pointed out that orientations are the products of total life experience, and that for understandings of work, work experience itself is critical. From here, the concept of orientation was illuminated, showing that orientations defined as determined by a single reward were unable to comprehend the breadth a person's understanding, evaluation, commitment and motivation in respect of their work. The evidence in attempts to so determine an orientation painfully showed this to be incorrect, that people expected more of their work lives than a single reward or aspect of work, and revealed dissatisfaction where these were inadequate, regardless of the amounts of any single one, even where that is money.

In determining what people desire of their employment, there is a danger that questions elicit what respondent's consider reasonably possible for them in their current circumstances, and not true wants, a danger that single reward determined orientations are more liable to fall foul of. Addressing this danger, orientations theorists model the interrelationships of related concepts, of rewards, wants, perceptions, expectations, importance, salience, satisfaction, total satisfaction, commitment, motivation, to proximate more true evaluations and understandings. These concepts how they interrelated were reviewed, which further reinforced the evidence that orientations were multi-faceted and that peoples' ongoing work experience was a critical for determinant how they understand that work. Specifically, it was shown there was no compensatory orientation, whereby

additional amounts of any reward compensated for inadequate amounts of any other. On the contrary that high levels of any reward heightened the salience of increasing other rewards, heightened the dissatisfaction with those rewards thought wanting. That in terms of satisfactions, total satisfaction is a measure of commitment, and the strongest contributors to total satisfaction are promotion and intrinsic job rewards, the first because it promises more of all rewards later. Lastly, it was suggested that a curious lack in many of the orientations studies was an appropriate measure of a sense of achievement, even where this was recognised as promotion, the sense of achievement of promoted workers was frequently not considered, a woeful omission, as commitment to an organisation was recognised as reducing with skill levels, and the experience of promotions is confirmation of skills; it was contended that measures of achievements need to be integrated into the orientations model, and their effects evaluated. Thus, with proper development, and reconstruction of the basic assumptions, the orientations model can offer very fruitful approach to accessing and explaining people's understandings of their work, career, commitment and motivation in respect of that work.

Footnotes

¹ "Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interests of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it."

(Smith, 1937.p.625.)

² This is now being recognised in the US and the UK, to be short sighted and to have drastic costs; subsequent reduced commitment of workers in many fields, due to a sense employment security with any company is unreliable, thus, that they should accept offers of employment which increases the immediate rewards re-

ceived, creating high turn over and inefficiency due to the need to retrain and integrate replacement employees into the work force.

³ "The concept of real subordination of labour (hereafter R.S.L.) described the capitalist mode of production where valorisation is fully in command. It is only achieved at the point where capital obtains the necessary control and disciplining of labour from the production process itself. Whereas private ownership of the means of production, divorce of the workers from the means of subsistence, and the wage form give rise to a formal subordination of labour, it is only really materially subordinated when capital can control exactly what the worker does in the work place, ensuring that the worker orders all his activities to one goal; valorisation. Thus in the R.S.L., capital employs labour, the means of production employ the worker in a material as well as a formal" (1980. p.6)

⁴ Weber believed that once capitalism had achieved take-off, the development of rationalisation, especially, but not solely, in its bureaucratic form, would take over the role of motivating and controlling people.

⁵ The indulgency pattern orientation is: "...a connected set of concrete judgements and underlying sentiments disposing workers to react to the plant favourably, and to trust their supervisors. It is an important, though not the only, source of job satisfaction experienced by the workers, motivating them to fulfil their roles for which they were employed, expressing a commitment to a set of beliefs as to how the plant should be run, generating loyalties to the plant and Company, and expressing preferences for certain patterns of social relationships rather than others." (1955 p.56)

Even under the indulgency pattern, workers expressed some distancing from their work and the plant:

"Their farming ties are still vital psychologically, even if frayed economically. Some have only given up farming reluctantly, and look

forward to a return... 'I used to have a farm myself, but I lost it because of high taxes. I want to go back to farming full time. Maybe work down here in the winters, like I used to. I like being my own boss.'" (Gouldner 1955 p.38)

