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## HRM Practitioners and the Meaning of Work: The Turkish Case

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### ABSTRACT

Although “work” is a critical concept for almost all social science disciplines, apart from industrial sociology, none of them takes the concept as a “core” one. On the other hand so many disciplines talk over “work” in a subordinate way. So, work-related discussions are available in almost all social science disciplines. This paper aims to present Turkish HRM practitioners’ approaches about “work” concept using a theoretical framework created by John W. Budd. This framework takes work in ten-conceptualisation which includes almost all social sciences approaches to work. To reveal Turkish HRM practitioners’ perspectives on work, interviews with HRM practitioners from Turkey, which appear in HR Magazine [*HR Dergi*], have been analysed via the software MaxQDA.

### KEY WORDS

work, HRM practitioners, Turkish case, the meaning of work

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

It’s not so easy to put the meaning of work clearly. Rather, defining work on an unquestionable ground is almost impossible because of its nature and of how people or scholars from different academic traditions see it. While the mainstream economic thought sees work or labour as a commodity that could be bought and sold in labour markets, many others can approach work in out of an economic framework. Thus that paper intends to provide the meaning of work from the viewpoint of HRM practitioners in Turkey. The main purpose of doing that is to examine the nature of HRM via the Turkish experience. The research is grounding on the work concepts that are provided by John W. Budd. In his prominent study [*The Thought of Work*] Budd examines the meaning of work under ten different conceptualisations on work. Therefore the paper is trying to find how Turkish HRM practitioners see work and their approach run into which category. For that purpose, at first the paper will provide a general conceptual framework of Budd’s study, then, depending on the ten-conceptualisation-approach the data from HRM practitioners via a periodical, *HR Dergi* [*HR Magazine*] that publishes the interviews with those practitioners were collected. And finally the paper intends to put a critics on the nature of modern human resource management.

## 2 HOW THE MEANING OF WORK HAS BEEN SHIFTED?

Under the Nazi Regime, so many concentration camps had been established in Germany during the Nazi rulership. There was a same statement on the gates of all these camps in German: *Arbeit macht frei* (work makes you free). This German phrase brings so many important questions on the table: Is this scene reflecting just a Nazi ideology? Has work had such an importance during the whole human history? If not, when and how a transformation in the meaning of work has been happened?

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At first, it needed to be emphasised that, the statement on the gates of concentration camps reflects not just the Nazi ideology but also a labour ideology of modernity or its economic world, capitalism. On the other hand, this perspective on work is not valid for the whole human history or for the all cultures. A well-known paradigm about the thinking on the meaning of work is the Greek paradigm. Although there is not a consensus on the paradigm, frequently it is treated as a paradigm that sees work as a virtueless activity (Meda, 2005). Here is a quotation from Aristotle (1985: 91 -1277a1/35): "Now we speak of several forms of slave; for the sorts of work are several. One sort is that done by menials: as the term indicates, these are persons who live by their hands; the vulgar artisan is among them. Hence among some peoples the craftsman did not share offices in former times, prior to the emergence of [rule of] the people in its extreme form." And a quotation from Aristotle's teacher Plato (2003: 54,371e):

"And there is still another group of people, I think, offering a service. We certainly would not want them as partners or associates for their mental attributes, but they possess physical strength suitable for manual labour. This they offer for sale, and the price they put on it they call their hire. That, I imagine, is why they in turn are called hired labourers. Isn't that right?"

Thus, the approaches toward labour, especially manual labour, were quite negative in ancient ages. This perception maintained a long period, till middle ages. Even during the middle ages, for example, the negative view of manual labour could be seen in the medical professions (Conner, 2005: 308): "medical practitioners organized themselves professionally in a pyramid with physicians at the top and surgeons and apothecaries nearer the base, and with other healers marginalized or vilified as 'quacks'". The position of surgeons in the pyramid reflects the position of manual labour.

