SOCIAL POWER: PERSPECTIVES, CONCEPTUAL LIMITATIONS, AND HUMBLE SUGGESTIONS

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<Abstract>

This paper presents four perspectives of power. Exchange theory provides a succinct conceptualization of power. According to the theory, in an exchange between two actors, power accrues to the one who provides the resource or service for which the other actor depends on. Although the logic is straightforward and plausible, exchange theory hardly considers in its analysis of power the effects of external conditions. Network analysis explains power by focusing on the strategic positions of actors in a multi-actor network. Those actors who are placed in the positions through which they can command the flows of critical information or resources can claim power. Both exchange theory and network analysis are, however, criticized for equating power with potential of power. Max Weber distinguishes between authority and power employing a couple of criteria. But Weber's conceptualization of power and authority is confusing and misleading at times. Resource dependency theory focuses on organizational dependency. Resource dependency theory argues that the actor who provides the most critical resources for organizational survival comes to have power. Resource dependency theory, however, suffers a logical problem of not being able to explain the process through which actors acquire critical resources.

사회학적 관점에서의 POWER: 이론, 개념적인 문제점, 및 소박한 제안

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<요 약>

　이 논문에서는 power에 관한 4가지의 관점들을 소개한다. 교환이론은 power에 관한 아주 간결한 설명을 제시한다. 이 교환이론에 따르면, 두 사람 사이의 교환관계에서 다른 사람이 원하는 자원이나 서비스를 제공하는 사람은 power를 갖게 된다는 것이다. 이 논리가 간단명료하고 그럴싸하기는 하지만, 교환이론은 power를 분석하는 데 있어서, 그 교환관계를 둘러싸고있는 외적 요인을 거의 고려하고 있지 않다는 지적을 받는다. Network analysis라는 이론은, 많은 사람들이 어울려있는 네트웍에서 사람들의 전략적인 위치에 관심을 두어 power를 설명한다. 즉, 중요한 정보나 자원의 유통을 마음대로 통솔할 수 있는 지위에 있는 사람은 power를 갖게 된다는 것이다. 이 교환이론과 network analysis는 power와 power의 잠재성을 동일시한다는 비판을 받는다. 막스 베버는 몇 가지의 기준을 가지고 권위와 power를 구별한다. 그러나 이 베버의 분류는 명쾌하지 못할 뿐 아니라, 이따금 오해의 소지가 있는 점을 노출시킨다. 자원의존이론은, 조직에서 조직의 생존에 필요한 가장 중요한 자원을 제공하는 조직의 구성원이 power를 갖는다고 주장한다. 그러나 자원의존이론 역시 어떻게 조직 구성원들이 중요한 자원을 확보하는가하는 과정을 설명하지 못하는 논리적인 문제를 내포하고 있다.

1. Introduction

　Some people naively believe that the important decisions of society are arrived at by a natural process of give and take, with different groups having their say along the way (Parenti, 1978). A close examination, however, reveals that in reality power operates virtually in every aspect of social life. Power affects the culture, social system, ideologies, and public policies of society, and the interactions and life chances of social actors. In the web of social relations, power often serves the interests of the powerful. The most desired social benefits are overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of a few. The powerless, who make up a large part of society, are largely excluded from the processes of making important decisions to their favor. Since power is a scarce good which helps the possessors (of it) realize their wishes and escape from burdensome disadvantages, people are concerned with getting as much as of it for themselves as possible, and all people wish to make it bear on themselves as little as possible (Weber, 1946). The hedonistic tendency often motivates people to strive for power in various social settings.

　Although power is an important part of social life, our understanding of it is still limited. Since the pioneering studies by Hunter (1953) and Dahl (1961), many scholars have tried to clarify the concept of power. But nobody has provided a comprehensive description of power. The main reason for this is because there is no general theory, broad-gauge model, or unitary definition of power (Bachrach and Baratz,1963; 632). Most of the students of power do not overcome the limits of their theoretical and orientational frameworks. The problem is serious not only because the conceptualiz-

ations of power are fragmentary, but also because different approaches to and assumptions about power largely predetermine their conclusions (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; 952).

This paper attempts to broaden and clarify our knowledge of power. To fulfill this objective, this paper presents the definitions and conceptualizations of power by exchange theory, network analysis, resource dependence theory and Weberian theory in the first half. The theories provide in-depth knowledge of power. But each of them suffers criticisms to a varying degree. Some theories are criticized on the ground that they only present a limited view by largely overlooking the structural and social conditions beyond a microscopic power relation. Some are also criticized for lacking logical consistency in their conceptualizations of power.

