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and Edward Granter

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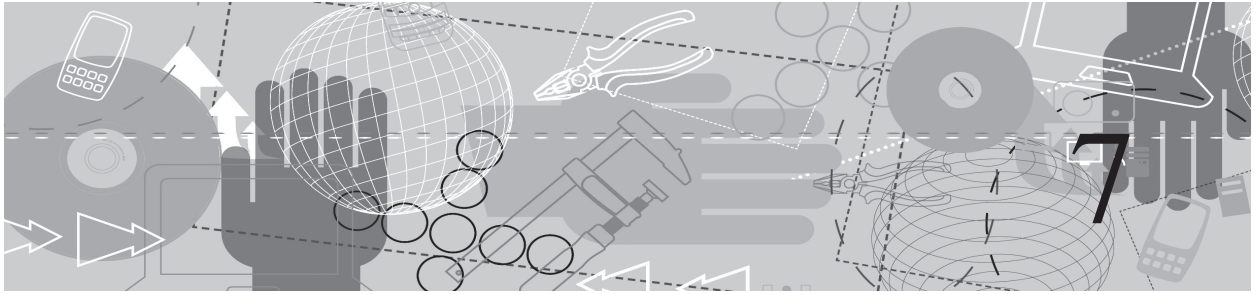
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Good Jobs, Bad Jobs

Arne L. Kalleberg

Creating good jobs and avoiding bad jobs are major priorities for all nations because work is central to human welfare and to the functioning of organizations and societies. The notion of job quality communicates that it is the *nature* of work that is important to workers, not just whether they have any job at all. Job quality has been historically a major theme in the study of work and employment, and has always attracted a great deal of attention from a diverse group of social scientists. The prevalence of bad jobs – such as marginal and irregular work – was common among the laboring classes in industrial countries in the nineteenth century. The ratio of good jobs to bad jobs increased sharply in the twentieth century – especially during the high rates of economic growth after World War II – as unions and governments in many countries helped to construct labor market institutions that provided relatively well-paying and secure jobs.

The end of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century saw a reawakening of fears about the deteriorating quality of jobs. Academic and media attention

increasingly focused on people's anxieties about their inability to obtain jobs that pay a living wage and that are relatively secure and offer opportunities for advancement. Political debates about booms and busts of the economy paralleled discussions among social scientists regarding whether recent changes in the world of work resulted in gains or losses for different groups of workers. While many of these concerns are not new (especially for women and non-whites), they created especially great disruptions in people's established patterns and in their expectations about their work lives, since this took place following the three decades after World War II that were marked by sustained growth and prosperity in the global North. As a consequence, enhancing the quality of jobs constituted new and pressing challenges for individuals and their families, businesses, labor, governments, and society.

The importance of a focus on job quality is rooted in the realization that work is central to addressing a variety of social and individual concerns. It is now widely recognized that people are more likely to remain in jobs

if they are of good quality, which would help to increase the employment rate and avoid the revolving door of unemployment. Good jobs provide a foundation for economic development as well as a higher quality of life, healthier workers, and stronger families and communities. Elements of good jobs, such as having control over what one does in the workplace, have far-reaching effects on one's psychological functioning and non-work life. By contrast, bad jobs contribute to a wide range of social problems such as working poverty, inequality, family disruption, stress and poor health, and community disorder.

The spotlight on issues of job quality brings to the forefront a number of key issues related to how we think about jobs and the benefits and costs associated with them. One is how to conceptualize and measure job quality and its various dimensions. A second is to explain why jobs differ in their quality and why some people tend to have better jobs than others. These explanations need to account for why job quality varies among countries as well as change over time. Finally, we need to understand how to enhance the quality of jobs by creating more good jobs and making bad jobs better.

This chapter first discusses what is meant by good and bad jobs and how it has been studied by various social science disciplines. I next provide an overview of explanations of differences in job quality, especially how it differs among countries and over time in the recent past. I will give special consideration to arguments about the polarization of jobs, such as how the growth of nonstandard work arrangements often has been accompanied by an increase in bad jobs in some countries. I finally consider future directions for research on job quality and policies that might enhance the quality of jobs.

DEFINING GOOD JOBS AND BAD JOBS

A *job* refers to the specific set of tasks that people do for a living. Jobs are embedded in broader aspects of working conditions that

characterize the employment relationship, such as those classified as occupations and workplaces. Jobs are complex and, from a 'worker-centered' point of view can provide workers with many potential *job rewards*, or benefits and utilities that individuals may possibly obtain from their work activities (Kalleberg, 1977; Green, 2006). Since jobs are comprised of bundles of different kinds of rewards, job quality is a multidimensional phenomenon, reflected in diverse understandings of what constitutes a 'good' job.