On the other hand, perceptions of labour has changed completely in modern capitalist societies. While the Greek paradigm saw work as an activity that makes people unfree because of its nature that includes an obligatory condition, modern labour ideology takes work as an activity that makes people free just as stated on the gates of the Nazi's concentration camps. So, the key question is that: what is the main reason under that transformation of the work perception? Of course this question implies a wide-range debates, but shortly we can say that the material conditions or necessities lead to or feed new discourses that serve for these conditions or necessities. Therefore, the main factor under that discursive transformation has been the transformation of economic structure in which a shift from a subsistence economy to a capitalist economy has occurred. Several great developments such as protestant reformation, scientific revolution (and Enlightenment) and Industrial Revolution have paved the way for new labour discourse that see work as a great virtue. Thus, classic and neo-classic economic thought approached to labour just like any other commodity. One of the most important critics against that perspective was put by Karl Marx. In his prominent work *Capital*, he present a detailed explanation that demonstrate this commodification of labour stand on an exploitation ground (Marx, 1992).

Thus, standing on neoclassic economic theory mainstream modern labour economics also see labour just as any other commodity and analyse labour market such as any other markets by supply-demand and price (wage) laws. Under that circumstance the meaning of work would had been transformed into one that see work as a great virtue. The roots of modern labour ideology that sees work as a virtue activity could be simply seen in a well-known novel written in early seventeenth century by Daniel Defoe (2003), *Robinson Crusoe*. Robinson is a quite well iconic-fictional figure who reflects so many characteristics of modernity and modern economic man. The novel can be analysed in vary aspects but for the purpose of that paper, it would be useful to present some Robinson's characteristics about labour. One of the most apparent characteristics on novel is a clear representation for the importance of working on nature. Working on nature reflects the motive of modernity on conquering or transforming nature into one that serves mankind's aims. Robinson transformed the environment in which he lives into a safer place or a less hazardous one and the main activity under that transformation is his working. The text places work in a position that is quite different from its position in Ancient Greek paradigm on labour.

On the other hand, the some measures taken by public authorities and some ethic codes against idleness also strengthened the importance of work. Michel Foucault (1988) presents a clear explanation on banning of mendicancy in his *Madness and Civilization*. Thus, while once upon a time a beggar was an agent to reach the God via charity, now he or she is an unwanted person who is seen as idler or a person who is a bad example for society. Additionally, work ethic also served for to constructing a new meaning of work. Because it says to employees that maximizing your benefit is less important to be more productive for your company (Bauman, 2004). So, when during the consolidation of capitalism till today, a meaning of work that is totally different from the Greek paradigm has been widespread. Especially an economic approach that see just paid employment as work has a wide acceptance in mainstream economics. To form a theoretical basis for the paper, in the next part the conceptualisations on work that are delivered by John W. Budd (2011) is going to be presented. The importance of the Budd's work is its multidisciplinary approach that try to deliver a literature collection about work from nearly all social science disciplines. Therefore this framework is a quite clear one.

### 3 TEN CONCEPTUALISATIONS ON WORK

In the mainstream economics, work is just an activity under employment relations. In the other words, just paid works or jobs are entitled to be or named as “work”. But in sociology of work literature this tendency has been criticized because sociological perspective tries to conceptualize work in a quite broad sense. This approach tries to go beyond dichotomies on work such as private (domestic works) / public spheres (paid employment), market / non-market divide or production (public-market area) / reproduction (private area) fields (for details see. Williams, 2010; Taylor, 2004). One approach that blur all the borders between these dichotomies is “total social organisation of labour” by M. Glucksmann (Williams, 2010: 404).

A recent report by UNDP approach work partly in a conventional tendency. Overview part of the report begins as (UNDP, 2015: 1):

“Work enables people to earn a livelihood and be economically secure. It is critical for equitable economic growth, poverty reduction and gender equality. It also allows people to fully participate in society while affording them a sense of dignity and worth. Work can contribute to the public good, and work that involves caring for others builds cohesion and bonds within families and communities.”

This perspective on work imply a more-market side explanation of work. But in the following sentences, report open a door slightly to a broad conception of work, it goes as (UNDP, 2015: 1): “The Report takes a broad view of work, including voluntary work and creative work, thus going beyond jobs.”

That paper will stand on the conceptual ground that was presented by John W. Budd. In his prominent book, *The Thought of Work*, Budd, presents the meanings of work in a quite broad perspectives, in ten different conceptualizations.