The second part of this paper presents a more comprehensive definition of power. As most students of power confess, power is an elusive term. The students are divided as to what consists of social power. But prudent scholars agree that for a certain phenomenon to be considered social power, it should include such elements as purposiveness, intentionality, capacity and relativeness. Detailed discussions on the essential characteristics of power are presented in the second half.

2. Perspectives

A. Social Exchange Theory

Exchange theory uses an individualistic exchange relationship as its main unit of analysis. This theory is concerned with a dyadic relationship between two people without considering the effects of external conditions on it. American exchange theorists such as Homans, Blau, and Emerson belong to this category.

In an individualistic exchange, in which the norm of reciprocity serves as a guiding mechanism, inability of reciprocation or inability of equal reciprocation by one party leads to the differentiation of power. An exchange relationship may be maintained as long as the relationship is rewarding to both parties involved. However, the services/material being exchanged are not always equally valuable, and sometimes, one of the parties has nothing to return for the material/services it received. In this context, a power difference emerges.

Blau (1977) says that a superordination-subordination relation emerges when one person has something to offer which the other needs, but the second person has nothing to reciprocate that the first person needs. If an individual can not provide material/services in return for what he receives, or is over-rewarded by the other party but wants to continue the relationship because of certain material/services which he can not obtain from other sources, he should then compensate in some other way so that the other actor feels the relationship is worth continuing. One of the strategies is a psychological payback by endowing power to the lender.

For the less powerful, the unbalanced power relationship is uncomfortable because

he must put himself in a subordinate position and must comply with the wishes of the other to maintain the relationship. What then makes individuals continue in such an unpleasant exchange relation? Dependence forces individuals to remain in the exchange relation. Many exchange theorists view dependence as an opposite concept of power. They think that the person whom the other depends on for vital benefits has power to enforce his demands.

According to Emerson (1962, 1981), the dependence of actor A upon actor B (=the power of B over A) is 1) directly proportional to A's motivational investment in goals mediated by B, and 2) inversely proportional to the availability to A of other goals outside of the A-B relation. In other words, dependence (power) is a function of the value of the exchange material and of the number of alternatives open to individuals for desired material/services. Thus, the more actor A values/needs the material/ services provided by actor B, and the fewer alternatives A has for the acquirement of the material/services outside the focal relation, the more power B has over A.

The powerful individual is the one who can more fully command the exchange relationship at his discretion. Homans (1974; 73) argues that the person who has the greater power vis-a-vis his counterpart in a relationship is the one who gets least out of the exchanges taken as a whole - "the principle of least interest". Homans thinks that the person who perceives himself as getting the lesser valued reward from the exchange is less likely to change his behavior in favor of the other than is the one who gets the greater valued reward.

In an individualistic exchange, the criterion for judging fair exchange is a norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) or the rule of distributive justice (Homans, 1974). The norm of reciprocity states that if a person gives something to another, the other is expected to return something of equal value.

But, value, one of the factors determining power-dependence relationship, is subjective. The value of reward, the motivational investment in goals, costs, and profits are hard to measure.

In response to this problem, Blau (1971) argues that justice in social exchange is determined by a social norm based upon the supply-and-demand principles prevailing in the community rather than by the values of exchanging material/services per se. He states:

> The prevailing norms in a community define in rough fashion what constitutes a fair or just return for various services depending on the investments needed to supply these services and their significance in terms of the community's value system. Not all men receive a fair return for their services and investments, however, because factors other than these social norms also influence exchange transactions and the ratios at which benefits are exchanged, notably changing conditions of supply and demand. The going rates of exchange that become established in various groups are, consequently, not identical with the fair rates of exchange specified by the social standards of justice in the community, although they are affected by these standards of fair rates..... The distinction between the going rate and the fair rate of social exchange corresponds approximately to that between the equilibrium price governed by supply and demand and the normal price governed by long-term trends in production and consumption in

economics (1971; 197).

However, Blau's reasoning of fair exchange does not escape from subjectivity in many ways. First, if the investment needed for the production of a service is a material thing or money, it is possible to determine the importance of the service materially, but if the service is a psychological or emotional thing, it is impossible to measure the importance of it quantitatively. Second, the community value system does not clearly specify what types of services are more significant than others for the community. Third, the value system of the community is not written or manifested in explicit ways. And fourth, the equilibrium of going and fair rates based on the conditions of supply and demand also fluctuates from time to time.

Recently, there have been several attempts to objectively conceptualize distributive justice in social exchange, using income distribution among people (Alwin, 1987; Jasso and Rossi, 1977; Jasso, 1978; Shepelak and Alwin, 1986), organizational fairness scales (Lim et al, 1988) such as pay rules, pay level, and so on. However, the efforts of these authors are simple technical refinements of the rough justice/equity formulae of Homans and Adams than the solution to the basic problem.