Dimensions of Job Quality

A number of multidimensional definitions of job quality have been suggested. The International Labour Organization's (ILO) conceptualization of 'decent work' includes nearly a dozen components (each comprised of numerous indicators) such as: employment opportunities; adequate earnings; decent hours; stability and security of work; arrangements to combine work and family life; fair treatment in employment; a safe work environment; social protections; social dialogue and workplace relations; and characteristics of the economic and social context of work (e.g., Ghai, 2003). The European Commission's (2001) related concept of decent work similarly includes ten components, such as: intrinsic job quality; skills; gender equality; health and safety at work; flexibility and security; and work-life balance (see also Green, 2006). The vagueness and all-encompassing nature of the ILO's and EU's conceptualizations of job quality has made it difficult to agree on how to measure the concept and obtain internationally comparable data on it (Burchell et al., 2013). There have been efforts to reduce the dimensions of job quality to a more manageable number. Holman (2013), for example, combined 38 indicators into five dimensions: work organization; wages and payment system; security and flexibility; skills and development; and representation and engagement (see also Bustillo et al., 2009).

While there are many aspects of work that might constitute potential rewards, most people would agree that job quality depends heavily on the following components, which have been emphasized by researchers from different disciplines: economic compensation such as earnings and benefits (e.g., health insurance and pensions); the degree of job security and opportunities for advancement to better jobs; the extent to which people are able to exercise control over their work activities and to experience their jobs as interesting and meaningful; and whether peoples' time at work and control over their work schedules permit them to spend time with their families and in other, non-work activities that they enjoy.

Different disciplines have emphasized some of these dimensions more than others. Economists tend to equate job quality with the level and stability of economic compensation (especially wages), presuming that good jobs pay high wages and bad jobs pay low wages (e.g., Acemoglu, 2001). This assumption is not unreasonable, as earnings are a fairly reliable indicator of the differences between good and bad jobs (Ginzberg, 1979). Economic compensation also includes benefits such as health insurance and pensions, and some economists have included the rate of employer-provided health insurance as part of their measure of job quality (e.g., Farber, 1997). Such economic benefits are an important job reward especially in countries characterized by an employer-centered model (such as Japan or the United States) that underlies much of the distribution of health insurance, retirement pensions, and other economic benefits. Nevertheless, some economists are beginning to pay more attention to non-economic aspects of jobs, such as job satisfaction (e.g., Hamermesh, 2001) and time poverty (e.g., Mullainathan and Shafir, 2013).

By contrast, sociologists have long emphasized the importance of non-economic aspects of jobs. Marx underscored the desirability of workers being able to conceptualize how to do their work as well as to execute it (Braverman, 1974). When conception is

not separated from execution, workers can exercise discretion over their work and have real input into decisions that affect them. A large literature in sociology has underscored the importance for workers' well-being of having autonomy and control, or self-direction, over what they do and how they do it (e.g., Kohn and Schooler, 1973). Psychologists have also stressed the centrality of non-economic dimensions of jobs such as autonomy and control for the quality of one's work experience and the ability of workers to achieve self-actualization (Maslow 1954; Hackman and Lawler, 1971).

Workers who are able to control how and what they do at work are also more likely to obtain intrinsic rewards from their jobs. These are benefits and utilities that people obtain *from* task performance, as opposed to extrinsic rewards such as money or fringe benefits, which people obtain *for* performing their work. Intrinsic rewards reflect people's ability to utilize their skills, knowledge, and abilities in their jobs, and to have interesting, meaningful and challenging work. An additional aspect of control is the capacity to decide the pace and scheduling of their work. Workers who have little control over how much effort they expend or the number and timing of hours that they work are more likely to suffer stress and other negative consequences.

Jobs that do not provide any real opportunities for advancement to better jobs (or an increase of wages in the current job) might also be regarded as bad jobs. Such 'dead-end' jobs do not offer the promise of more non-economic and economic rewards in the future. A lack of advancement opportunities is especially problematic for people who have completed their formal education and have families to support.

Some of these aspects of job quality are easier to evaluate and measure than others. There are relatively good data on the distribution of (and changes in) earnings and economic benefits, for example. Others are measurable in principle but data are not easily available, such as job security and

statistical probabilities of opportunities for advancement. Still other dimensions of job quality are difficult to measure even in principle, such as cooperation among coworkers and intrinsic rewards.

Overall Job Quality?

There are good theoretical reasons to expect that the dimensions of job quality are generally positively interrelated, and so we can speak of the overall 'goodness' or 'badness' of jobs. Labor market segmentation theories, for example, assume that various aspects of job quality co-vary such that 'only certain configurations of [governing] rules tend to fit together' (Tilly, 1997: 269). The dual labor market theory proposed by institutional economists in the 1960s and 1970s posited that various dimensions of job rewards cohere together into clusters of 'good jobs' and 'bad jobs'. Thus, the *primary* labor market segment was comprised of good jobs (i.e., well-paying, relatively secure jobs that were associated with job ladders in large firms) and a *secondary* segment consisted of bad jobs (i.e., relatively insecure jobs associated with low-wage employment and the absence of job ladders and opportunities for advancement to better jobs) (Bluestone, 1970; Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Kalleberg and Sørensen, 1979).

Economic and non-economic rewards may also be positively related due to their common dependence on skills. Some writers (e.g., Green, 2006) regard skill as a separate dimension of job quality because skill utilization has intrinsic value. Others (e.g., Kalleberg, 2011) argue that skills are important for job quality mainly because of the job rewards that derive from the greater market power enjoyed by those with more skills. Higher skilled workers are generally more sought after by employers, which tends to bring the workers more earnings as well as giving them more autonomy and control over their work activities and schedule, and more job security.

An alternative view is that interrelations among job rewards are relatively weak.

