

Goods, Man and Organization

—Preliminary Survey on Secondary Life Behaviors—

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The present article touches upon a new phase in the study of "goods in social behaviors" -- a basic subject in sociological analysis of an economic problem called "consumption." The study covers the use of goods in the secondary life behaviors (social behaviors at work places), has connections with the study of tertiary life behaviors (leisure-time social behaviors), which has already more or less run its course, and forms a sub-system of the study of life structure. The use of goods in secondary life behaviors is mostly for improvement of efficiency in work processes, and human elements seem to be present in heavier weights in clerical works than in productive works. Although the use of goods has much to do with promotion or slowdown of organizational functioning, this problem of goods, man and organization has so far been left untreated not only by conventional studies of management but also by traditional industrial sociology and industrial psychology.

The present study forms a preliminary factual analysis of this new problem and covers 308 sample residents (each having 20 years or over) of the same cities covered by studies on tertiary life behaviors. The study shows that the work places as part of organizations are always in pursuit of functionalism and rationality and that workers there are highlighted by their rational features. Goods having rational functions (such as electronic computers, related equipment and other office machines) are coming to the aid of the work place organization and man's rationality, thereby making powerful contributions to the promotion of the total functionality of the work places. There is no denying the fact, however, that, in some roles and work place environments, emotional disturbances are seen in workers in connection with their use of goods. Although the present preliminary survey did not reveal cases in which the above-cited disturbances actually are blocking smooth running of the work place organization, it did find the locuses of the problems involved.