Table 1: Conceptualizing work

Work As	Definition	Intellectual Roots
1. A Curse	An unquestioned burden necessary for human survival or maintenance of the social order	Western theology, ancient Greco-Roman philosophy
2. Freedom	A way to achieve independence from nature or other humans and to express human creativity	Western liberal individualism, political theory
3. A Commodity	An abstract quantity of productive effort that has tradable economic value	Capitalism, industrialization, economics
4. Occupational Citizenship	An activity pursued by human members of a community entitled to certain rights	Western citizenship ideals, theology, industrial relations
5. Disutility	A lousy activity tolerated to obtain goods and services that provide pleasure	Utilitarianism, economics
6. Personal Fulfillment	Physical and psychological functioning that (ideally) satisfies individual needs	Western liberal individualism, systematic management, psychology
7. A Social Relations	Human interaction embedded in social norms, institutions, and power structures	Industrialization, sociology, anthropology
8. Caring for Others	The physical, cognitive, and emotional effort required to attend to and maintain others	Women’s rights, feminism
9. Identity	A method for understanding who you are and where you stand in the social structure	Psychology, sociology, philosophy
10. Service	The devotion of effort to others, such as God, household, community, or country	Theology, Confucianism, republicanism, humanitarianism

Source: Budd (2011: 14)

As seen in the table (for a brief explanation see Budd, 2011: 14-18) the first conceptualisation takes the work as a curse, the second conceptualisation, in the words of Budd, “shows how work can be seen as a source of freedom. The third conceptualisation depends largely on mainstream economic thought that see labour as commodity just like any other commodity that can be sold and bought. The fourth conceptualisation approaches work as occupational citizenship (“an activity undertaken by citizens with inherent equal worth who are entitled to certain rights and standards of dignity and self-determination irrespective of what the market provides”). With the fifth conceptualisation, work is seen as “an instrumental, economic activity that is tolerated because of the resulting

income and extrinsic rewards but that lacks psychological satisfaction and other intrinsic rewards and is therefore not enjoyed.”

In the sixth conceptualisation work is come up as personal fulfilment. Under that conceptualisation work is held as a beneficial activity “for an individual’s physical and psychological health.” This conceptualisation has another importance for its relation to human resource management practice because it presents an intellectual ground for human resource management, “which seeks to enhance worker effectiveness by recognizing the satisfying and dissatisfying aspects of work.” So this conceptualisation is also one of the most important ones for that paper, because so many dimensions which have relation with that conceptualisation have been emphasised by HRM practitioners who consist the sample of that paper.

And in turn, the seventh conceptualisation approaches work as a social relation that present a view which go beyond an economic exchange; the eighth conceptualisation takes work as caring for others that is not a central conceptualisation for that paper; the ninth conceptualisation see work as a part of personal identity which is also a weak conceptualisation for that study. And finally the tenth conceptualisation consider work in a way that go beyond an individual needs. Under that conceptualisation work is seen as service for a broad field such as society or God. For that paper emphasises on social responsibility or environmental concerns have relations to that conceptualisation.

#### 4 A BRIEF STATEMENT ON THE MEANING OF HRM

Now we need to focus on the nature of HRM and its relation to these conceptualisation on work very briefly. Discussions on HRM provide a bunch that consisted of vary approaches, which is not possible to present all of them in here. Yet as some writers do, we can put these approaches under some categories. Looking at HRM through these categories makes easier to think on the nature and meaning of HRM. Kaufman’s brief frame on these categorisation is going to be presented in here but similar categorisations are available in another text on HRM nature (e.g. see, Collings and Wood, 2009: 1-16).

Kaufman (2004: 322-324), presents various HRM definitions that allows “nearly a dozen different conceptualisations or dimensions of HRM” and then his final point as “a careful reading of these pages yield at least three different conceptualisations of HRM.” The first definition conceptualise HRM as “a generic management activity or function in business firms.” So in that perspective HRM is “largely equivalent to personnel management in that both are a generic functional management activity, although HRM is distinguished by a broader range of concerns and practices that are sometimes considered at a higher management level in the firm” (p. 322). In another world through this perspective HRM is no more than personal management, which is pointed as “old wine in a new bottle” by Armstrong in his an early study (2007: 18).

The second approach presents some distinctions between HRM and personal management. For instance personal management implies that employees are an organisational cost. “On the other hand, HRM emphasizes the potential of employees as organizational assets.” This definition puts a great difference for my paper. Because seeing employees either as a cost or as a potential requires quite different two perspectives, and HRM see workers as potential to be developed in that definition.