Workers who have jobs that are intrinsically interesting or convenient (in terms of flexibility) may not necessarily be well paid or have opportunities for advancement with an employer. In addition, some relatively low-skilled jobs in the primary labor market that are unionized may provide good economic benefits and high wages, at least in the past. This is consistent with the 'summative' view of job quality held by neoclassical economists, who assume that employers can vary job rewards at will (within certain limits); a job can be good on some dimensions and not on others. This leads to the possibility of compensating differentials, such that one kind of benefit may compensate for another (Tilly, 1997) and workers can trade off the attainment of some types of job rewards to obtain others (Rosenthal, 1989). Employers may have to pay workers more, for example, to get them to work in insecure conditions where there may not be much chance of advancement, as in the case of many relatively high-skilled consulting arrangements.

In any event, it is likely that interrelations among dimensions of job rewards have loosened over time. For example, all jobs have become more insecure, though some jobs and persons are more vulnerable than others to both the risk and consequences of job loss. Thus, job security may have become even negatively related to income and other job rewards. Since both good jobs (e.g., well-paid consultants) and bad jobs are generally insecure, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish good and bad jobs on the basis of their degree of security.

Job dimensions may also be arranged in different patterns so as to yield diverse types of good or bad jobs. Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005) find that there were various pathways by which workers may consider jobs to be good; job quality among their sample of unionized workers in the United States is related especially to satisfaction with benefits, interesting work and autonomy. Sengupta, Edwards, and Tsai (2009) use data from 66 firms and 203 workers in the United Kingdom, and find that jobs in food

and media occupations pay poorly but have relatively high autonomy. Holman (2013) analyzes differences in patterns of job quality among 27 European countries, using data from the 2005 European Working Conditions Survey. His cluster analysis identified six different job types or patterns of job quality measures: active jobs (which combine high discretion and high demands) are high in quality on all dimensions; saturated and team-based jobs have many features of high-quality jobs, but these are partially offset by high workloads, nonstandard hours and low flexibility; passive-independent jobs have some high-quality features (high security), but more low-quality aspects (low resources, flexibility and skill development); and insecure and high-strain jobs have mostly low-quality features.

At any rate, the current state of data collection is such that there is no widely accepted single measure or index of job quality that enables us to examine changes in job quality over time and that includes both economic and non-economic factors. Hence, most studies investigate the various key dimensions of job quality separately (Commission of the European Communities, 2001: 7).

Role of Individual Differences

People have differing opinions about what constitutes a 'good' job since they seek to attain diverse goals from work. Some will say a good job is one that pays well or that provides health insurance, is secure, or leads to higher paying jobs in the future. Others will maintain that a good job is one that a person enjoys or finds interesting, challenging and fulfilling. Still others believe that a good job is one that, alternatively: provides them with a convenient and easy commute; allows them to leave 'work at work' and does not interfere with life on weekends or in the evenings; permits one to work in pleasant surroundings; doesn't (or does) require a person to move around from one place to another; and so on. To some extent, then, the

quality of jobs should be evaluated in terms of personal choice and so whether particular job characteristics constitute potential job rewards depends on individual differences (Kalleberg, 1977; Clark, 1998).

The importance that people place on various aspects of jobs differs in part according to their opportunities for the attainment of various kinds of job rewards: within a society, a person's work values and expectations are related to his or her gender, race or age, as well as their education and work experience. Two alternative theories of the relations between work values and job rewards are the *reinforcement* explanation, which holds that people tend to adapt to the realities of their occupational experience, and the *problematic rewards* account, which suggests that people are apt to value most highly those job rewards that they feel least certain about obtaining at a certain time. Less educated workers and blacks – the groups most vulnerable to job and economic insecurity – are more likely to place high importance on income and security, which is consistent with the problematic rewards explanation (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013). On the other hand, women tend to place less importance on high earnings than men, which is more in line with a reinforcement hypothesis since women typically earn less than men in large part because women are crowded into a relatively small number of traditionally female-typed jobs that pay less, as well as into lower paid specializations within male-typed jobs (Reskin and Roos, 1990). (For discussions of the magnitude and reasons for the gender gap in earnings, see, e.g., Blau and Kahn (2007), and Gottfried (2012).)

There are also modal, cultural and institutional understandings of what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' job characteristics in a particular society and time period. Workers are likely to calibrate their standards of what constitutes a good or bad job based on economic conditions. During economic downturns, for example, workers are likely to be happy to have a job at all (even a 'survivor' job) as opposed to suffering through long-term spells

of unemployment. In the Great Depression, a 'good' job was one that provided enough money to live on. By contrast, in the relatively affluent decades of the 1960s and early 1970s, the standards for evaluating a job as good was raised to one that provided meaningful and interesting work that enabled persons to self-actualize. Younger workers in these decades appeared to emphasize the importance of intrinsic rewards – raising fears among the media, social scientists and managers regarding possible widespread 'alienation' from work – while older cohorts of workers remained concerned with obtaining extrinsic benefits such as earnings and job security. This changed in the 2000s, with workers placing relatively greater importance on income and security (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013).

EXPLAINING JOB QUALITY

Numerous factors and forces at multiple levels of analysis influence job quality. Job quality is a contextual phenomenon, differing among persons, occupations and labor market segments, societies, and historical periods.

