

Changing the Relationship Between Paid and Unpaid Work – a Sustainable Working Model in the Perspective of Degrowth

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Abstract

Current societal orientations on economic growth lead to strong individual and social dependences on paid work. At the same time, manifold fields of unpaid work are losing in importance. In the perspective of degrowth, unpaid work is of special importance as it is not profit oriented, socially integrative and allows to follow sustainable life styles and consumption pattern.

This study is based on the following hypothesis:

Sustainable working models have not prevailed yet, because structures of recognition are lacking.

Hereby, "recognition" in the approach of Honneth (1994) is used to analyse why paid work in relation to unpaid work continues to be of such a high individual and societal relevance. Qualitative case studies in sustainable working concepts in Germany aim to uncover intrinsic qualities and possibilities of individual and societal recognition of unpaid work.



Theoretical Approach

Holistic concept of work

- _ Debate on 'end of work'
- _ Variety of working activities without being 'work'

3 Levels of Recognition (Honneth 1994)

- Love**_ recognition in private spheres in personal relationships: family, friends, colleagues
self-confidence
- Law**_ mutual recognition of individual rights through all members of society
self-respect
- Solidarity**_ recognition of individual performance and its contribution to societal aims
self-esteem

Cooking, gardening
doing handicrafts
voluntary charity work
citizen engagement...

Methods

Research question_ How can unpaid work be recognised?

Empirical Design

- _ Multiple Case Study Approach
- _ Interviews with experts and members of the projects
- _ Qualitative Content Analysis
- _ 3 sustainable working concepts in Germany
Centre for Creativity_ Country Life Ass_ Anthroposophic Corp

Results

Recognition pattern for unpaid work

Subjective level (Love & Solidarity)

- Individual use of artistic, social, handicraft potentials of unpaid work
- _ Mutual care
- _ Strengthening private relationships in family and friendship
- _ Self-fulfilment
- _ Individual orientation, sense giving
- _ Personal development
- _ New skills & competences
- _ Exploring alternative fields of recognition in life and work

Institutional level (Law & Solidarity)

- Challenge to integrate individual aspects into *formal* societal spheres
- _ Identification of niches & intermediate spaces
- _ Recognition as contribution to public welfare necessary
- _ Integration into political regulation (working time, income distribution)

Regulation approaches towards Degrowth