And the last definition is the most comprehensive one: “Human resource management is the science and the practice that deals with the nature of the employment relationship and all of decision, actions, and issues that relate to that relationship. In practice, it involves an organization’s acquisition, development, and utilization of employees, well as the employees’ relationship to an organization and its performance (Ferris et al. 1995: 1-2). This definition is quite useful for purpose of that paper especially the emphasis on utilisation of employees imply a broad frame that include some work-conceptions from the ten-conceptualisation base such as commodity which stand on human potential in employment relations.

#### 5 PROCEDURE, DATA AND OBJECTIVES

That paper is trying to bring two controversial concepts, work and HRM, together. The main aim of the paper is to look at how work is seen through HRM practices and so to revisit the debates on HRM nature. For that purpose the paper is looking at the human resource management practitioners from Turkey by using the archive of a relatively long-lasting magazine, HR Dergi (HR Magazine). The magazine is generally a monthly periodical and has a twenty-year history, has been publishing since 1996. The magazine is not an academic journal, but is a periodical that share the current development in the human resource management world in Turkey. The target group of the magazine is the practitioners: “The % 67 of our readers are middle and senior executives” (HR Dergi, 2016). Almost all issues include one or more interviews with HRM practitioners, so the sample of the research is consisted in that archive.

Determining the sample, all issues from the first volume to the volumes published in the year of 2015 were scanned. In that period 193 issues of HR Dergi have been published and subscribers can access the all issues via internet. Totally 140 interviews from all these issues were retained and 67 interviews were selected randomly. The interview selection table is as following:

Table 2: The reliability of the scales

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Number of selected Issues	1	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Number of selected Issues	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	67

Then, all these 67 interviews with HRM practitioners were read to find out how Turkish HRM practitioners see employment relations or work issues. Doing that the main objective of course was not to try to get the ten-conceptualisation directly but more in indirect way by using MaxQDA 12 qualitative data analysis software. In another word, the interviews were read via some codes that created by the author to derive work conceptualisations of Turkish HRM practitioners in indirect way.

*The construction of codes for MaxQDA:* Analysing the interviews for the purpose of the paper, sixteen sub-codes under five main groups were created. A brief explanation about the coding design is shown in the table below. As you see there are only five categories, not ten, because all the conceptualisations mentioned above from Budd are not available in the interviews selected for the sample of the paper. Another point that needed to be presented is an explanation about the main codes. All main codes (except one, post-Fordism) are labelled as in the Budd's framework but the sub-codes under post-Fordism serve for several purposes: First of all some of these sub codes have relations with other conceptualisations from our "ten", for instance the connection between these sub-codes and "fulfilment" is also a possibility. Thereby, secondly, the reason of constructing a main-code such as post-Fordism is also to see something about "the nature of HRM" from lens of practitioners.

Table 3: Main codes and sub-codes

Main Codes	Explanation	Sub-codes
Post-Fordism	These sub-codes are also for "the nature of HRM" in perspectives of practitioners.	Corporate-employee consistency Flexibility Team Outer customers Total quality
Commodity	All these sub-codes imply a human potential that could be changeable in the labour market.	Traning Skilled personnel Performance Human potential
Fulfillment	That main-code implies a great mission for HRM practices to construct a unitarist employment relationship.	HRM as bridge Private life / working life HRM-human aspect Employee satisfaction
Service	Actions for environmental protection and social responsibility imply a service for society.	Environment Social responsibility
Identity	Although there is a quite limited space in interview for "identity" I used it as a main-code because there is an important debate in literature on "work-related identity".	Identity

## 6 FINDINGS

In that part of the paper some analysis depends on the statistics or frequencies that derived from MaxQDA will be presented. Table 3 presents detailed information of frequencies for both main-codes and sub-codes. The table supplies a chance to see the percentage of any sub-codes in main-codes and among all codes and also the percentages of main codes in all main-codes.