Differences in job quality result from two main sets of factors. First, economic, political and sociological forces shape the structural and institutional contexts of work and help to explain how and why employers make various decisions, industries grow and decline, occupations expand and contract, and the extent to which workers are able to exercise, in greater or lesser degrees, individual and collective power in relation to their employers. The debate between those who argue that work structures are central for explaining job quality and those who maintain that job characteristics result from market forces has been a major source of contention in the intellectual history of theorizing and research about the labor market. Neoclassical economists, for example, generally assume that market forces primarily determine job quality, and their models leave little room for

the independent roles played by institutions, laws, and regulations (though see, for example, Levy and Temin, 2007). This view underpins many of the neo-liberal, pro-business/anti-union policies that have dominated the global economy since the late 1970s, especially in liberal market economies such as the US and UK (started by Reagan and Thatcher and continued by Clinton and Blair), which played an important part in the economic and political restructuring after the 1980s in these countries and is a key reason why jobs have generally become more insecure.

Second, changes in the composition of the labor force and in the needs and preferences of workers affect the fit between job characteristics and workers' values, needs, and expectations, and thus influence what features of work are salient for defining a good (or bad) job, as I discussed in the previous section.

Country Differences in Job Quality

There are country differences in job quality that result from both institutional and cultural differences. Neo-institutionalist theories of differences in job quality among countries maintain that there are growing dissimilarities that are due to labor markets and other institutions. By contrast, universalistic theories predict that country differences in job quality should be minimal and decline over time.

Two influential neo-institutionalist theories of differences are those associated with the 'varieties of capitalism' (VoC) or 'production regime' theory and the 'power resource' (PRA) or 'employment regime' approaches (see Gallie, 2007a, 2007b; Olsen et al., 2010; Holman, 2013). These frameworks link macro institutions to micro behavior, pointing to how institutional similarities and differences have implications for the quality of employment and workers' well-being. Both theories predict that there will be country differences and make some of the same predictions with regard to how job quality differs between countries. The VoC and PRA

approaches differ in their assumptions about which institutional features are more important for explaining differences in job quality: VoC emphasizes the preferences and actions of employers; whereas PRA regards the power of workers through unions as the main driving force for divergence.

VoC or production regime theory categorizes countries based on the interrelations between their production and institutional systems. The distinction between regimes reflects distinctions in the interrelations among four main ways that production is organized and how companies coordinate production through markets and market-related institutions: the financial system; the industrial relations system; the educational and training system; and the inter-company system (Soskice, 1999). Nations are clustered into distinct groups depending on how these spheres interrelate, leading to the distinction between liberal market economies (LMEs) and coordinated market economies (CMEs). Examples of ideal type LMEs are the United States, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and of CMEs are Germany and the Scandinavian countries. (There are also two variants of the CMEs: northern European, in which the most fundamental patterns of coordination take place within industries; and Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea, in which there is a stronger company-based coordination (Soskice, 1999).) Whereas CMEs are characterized by a higher degree of non-market coordination, the LMEs exhibit far more limited non-market coordination between companies, where labor is largely excluded and the state plays a smaller role (Soskice, 1999).

The two regime types are argued to be associated with differences in job quality. The LMEs tend to rely on general skills combined with greater opportunities for inter-firm worker mobility, whereas CMEs depend more on specific skills and continuous training. Responsibility can be more easily transferred to employees when they are more skilled and experienced (for instance, when they are organized in autonomous teams) (Soskice, 1999). The differences in

skill systems between CMEs and LMEs are likely to affect dimensions of job quality such as job security and intrinsic rewards derived from the exercise of autonomy and control, participation in decision-making and opportunities for learning, and other forms of skill acquisition. However, some have questioned the utility of the distinction between CMEs and LMEs for explaining country differences in job quality, as the pattern of firm-specific skills shows large variation among the coordinated countries (Gallie, 2007b; Edlund and Grönlund, 2008).

On the other hand, the PRA or employment regime theory emphasizes the distinct interests held by employers and workers (Korpi, 2006). Power exercised through unions enables workers to improve working conditions, constraining the actions of employers by mechanisms such as resisting tight employee control systems. PRA posits a somewhat more fine-grained clustering of countries than VoC, distinguishing between: social-democratic, liberal, and corporatist welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1990); or inclusive, dual, and liberal employment regimes (Gallie, 2007a). This categorization emphasizes that the employment systems differ in a systematic way in terms of the involvement of organized labor, principles underlying employment policy, the role of the public sector, the salience of work-life programs, support provided to balancing work and family lives, and the level of welfare protection offered to the unemployed (Gallie, 2007a). For example, dualist employment regimes differ from inclusive regimes by providing strong rights only to the core workforce at the expense of the peripheral workforce, such as those on temporary and other nonstandard contracts. Due to differences in the strength of unions, and the distinct roles unions play in the labor market in inclusive and dualist regimes, the risk of polarization is greater in dual employment regimes (Gallie, 2007a).