⁶ Blackburn and Mann divide the social background factors that they investigated for causal influence on orientation into, non-work, present employment and work history. Included in each of these sub-categories were; for non-work, life cycle and family position, personal health, community attachment, the size of the communities of origin and residence, house tenure, type of school attended, educational achievement, and religion; for present employment as background factors, the rate of absenteeism, rate of or lateness for work, frequency of feeling reluctant to go to work, the spill-over of work problems into non-work lives (which they took to be an indicator of work stress at work, while this may equally represent work commitment) and the occupational status of the present job, both singly and comparatively with that of their father and friends; and, for work history, occupational mobility determined by a, the difference between their present occupation and that of their father when they were leaving school, career mobility, the difference between the highest job level attained and the present one, the proportions of career moves upwards or downwards, the status of the job that the worker liked best compared with their present one, they distinguished manual, non-manual jobs and self-employment, the employment sector; any experience of unemployment and/or involuntary job moves, and the number of firms worked for.

Prandy et al., have similar views of social background factors as both work and non-work, although they focus on fewer, factors. They identify; 1, age and life cycle position, 2, father's occupational status when the subjects left school (a surrogate for socialisation and social origins), size of the community of origin, education variables (i.e., type of school attended, leaving age,

further educational experience and qualifications attained), geographical mobility, membership of, and activity in, associations, social status of the respondent's friends and neighbours, and the person's first ever job and first job with their present employer as social background characteristics.

⁷ This led them, ironically, to conclude that some workers' orientations may be the instrumental orientation that they considered so insidious and one-sidedly inaccurate in Goldthorpe et al's study.

⁸ The second and third reasons most frequently given were security and a fair employer. Furthermore, 33% of the respondents did not mention pay as a reason for remaining in their present employment; their reasons for staying are more diffuse and less focused than the authors would like to conclude, although, instrumentalism is also blessed with other characteristics which they build upon in an attempt to confirm their analysis.

⁹ Instrumentalism they described thus:

"(i) The primary meaning of work is as a means to an end, or ends, external to the work situation; that is work is regarded as a means of acquiring the income necessary to support a valued way of life of which work is not an integral part. Work is therefore experienced as mere 'labour' in the sense of an expenditure of effort which is made for extrinsic rather than for intrinsic rewards. Workers act as 'economic man', seeking to minimise effort and maximise returns; but the latter concern is the dominant one. (ii) Consistently with this, worker's involvement in the organisation which employs them is primarily a calculative one; it will be maintained for so long as the economic returns for effort is seen as the best available, but for no other reason. Thus, involvement is of low intensity, and in terms of affect is neutral or 'mild' rather than being highly positive or negative. (iii) Since work is defined essentially as a mandatory and instrumental activity, rather

than as an activity valued for itself, the ego-involvement of workers in their jobs - in either the narrow or the wider sense of the term - is weak. Their jobs do not form part of their central life interests; work is not for them a source of emotionally significant experiences or social relationships; it is not a source of self-realisation. (iv) Consequently workers lives are sharply dichotomised between work and non-work. Work experiences and relationships are not likely to be carried over into 'out-plant' life, and workers are unlikely to participate in 'social' activities associated with work - e.g., in works clubs and societies or in other than what are seen as economically urgent or essential trade union activities."

(Goldthorpe et al., 1968 pp. 38-9)

¹⁰ While many writers worry about their ability to access need, wants, etc., which are thought more fundamental for the individual concerned, thereby for their orientations, than aspects such as expectations, which are thought made necessary for the worker by their context and not by themselves. Something of these things which are considered more basic appear in the reports of workers of preferences for other work, experiencing monotony etc., which Goldthorpe et al., preferred to ignore.

¹¹ Blackburn and Mann put forward, initially, these measures of orientations:

"The essence of an orientation is that it is extensive, that it colours a worker's attitude in general. Therefore, to unearth orientations we must ask a whole set of questions and see whether an individual responds in patterned ways. Firstly, we use the preference data, based on the evaluation of ten firms... We take as a strong measure, four or more mentions of a particular aspect, which we have classed as a persistent preference. Although the questions were hypothetical we have good reason to believe they reveal 'true' preferences. Certainly they minimise the likelihood of rationalisation that is liable to occur in reasons for attachment to the present

job, which Goldthorpe and his associates were obliged to use, and they avoid the additional problem of recall that arises in reasons for having taken the job. However, we also asked other questions using the same open-ended format as that underlying the preference data, and these results can be used to help establish the extent of orientations. Secondly, we asked workers what is salient to them in other frames of reference. We will concentrate on two of these, on abstract questions about how important are certain factors in weighing up a job, and a question about job satisfaction. Both of these were fixed-choice questions, that is, the workers were asked to evaluate a list 12 specified aspects of work. As we used a different methodology to the preference data, a crucial question is did they elicit similar results?" (1979 pp. 146-7)