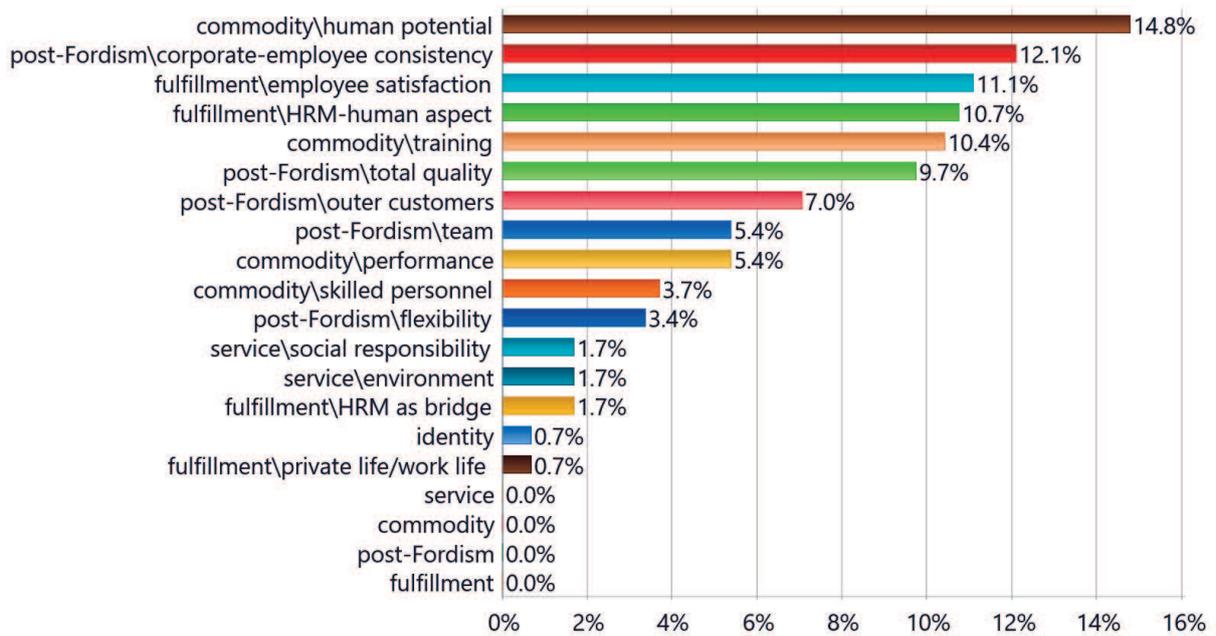
Table 4: Frequencies of main-codes and sub-codes

Main Codes	Sub-codes	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Post-Fordism	corporate-employee consistency	36	32.14	12.1
	total quality	29	25.89	9.7
	outer customers	21	18.75	7.0
	team	16	14.29	5.4
	flexibility	10	8.93	3.4
	<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Commodity	human potential	44	43.14	14.8
	training	31	30.39	10.4
	performance	16	15.69	5.4
	skilled personnel	11	10.78	3.7
	<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Fulfillment	employee satisfaction	33	45.83	11.1
	HRM-human aspect	32	44.44	10.7
	HRM as bridge	5	6.94	1.7
	private life/work life	2	2.78	0.7
	<b>Total</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Service	environment	5	50.00	1.7
	social responsibility	5	50.00	1.7
	<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Identity	Identity	2	100.00	0.7
Total	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0.7</b>
		<b>298</b>		<b>200.0</b>

To see a comparison between all sub-codes Figure 1 is a useful visual. And lastly Figure 2 presents the percentages for each main-code. Now looking at all these data, it's easy to grab a narrow conceptualisation of work and also a narrow-dimensional view toward HRM. The conceptualisation ground, ten conceptualisations, presents a quite wide or rich perspective to see work activities. But as it's seen in the data presented here just several conceptualisations of "ten" came in sight from the interviews with HRM practitioners, and just three of them have a meaningful frequency size. The three biggest main-code categories consist 96 percentages of all codes. So the other two main-codes have quite small value in the analysis. If so, what do these three main categories that compose almost all codes mean?

The codes and their frequencies show that the corporate-related issues have the most important priority comparing with ideological discourse of HRM. In narrative level HRM ideology bring the importance of human as human fore while the importance of human is realised in practice but as source that could make contribution to corporate strategy. In the data, "HRM-human aspect" stands in the fourth rank but I put some emphasises on such as communication, employee-voice into that code but this emphasises on human aspects in HRM have primarily concerns of corporate strategy. An interviewee presents this perspective very clearly: "The strategy, aims and perspective of top management are necessary to come down to our friends who are working in the plant. They are playing a critical role for us. Thus, the construction of firm, tight and healthy communication channels by middle level managers is so important."