Holman (2013) finds support for divergence theories through his analysis of differences among countries in the patterns of job types. He finds that social democratic

institutional regimes (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) have the greatest proportion of high-quality jobs. Southern European countries (such as Italy, Greece, Spain) have especially high proportions of passive-independent and insecure jobs, whereas transitional institutional regimes (Eastern European countries) have high proportions of high-strain jobs. He argues that these country variations in job quality are rooted primarily in differences among institutional regimes in terms of their employment policies and the relative organizational capacity of labor.

Gallie (2007b) points to the distinctiveness of Scandinavia's welfare regime and argues that the evidence is more consistent with employment regime theory as opposed to production regime theory in explaining job quality (see also Edlund and Grönlund, 2008). Comparing five countries (UK, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland) with regard to the differences in teamwork and autonomy, Gallie found that Germany and the Scandinavian countries were consistent with the predictions of production regime theory in terms of skills, but not with respect to control, teamwork and participation. Furthermore, employees in Denmark and Sweden enjoyed a higher quality of work tasks and better opportunities for involvement in decision-making. On these latter dimensions, Scandinavian countries are distinct, which he argues is explained better by welfare regimes rather than employer preferences, and so concludes that this underscores the ability of Scandinavian governments and unions to influence the actions of employers and to enhance job quality for employees.

Also building on explanations rooted in PRA, some institutional theorists argue in favor of societal effects in that employment systems operate according to different logics (Fligstein and Byrkjeflot, 1996). Workers in the Nordic countries, in which employment systems are characterized by skill-orientation, were found to have greater discretion than in the rule-oriented employment systems in the United Kingdom and the United States (Dobbin and Boychuk, 1999).

Green et al. (2013) use a series of European Working Conditions Surveys from 15 European Union countries between 1995 and 2010 to examine both country differences in job quality and changes in job quality over time (see below). They use four indices of non-wage job quality: work quality (skill use and discretion); work intensity; good physical environment; and working time quality. They found that the average levels of job quality were generally higher in more affluent countries. While they did not group countries into particular institutional categories, they found that social corporatist countries (such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden) had the highest work quality and lowest dispersion for all four indices, which they attributed to their long history of trade union activism that has helped create a more equal balance of power and lower levels of income inequality.

By contrast, universalistic arguments state that market and economic forces are so strong that each nation and each organization has to adapt to similar organizational and market logics. Organizations and welfare and production regimes come under pressure to compete in the increasingly internationalized markets. At the firm level, organizations tend to become more similar, and the conditions for job quality will over time become more homogenous among firms in different production and employment regimes. Thus, globalization, deregulation and changes in technology may weaken the impact of the institutional context, making the quality of jobs in different countries converge.

Some studies have found support for convergence theories. For example, Green (2006) argues that technological and organizational changes (e.g., new monitoring systems, as in call centers) affect all firms. Furthermore, many countries have faced a growth in non-standard forms of employment that may have made jobs more precarious (e.g., Rubery, 2005). There is also evidence of convergent pressures in European industrial relations as market, technological, and political developments create an impetus towards convergence (Vos, 2006).

Olsen et al. (2010) find support for both divergence and convergence theories. They report that job security, the ability to work independently, and the quality of working conditions and interpersonal relationships tend to be greater in Norway and West Germany than in the United States and Great Britain (in 1989 and 1997), while US workers tend to be most satisfied with advancement opportunities, intrinsic rewards, and overall job satisfaction (in 1997 and 2005); these findings underscore the importance of institutional differences. They also find a convergence in job security and work intensity among these countries, which may reflect increased market pressures that encourage a 'lean and mean' strategy both in production and employment regimes.

TRENDS IN JOB QUALITY

The real test of divergence as opposed to convergence theories of job quality, however, is whether country differences increase or decrease over time. An issue here is whether there are trends in job quality at all, or if differences among countries or over time simply reflect changes in job opportunities associated with business cycles (Schmitt, 2007). This is a matter on which sociologists and economists tend to disagree, with the former more likely to view changes in job quality as reflecting the outcomes of structural trends. Kalleberg (2011) argues that the growing gap between good and bad quality jobs in the United States is a long-term structural feature of the changing labor market and not merely a temporary aspect of the business cycle that will correct itself once economic conditions improve. Social scientists generally agree, though, that many dimensions of job quality (such as job security, career opportunities, wages, though not necessarily intrinsic rewards) generally increased during the post-World-War-II period relative to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in most industrial countries. The debate here, then, is about the more recent trends in job quality.

There are several contrasting convergence theories of the trends in job quality since the decline of the Fordist mass-production system (see Handel, 2005; Gallie, 1991). The 'post-Fordist' view suggests that there has been a general increase in job quality as technological advancement and organizational restructuring have led to higher skill levels and better jobs (Kerr et al., 1973). The 'neo-Fordist' perspective argues that there has been a decline in job quality, resulting in large part from work being increasingly deskilled (Braverman, 1974). Though differing in their predictions about the direction of changes in skill, these perspectives are both universalistic in the sense that they assume that processes of control and skill development would lead to convergence or greater similarity across countries.