In their quest of a general standard for distributive justice, some authors assume that people share some degree of consensus concerning fairness (Jasso and Rossi, 1977, p 649; Shepelak and Alwin, 1987, p 34). Even if there actually exists a consensus among people, the consensus is not an objective standard from which one can judge fair exchange because: 1) if, as Marxists argue, the existing social system or culture is biased by the dominant values which justify inequality, the consensus is useless in determining people's sense of fairness; 2) the authors implicitly assume that consensus is stable and static, which in fact is rarely so; and 3) even if people invest the same thing and receive the same reward, the values of the input and reward may be differently perceived because of the differing marginal utility of the reward to the individuals, and different needs and aspirations of the individuals.

Thus, equity or justice in social exchange can not be measured objectively. As Walster and associates (1976; 4) say, equity or distributive justice ultimately depends upon individual's subjective perception. For an unobtrusive bystander, it is hard to identify the powerful actor in an individual exchange due to subjectivity in measuring the values of the materials being exchanged.

B. Network Analysis

This is a theory, using microscopic individualistic exchange theory as the backbone of its theorizing, tries to apply exchange theory to an organizational context or to a network situation which is composed of more than two individuals. Such authors as Coleman, Burt, Marsden, and Cook belong to this category.

Since network analysts borrow basic concepts and rationale from individualistic exchange theory, their principles and assumptions are not so different from exchange theory, despite the difference in their unit of analysis. Network analysts pay attention

to the intra/inter-organizational context. The basic model of exchange, however, is the one in which guiding mechanism is a mutual reciprocity between partners or between partners in multiples of two.

For network analysts, the basic cause of power differentiation is dependence. Network analysis looks at the structural factors within a network situation such as positions of actors and competition among actors, the factors which are out of consideration in a dyadic exchange theory. Many network analysts view structural positions of actors as main determinants of power. This idea is based on Emerson's assumption that in an exchange between two actors, an actor's power is a function of the number of alternative sources he has for a needed resource. The positions actors occupy affect the relative dependence/power of the actors by allowing/limiting their opportunities for transaction.

Cook (1982) explains emergence of power in a multiple actor transaction. In a dyadic exchange relationship, two actors are connected directly to each other. But suppose a multiple actor network of four (A, B, D - C), in which each actor (A, B, or D) has no direct access to the other actors, and the transaction between actors is only possible indirectly through a central actor, C. Actors A, B, and D, who occupy peripheral positions, can not reach the other actors through a direct channel. This locational limitation lessens the relative power of the peripheral actors, and increases the power of the central actor. The reason for this, according to Cook, is because the central actor C, by controlling the alternative exchange relations between the peripheral actors (A, B, and D), can manipulate the relative dependence, and thus, the power of the actors in the network.

There are other reasons for this: 1) if not for the existence of C, A can not provide the resource to B for which B depends on A. Thus, without the existence of C, A can not have power over B. For A to claim power over B, he needs a third actor, C, who makes the transaction between A and B possible; and 2) for a peripheral actor, A, to receive a resource from B, he comes to need one more actor, C. In this case, A is dependent on two actors, C and B, for a resource, compared with the dyadic exchange (A-B) in which A depends only on one actor, B.

Similarly, Marsden introduces a concept of brokerage role in a multi-actor network. A broker is an intermediate actor that facilitates transactions between other actors who lack access to or trust in one another (Marsden, 1982). In a restricted exchange network where actors have no direct access to each other, a centrally positioned actor (broker) gains power due to his ability to affect the relative number of alternatives of the other actors, and his control over the flows of information or resources. Marsden explains:

> First, central actors will be most likely to be situated on unique chains or linkages joining peripheral actors, and they will therefore be able to extract resources from peripheral actors in the form of commissions. Second, central actors in an access network will be close to most other actors in the system of action. This means both that they will need to have fewer of their own exchanges with others brokered and that they will be able to make use of comparatively short routes for those transactions that must be

brokered, thus incurring fewer transaction costs. Overall, therefore, we should expect that the net flow of resources will be toward central actors and away from peripheral ones when exchanges between unconnected principals are mediated by intervening actors (1982; 207)

Compared to the peripheral actors, the gain of power by the broker is a function of 1) the increase in the number of exchange alternatives by being positioned centrally - "betweenness", and 2) the decrease in transaction costs due to the fact that the broker needs fewer channels to reach other actors in the system -"closeness".