Figure 1: Frequency distribution percentages of sub-codes

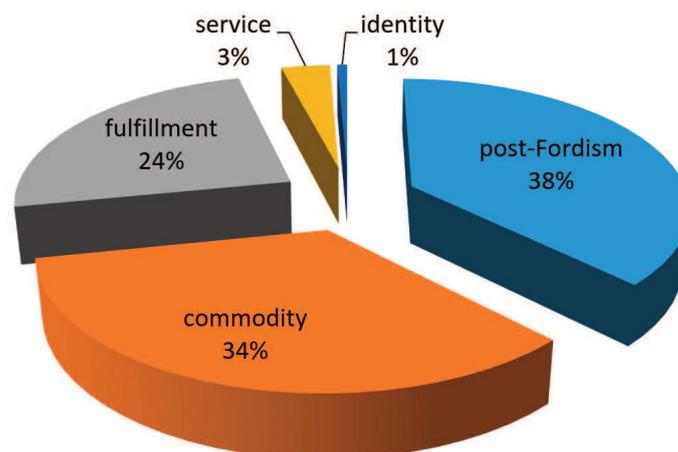


As stated above the main-category post-Fordism is a mixed category that is not available under the same label in our ‘ten-conceptualisations’. Thus, if that category excluded, the most striking main-code group would be “commodity”. This conceptualisation in our ten implies an exchange in labour market and see labour just as a commodity that has a changeable potential nature. Because of that potential, employers exploit, control or monitor it during working time to expand that potential till its end point. First ranking of “human potential” sub-code in our analysis shows that HRM practitioners are aware of the value of human potential at work. Another important sub-code, training, also demonstrate the importance of expandable that potential via developing practice.

Third important main-code category is fulfillment that point to employee satisfaction in a broad sense. Especially the sub-code employee satisfaction is ranking number three among all sub-codes. This reflects a tight relations with the ideology of modern HRM practice which aims to maintain and rise employee engagement as an interviewee puts: “As HR team, our priority is to keep the employee engagement in a highest level.”

Last two main-code fill a quite limited room in the paper. One of them is about to seeing work as service for whole community or country. Recently corporation and thereby HRM practitioners began to emphasise this dimension by a discourse on environmental protection and social responsibility. But nevertheless this emphasises are just available in five interviews. On the other hand work-identity relations that is a quite significant debate on the meaning of work is also not available, just two interviewees mentions something on that issue –one of them is quite indirect and just one emphasise the importance of identity. The date of this last one goes back to 1997. I emphasise the date because according to some argument work-identity relation is getting weaker especially for the transformation of work in post-industrial process (for details see Strangleman and Warren, 2007). Thus the frequencies on that sub-code also show that this issue is certainly not a priority for HRM practitioner in our case.

Figure 2: Frequency distribution percentages of sub-codes



## 7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

*Conclusion:* The main category post-Fordism is on the first rank among all main-code categories. This title and the sub-codes that place under that title implies significant issues in relation with employment relation and the nature of HRM. The sub-codes under that title point to a new working world that is not similar to one under Fordism. Total quality practices, flexibility and working with teams are new concepts and reflect effective conclusions on labour control. Thus, these sub-codes reflects also important implications about the nature of HRM.

As stated in the definitions of HRM presented above, the second and especially the third definition are presenting a quite wide borders for HRM that put a clear distinction for HRM comparing with traditional personal management. The second definition was emphasising “the potential of employees” and the third definition was approaching to HRM as an area that “deals with the nature of the employment relationship and all of decision, actions, and issues that relate to that relationship.” Hence, looking at the data derived from the interviews with HRM practitioners, these last two definitions are seen very clearly. On the other hand a lexical search in the interview text also presents a similar conclusion. The numbers of words searched through all the interviews text are as following: training 776, performance 443, customer 257, team 138; while employee voice 52, employee satisfaction 21, social right 7. These numbers reflect a picture on the nature of HRM.

What about the meaning of work? As seen very clearly above, the broad meaning of work can't be seen in the interviews with HRM practitioners. Just several main-categories that have direct relation with markets and profit come to the forefront, in the other word analysis of our data present just the economic dimension or the economic meaning of work. Therefore, one of the important conceptualisations of work, identity, also is almost not available in these interviews. Shortly, the narrow meaning of work that is just stand on an economic understanding is quite widespread in HRM practitioners' world, so seeing meaning of work on an economic ground as mainstream is the case.