The 'post-Fordist' theory argues that competitive pressures associated with capitalism have pushed organizations to take the 'high road' and to compete by making investments in their workers, and to consider them as human resources as opposed to being merely labor costs of production. One way that organizations have sought to do this is by giving workers more control over their jobs and greater input into decision-making. The growth of 'high-performance' work organizations represents efforts by employers to elicit the discretionary effort of their workers by allowing them to participate more in decisions as to how their work is to be done, and to have more autonomy and control over essential aspects of their jobs. Workers who are employed by these kinds of high-performance organizations are also likely to be relatively well paid. At the same time, workers in these kinds of organizations are generally thought to have more job security, as it is commonly assumed that employers need to promise workers greater job security in order to elicit their loyalty and commitment. Since these jobs involve considerable training of workers, there are opportunities for advancement to higher skilled jobs that are linked in job ladders within occupational if not organizational internal labor markets

(see Appelbaum et al., 2000). There is evidence that the use of high-performance work organizations diffused rapidly between 1992 and 1997 in the United States (Osterman, 2000) and that there was an increase in the adoption of high-road strategies among companies in Norway from 1997 to 2003, for instance via increased use of teamwork and job rotation (Olsen et al. 2010). These high-road strategies were at times unstable, however, as some collapsed in the 2000s (Osterman and Shulman, 2011).

Occupational restructuring during the past 30 years has also been argued to have created good jobs, a perspective that extends the liberal, up-skilling theory advanced by Clark Kerr and his colleagues in the 1950s. The 'skilled-biased technological change' story maintains that there has been an increase in high-skilled jobs due to the requirements of more sophisticated technology. Low-wage, low-skilled jobs have been shifted overseas or automated, leaving better jobs for Americans. As a consequence of these more advanced technological requirements, economists have documented an increase in the wage advantages enjoyed by college graduates compared to less educated persons in recent years (e.g., Goldin and Katz, 2008).

Kalleberg (2011) finds that there has been an expansion of opportunities for workers to exercise autonomy and discretion in their jobs, to participate in decision-making in their organizations, and to obtain intrinsic rewards from their work. Responses to survey items tapping these three sets of concepts administered to national samples of workers in the United States over a 25- to 29-year span, provide suggestive evidence that there has been an increase in their overall mean levels.

Green et al. (2013), in the study referred to earlier, found that the levels and dispersion of the four work quality indices remained relatively stable over the period 1995–2010 in all 15 European countries that formed the European Union in 1995, though work quality and working time quality each rose in several countries. The dispersion in working time quality, work intensity and good physical

environment also decreased in many of the countries. Green et al. take these trends as supporting optimistic universal theories, especially the finding that working time quality increased the most, which they interpreted as reflecting the responses of countries to the changing work-life balance needs of their labor forces.

By contrast, the neo-Fordist theory argues that the conditions of capitalism have not changed fundamentally, and that the principles underlying the way in which firms organized work during the Fordist period of mass production still persist. Thus, forms of hegemonic despotism still persist (Burawoy, 1983), as employers still seek to cut costs by means of coercion, reducing wages and utilizing market mechanisms to maximize profits. The creation of bad jobs has been argued to result from attempts by managers to restructure organizations by means of 'low road, stick' (rather than carrot) strategies (Gordon, 1996) such as cutting costs through de-skilling jobs and subcontracting jobs as much as possible. Work has worsened while many companies have prospered.

The *McJobs* scenario holds that the rise of the service sector has led to the creation of more bad jobs, since average wages are higher in manufacturing than in services. Thus, Bluestone and Harrison (1986) argued that most of the jobs created during the 1980s in the United States were low-wage jobs, reflecting a shift from manufacturing to services. Ginzberg (1979) also pointed to the increase in service-sector jobs in an earlier period (1950–1979) as indications of a growth in bad jobs, noting that jobs in these sectors were more often part-time and wages tended to be low. Some observers have argued that the increase in large numbers of service jobs, regardless of their quality, has been the focus of American industry, as compared to Europe, where there has been more emphasis on creating fewer, but higher quality jobs (Lowe, 2000).

Gallie, Felstead and Green (2004) find evidence that task discretion declined over the decade of the 1990s in the United Kingdom: there was a significant downward

trend in discretion even after controlling for changes in skill requirements, the spread of automated or computer-based technologies, indicators of high-performance work organizations, and measures of occupational and labor force composition. They speculate that this decline in task discretion reflects the consequences of work intensification and the need to adhere to deadlines due to increased competitive pressures, as well as to forces promoting greater accountability and the wider regulative framework of employment. However, their study leaves unanswered whether this negative trend in task discretion also characterizes the period between the 1970s and 1990s.

The neo-Fordist perspective also emphasizes the growth of nonstandard (Casey, 1991; Blank, 1998), contingent (Freedman, 1985; Polivka and Nardone, 1989; Barker and Christensen, 1998; Kalleberg, 2000), or externalized (Pfeffer and Baron, 1988) forms of employment. Temporary work, outsourced and contracted work, often part-time work, self-employment and independent contracting represent these work arrangements. These signify a departure from the standard employment relationship which constituted the norm during the post-World-War-II period in most industrial countries and which was characterized by relatively high job security and mobility within the firm, accompanied by training opportunities and the progressive development of skills and knowledge. The growth of certain types of nonstandard work (especially temporary work) has been shown to be associated with a decline in the quality of jobs, including pay, security of employment and pensions, especially in liberal market economies such as the United States (Kalleberg et al., 2000) and the United Kingdom (McGovern et al., 2004). However, the extent to which nonstandard employment relations represent bad jobs varies among countries: for example, the quality of temporary jobs depends to a large extent on a country's labor market and other institutions, which affect whether or not temporary jobs are bridges to better jobs or traps that

consign people to dead-end jobs. In Social Democratic countries, the growth of temporary and part-time work reflects to some extent the demands of progressive social policies (such as child care or maternity leave), rather than resulting from efforts by employers to cut costs.