¹² Interestingly, they continue;

"...Clearly the most important reward, in the sense of what is best satisfied in the situation is not the same as the most important among all those desired (Kornhauser, 1965), nor as that which is most salient for action related to the job." (Prandy et al. 1982 p.84)

And they define salience as;

"...the extent to which an individual is motivated to pursue an improvement (or in some cases resist a deterioration) in a particular reward. Possibly the salience of a reward in this sense could be conceptualised as having an absolute value, but this would involve great problems of measurement and comparison. Another approach which is more tractable and potentially no less useful, is to consider salience as a relative phenomenon..." (ibid. p.84)

¹³ See Stewart and Blackburn, 1975, for a perceptive review of such studies.

¹⁴ "There are a number of conceptual and theoretical difficulties associated with the idea of job satisfaction, but these are somewhat reduced where workers share a similar experience of employment possibilities, and the procedure seems reasonable in the present case. In itself

satisfaction is not of course, a measure of orientation, but of attitude to a given level of rewards. However, if workers do have orientations which they bring to the work situation, these will influence the evaluation made. Thus we may be able to observe their effects in expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. ...on the average respondents expressed satisfaction rather than dissatisfaction with aspects of their work and work in general. This, of course, is in keeping with the findings of all studies of job satisfaction. It is worth noting, however, that in this case (probably because of the method used) the levels of satisfaction were not particularly high. Only with the friendliness of their workmates were respondents more than 'moderately satisfied', while on promotion chances, trade union strength, working conditions, fringe benefits and pay they range from barely satisfied at all to 'just satisfied'. We may recall that social relationships are the main source of enjoyment in their jobs."

(Blackburn and Mann 1979 pp. 167-8)

They wrote also:

"This suggests that respondents tend to identify with the occupational group, and that it is this group, rather than the individual, which is seen as the major unit in the determination of income." (ibid. p.92)

¹⁵ For income, though, the individual's own occupational group, both within and outside the company, had positive and negative effects on this satisfaction, indicating the importance of immediate reference groups for income assessments.

¹⁶ "Apart from promotion, it is again intrinsic job reward which stand out. Perception of use of abilities and control together have a substantial positive influence on satisfaction with social interaction, superiors, promotion and status, while the use of abilities alone affects satisfaction with security and income. Intrinsic job expectations have quite a strong negative influence on all of the satisfactions, with the ex-

ception of security." (Prandy et al., 1982 p.121)

¹⁷ The importance, the salience, of job factors decreases as satisfaction with those specific rewards increases. This is a consequence of the way that salience was measured; as a prioritising of desire for marginal improvements in the level of each particular reward. This result is not, therefore, surprising and it points to salience increasing where these rewards are under threat: It is not the value ascribed to each job aspect that is being measured but the desire for change in it.

¹⁸ Oddly, it has been suggested that lower levels of satisfaction reported by workers in Japan comparatively with workers in the states argued that satisfaction was a product of commitment; that the lower levels of satisfaction in Japan could be explained by higher commitment to the company leading to greater expectations which are then not met, thus lower satisfaction. See Lincoln and Kalleberg (1985 pp. 746 - 7) for a discussion of this issue.

¹⁹ Poggie Jr., examined the question of success in relation to the fishers of Puerto Rico, but his attention was directed towards the fisher's categories for assessing the reasons for the success of other fishers, not what is considered by them as being measures of success. It is directed towards what the fishers consider as reasons for the success of others and is not an assessment of their own activity except insofar as there is no indication of hypocrisy we can assume they apply these assessments to their own activity and to how they can achieve success, if it is desired. What Poggie Jr.'s work does indicate is that fishers have conceptions of success and of how it can be achieved. Similarly the discussion of the question of the skipper effect, regardless of whether it is a myth, as some contributors to the debate have suggested it is, indicates the existence of such an interest in the question of success on the part of fishers. (Byron 1980 pp. 228-9, Palsson and Durrenberger 1982, 1983, 1984, 1990, Gatewood 1984, McNabb 1985, White 1992.)

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