*The interdisciplinary nature of work:* One of the most useful concepts for understanding sociological thinking presented by Zygmunt Bauman is “hiding in the light”. In the first letter form *44 Letters From the Liquid Modern World*, Bauman (2010: 3) put the concept as: “Nothing escapes scrutiny so nimbly, resolutely and stubbornly as ‘things at hand’, things ‘always there’, ‘never changing’. They are, so to speak, ‘hiding in the light’ –the light of deceptive and misleading familiarity! Their ordinariness is a blind, discouraging all scrutiny. To make them into objects of interest and close examination they must first be cut off and torn away from that sense-blunting, cosy yet vicious cycle of routine quotidianity.”

The concept “hiding in the light” is also so useful for thinking on work matter as well. Although work constitutes large part of any ordinary man's or woman's life in modern employment societies, it is not a core issue in every day agenda. However it's vital for also any member of society, it's just rarely seen on news streams. Thus work is, so to speak, hiding in the light. Probably this is a critical point to understand why work matter is spread through into so many disciplines, from theology, philosophy, economics, and political thought to management, industrial relations, human resource management and psychology. All these approaches focus on work issue from their own angle and thereby present a different work frame. Thus mainstream economics take work issue as a commodity, following that path mainstream management is also approaching work in the same way, psychology take work as a way to personal satisfaction etc. One easy way to grasp all these approach is John W. Budd's frame –ten conceptualisations. So, using that frame is not ignoring to all other approaches, contrary, studying work with Budd's conceptualisations is an attempt to widening perspective on work issues.

*Discussion:* What are all these findings telling us? And is there anything to do for companies and public authorities to achieve an employment with a human face? The world of work has been under a great transformation in last several decades. The safety nets of working class have been eroding, expenditure of welfare state has been cutting down, typical employment contracts are becoming an exception, and on the other hand flexible work pattern is widespreading and therefore national labour law regulations are being shaped by these trends. The conclusion of this story for employees is not seen as good. In another word all these trends point an inevitable unsafe world of work: precarisation. According to a recent report appeared in *The Guardian*, precarisation treat is quite clear for a central capitalist country, UK (Booth, 2016):

“The number of workers in the UK in precarious positions where they could lose their jobs at short or no notice has grown by almost 2 million in the past decade, as businesses insist on using more self-employed workers and increasingly recruit staff on temporary and zero-hours contracts, analysis for the *Guardian* has revealed.

More than one in five workers, some 7.1 million people, now face precarious employment conditions that mean they could lose their work suddenly – up from 5.3 million in 2006, according to analysis of official figures conducted by John Philpott, a leading labour market economist. Half of the biggest group – the self-employed – are in low pay and take home less than two-thirds of the median earnings, according to the Resolution Foundation thinktank. Two million self-employed people now earn below £8 per hour.”

What about Turkey and HRM? The same trend is existing in Turkey as well. With the beginning of new millennium new Turkish labour law which is consonant with this transformation adopted; national employment strategy that focus on flexibility has been put into practice. These neoliberal paths bring new managerial strategies

and tools. One of these tools is HRM and its discourse. Although HRM emphasises the importance of human being it also stand on a “unitarist ground” and focus on productivity to a large extent. So, the findings derived from interviews with HRM practitioners also present the same approach -mainstream economics, management and HRM perspective- that always prioritise efficiency in working life.

Now, the second question, is there anything to do? This is a quite critical question and also it’s difficult to present an answer. Critical approaches like Marxism supply highly radical solution in the face of the commodification of labour and generally declare capitalism or capitalist class as a unique evil. This approach also see HRM area as a “hegemonic” tool to control employees. The author of “ten-conceptualisation” present an important way for the question above: balancing the interests of both sides, labour and capital. In his prominent study John W. Budd (2004) suggest a balance between three objects of employment relationship. According to Budd (2004: 13-31) there are three objectives of employment relationship: efficiency, equity and voice. All these objectives are so important in employment world and none of them can be given up at the expense of the any other. To achieve an “employment with a human face” there is a necessity for “balancing efficiency, equity and voice”. Thus, this approach has a potential for an employment with a human face in that work is not seen just as a pure commodity or an economic tool for productivity but also as a humanistic activity.

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