The neo-Fordist view also suggests that all jobs have generally become more insecure and have fewer opportunities for advancement, as a growing portion of the labor force, both in white- and blue-collar occupations, are feeling greater insecurity. The rise of contingent work (especially temporary work) has put pressure on permanent workers, much in the same way as a reserve army of the unemployed did in earlier periods. This general increase in insecurity has spread to the labor force as a whole, with the result that 'bad' job characteristics are now found in more jobs. Bad jobs often tended to be concentrated in blue-collar jobs in the past, but now the distinction between blue-collar and white-collar occupations has been blurred: for example, contingent jobs are found among professional (such as academic) workers as well as in blue- and white-collar jobs. Corporate restructuring and other organizational changes in the economies of industrial societies during the 1990s (such as downsizing and technological control) has produced a deterioration in working conditions in white-collar jobs (for those who are lucky enough not to have been laid off) that is reflected in an increase in workloads and hence time pressures, lower salaries, an erosion of pension and health benefits, and greater insecurity. These changes have created a sweatshop atmosphere among white-collar workers (see Fraser, 2001). Again, the extent to which insecurity is a problem is likely to vary among countries depending on their institutions, such as the extent of active labor market policies provide unemployed workers with economic compensation and opportunities to obtain skills to re-enter the labor market.

The combination of organizational restructuring and an increased emphasis on occupational skills has also created more free

agents, or workers who are able to move from one firm to another with relative ease. Workers with skills that are in short supply and relatively high demand are assumed to be able to exert more control over their careers as a result of their portable competencies. These new free agents are governed increasingly by market mechanisms, reflecting a new understanding of the employment relation or a 'new deal' between employers and employees (Cappelli, 1999).

Polarization in Job Quality

As the example of good and bad insecure jobs suggests, there may have been an expansion of *both* good and bad jobs. There could be an increase in high-skilled, good jobs and low-skilled, bad jobs, along with a decline in semi-skilled, well-paying jobs that has shrunk the size of the middle class in many industrial nations. Some jobs have gotten better, but others have become worse, resulting in greater inequality in especially income and wages, but also in job security and stability, autonomy and control over jobs, and opportunities for advancement (Lowe, 2000; Kalleberg, 2011); there has been an increase in poorly paying jobs at the same time as other jobs are being paid higher wages.

There are several competing explanations of the polarization in job quality. One account argues that polarized employment systems result from the economic restructuring and removal of institutional protections that have occurred since the 1970s in many industrial countries, which have made bad jobs a central, and in some cases growing, portion of employment in many industrial countries (e.g., Kalleberg, 2011).

Another view explains the growing polarization between high-skilled occupations such as managers, professionals and technical workers, on the one hand, and lower skilled white-collar and blue-collar occupations, on the other, in terms of technological changes and skill differences. The increasing use of computers has permitted managers to routinize

and automate middle-level occupations (Levy and Murnane, 2004; Autor et al., 2006), which reduces inequality between these and low-end jobs, which are less amenable to computerization. Goos and Manning (2007) extend Autor et al.'s arguments about routinization to suggest that this has resulted in a polarization of the occupational structure since the 1970s in the United Kingdom, as the bottom and top tiers of the employment structures (which they term as consisting of 'lousy' and 'lovely' jobs) increased more than middle-level jobs, which were more likely to be routinized. They further expand their argument (Goos et al., 2009) by showing that this kind of technology-induced polarization also increased elsewhere in the EU15 (except perhaps in Italy and Portugal) between 1993 and 2006.

Building on comparative institutional approaches, Emmenegger et al. (2012) underscore the importance of politics by arguing that political and economic processes increase dualization and social divides in society. They emphasize particularly the role of immigration policies and related migration flows in producing patterns of polarization and inequality between 'insiders', who are often in standard employment relations in core sectors of the economy, and 'outsiders', who frequently work in nonstandard employment relations and are denied social protections (see Gottfried, 2014).

Kalleberg (2011) finds that there has been an increase in the degree of polarization or inequality in a number of non-economic rewards, especially for opportunities to exercise autonomy over work tasks and to participate in decisions, in the United States. The significant increases in the variances of measures of these concepts are over and above changes in their mean differences, as well as in a large number of explanatory variables, and are consistent with a scenario that there has been a growing polarization in the responses of organizations to macro social and economic forces.

DiPrete et al. (2006) contend that economic polarization between high and low-paying jobs is not the only way in which countries

have responded to the broader macroeconomic forces that have led to a higher demand for some workers than others. They contrast the case of the United States (which has experienced polarization with regard to wages) with France, which has seen a growing polarization between skilled workers in relatively standard employment relations and lower skilled workers in insecure, nonstandard jobs (see also Maurin and Postel-Vinay, 2005).

Fernández-Macías (2012) uses differences in wages and education among occupations to examine polarization in 15 European countries from 1995 to 2007 (cf., Goos and Manning, 2003; Wright and Dwyer, 2003). He finds that only some countries (continental countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, France and Belgium) fit the polarization pattern of increases in both good and bad jobs, while others were more consistent with patterns of general structural upgrading and increases in good jobs (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Ireland, and Luxembourg) and the relative expansion of middle quality occupations (Southern European countries). He also finds that liberal market economies such as the United Kingdom and Ireland were characterized by a pattern somewhere between polarization and upgrading.

LOOKING AHEAD: ISSUES FOR RESEARCH AND POLICY

The issue of job quality is likely to continue to increase in importance in the future despite concerns about unemployment and the quantity of jobs, as social scientists and policymakers are apt to become increasingly aware that the kind of jobs that people have matters greatly for individuals and organizations. Addressing the issue of job quality raises a number of important challenges for social science researchers, employers and workers, and policymakers (cf., Findlay et al., 2013).

One is to reach agreement as to how to conceptualize job quality. At present, the identification of the dimensions of job

quality is somewhat contested, differing among researchers across as well as within disciplines. It is generally established that job quality is a complex, multidimensional construct that consists of both objective characteristics, such as level of earnings or the safety of working conditions) and subjective aspects, such as the degree of meaning and challenge people want and obtain from their jobs. The notion of good jobs in particular is a normative construct that is gendered, contested, fluid, contingent, and evolving. Greater consensus is needed as to what constitutes the most essential features of jobs for a variety of work and non-work related outcomes. The multidimensional nature of job quality calls for a multidisciplinary research effort, with contributions needed from sociology, economics, industrial relations, management, law, psychology, and political science, among other areas.

Advancing our understanding of job quality also requires some concord on how to measure this concept. Studies of the quality of jobs differ in their methodologies, complexity, and dimensionality as well as levels of analysis. Some rely exclusively on objective indicators, such as administrative data, labor statistics, policies, and laws; some use subjective measures including perceptions of job characteristics such as adequacy of pay, degree of challenge or overall assessments of satisfaction and happiness at work; and some use both objective and subjective indicators. Some studies focus more on specific jobs while others examine aggregations of jobs into occupations or industries. Moreover, some researchers have sought to develop measures of the overall quality of jobs while others maintain that the worth of the various dimensions of jobs need to be assessed separately.

Explaining differences in job quality also presents challenges since we do not yet have unanimity on a theory or model of what differentiates good and bad jobs. While it is clear that job quality depends on characteristics of both jobs and people, studies have tended to emphasize one or the other, often

ignoring social factors such as class, gender, and race (a notable exception is Gittleman and Howell (1995)). Thus, we need better multi-level models that integrate macro and micro approaches in order to explain how work is structured (among occupations and organizations, for example) and how people respond to (and try to change) those structures. The far-reaching consequences of job quality are becoming better understood, though more research is still needed on how jobs affect health, family life, social integration and other aspects of life.

We also must gain a better appreciation of how country differences generate job quality. National employment regimes, government policy, trade union power, and cultural norms are among the salient aspects of countries that shape the quality of jobs (for examples, see the relevant chapters in Gautié and Schmitt (2010)). Cross-national studies should ideally be longitudinal, so as to be able to assess patterns of divergence or convergence in job quality and the structural reasons for changes in the quality of jobs. Considerable progress has been made on this issue in Europe, where the collaboration among researchers from a variety of countries has enabled the collection of comparable data sets that have permitted the assessment of institutional theories of job quality (e.g., Gallie, 2007a; Green et al., 2013). But these European studies need to be supplemented by comparable studies of job quality in the Americas, Asia, Oceania and elsewhere, in order to describe and explain a broader range of variation in job quality.

A major concern related to job quality is the growing precarity and insecurity associated with both standard and nonstandard jobs in virtually all industrial countries. In this regard, the notion of 'flexicurity' has attracted a great deal of attention among European labor market reformers looking for a way to give employers and labor markets greater flexibility and still provide protections for workers from the insecurity that results from this flexibility (Wilthagen and Tros, 2004; Viebrock and Clasen, 2009). Groups such as the European Commission (2007), for

example, have supported this policy, maintaining that adopting flexicurity arrangements will result in widespread economic and social benefits. The exemplars of this approach are found in Denmark and the Netherlands, but it has also been adopted in Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea (Kalleberg and Hewison, 2015). Nevertheless, the applicability and potential of flexicurity policies, especially during times of economic crisis, have been the subject of considerable debate in recent years (e.g., Heyes, 2013).

Understanding the nature and causes of job quality is not only important for social science research, but also for social policy and business practice. As noted above, enhancing job quality is a pressing issue given the centrality of work to both economic performance and individual well-being. Yet the imminent characteristics of work are by no means certain, as globalization and technological change do not automatically translate into particular work characteristics. Rather, governments and companies have considerable latitude in the choices they are able to make about what kinds of jobs are created. Thus, it is possible that the future of work in some countries may consist of good jobs that are relatively secure and well-paying, or bad jobs that are precarious and characterized by large numbers of poor workers, or a polarized economy in which there is a wide gap between good and bad jobs. Comprehending these possible scenarios provides the potential to institute social and economic policies that might enhance the quality of work for individuals and societies.

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