However, Marsden is concerned mainly with a restricted exchange network where actors have no access to each other without a broker. Aldrich (1982) explains the emergence of a brokerage role in an unrestricted network in which all actors are connected to each other directly. According to him, a broker (an intermediate actor) is a natural result of the actors' rational attempts to minimize transaction costs by reducing the number of channels for transactions. Suppose there are two groups of actors - Group X of X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, and group Y of Y_1, Y_2, Y_3, Y_4, Y_5. In this system, if a broker is created, linking the Xs and Ys, the number of connections in the network would be reduced to X plus Y, rather than X times Y (1982; 290). He assumes that having a broker is advantageous when the population of X's and Y's is heterogeneous because if all X's were alike, any given Y would need only a single X (see Aldrich for more detailed discussions).

Although these theorists generally recognize the importance of positions in an exchange network, they suggest somewhat different answers to the question, "What is the most important factor determining actor's power in a network?"

Imagine a network system where there are three types of actors: a central actor (C), intermediate actors (I_1, I_2, I_3), and peripheral actors (P_1, P_2, P_3,.....P_{10}). Cook (1982) and Emerson (1981) argue that over time power shifts from the center (C) to the occupants of the intermediate positions (I_i). According to Cook, this occurs because of the extreme dependence of the peripheral actors on intermediate actors and the inevitable competition between the peripheral actors for access to the intermediate actors.

But Freeman (1979), Freeman et al (1979-80), Marsden (1982), and Marsden and Laumann (1977) argue that the central actor (C) has most power in the system. Along with this argument, some of them introduce concepts of betweenness - the degree to which a position falls between other positions on shortest paths, and of closeness - the degree to which positions have little need for a brokerage service. Marsden (1982) says that for the central position to guarantee power gains to the occupant, the position should be a central position in terms of betweenness and closeness (for more detailed discussions on betweenness and closeness, see Freeman, 1977, 1979; Freeman et al, 1979-80;and Marsden, 1982).

Regardless of their sophisticated arguments, the central theme of their arguments is that the central actor in a restricted network has power due to his positional ability to control the relative number of alternative channels of transactions. Simply stated, this argument is one of Emerson's assumptions that an actor's power is a function of the

number of alternatives he has for exchange.

Burt (1980, 1982) analyzes power in an exchange context where a position is jointly occupied by actors or organizations. In this context, he considers the relative degree of centralization/homogeneity of actors/organizations that jointly occupy a certain position. He introduces a term, structural autonomy, meaning the ability of an actor/organization to pursue and realize his interests without constraint from other actors/organizations in the system.

To him, a lack of alternatives is not the sole determinant of dependence (autonomy). The occupants of status j are constrained by their relations with the occupants of the other status i to the extent that the two following conditions occur simultaneously: 1) the occupants of status j only have relations with the occupants of status i, and 2) the occupants of status i are coordinated so as to act collectively in their own interest. In other words, the autonomy of the actors in status j is related positively to 1) the number of alternatives the occupants of status j have, and negatively to 2) the degree of centralization of the occupants of status i for a collective action against the occupants of status j.

The second condition implies that between the actors of statuses j and i, the less competition among j's, the more it to j's advantage to be able to impose more constraint on the other actors (i's). Burt (1980; 895) says, "The actors jointly occupying position j will be able to escape the constraints of supply and demand imposed by actors in other positions and, accordingly, will be autonomous within their system, to the extent that among persons, or corporate actors, occupying the position there exists an oligopoly (few competitive decision makers) or, in the extreme of centralization, a monopoly (a single decision maker)." A close look at Burt's argument of centralization/homogeneity reveals that it is a sophisticated refinement of Emerson's idea with a consideration of structural factors. Between the two statuses of actors, j and i, if the actors in a status i are very competitive and of conflicting interests among themselves, the actors in status j come to have more alternatives by manipulating the situation of the actors in status i.

C. Resource Dependence Theory

Resource dependence theory (hereafter, RD theory) assumes that individual organizations come to engage in exchanges with their environment because they are not self-sufficient (Aldrich and Pfeffer, 1976). (Here, the environment refers to either the environment in general or organizations which have some importance to the focal organization.) The critical concern of an organization is how to survive (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). And the key to organizational survival is how to manage organizational dependence upon the elements of the environment.

An organization is viewed as dependent upon its environment for three major resources: 1) material resources, including monetary and human resources; 2) information; and 3) social and political supports - legitimacy.

In RD theory, the dependence of an organization upon its environmental

contingencies and controls determines the internal structure of the organization, especially the distribution of power within the organization. Since the key to organizational survival is managing the dependence, the organizational actors/subunits which are most able to cope with the organization's dependence and critical problems acquire power in the organization (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

Not all participants, however, provide contributions that are equally valuable to the organization. Those actors/subunits who bring resources, information, or capabilities which are most desired and valued by the organization and by other members come to have most power and influence within the organization. The actors/subunits who provide the resources which help the organization survive by securing the organizational autonomy, and by coping with environmental uncertainties (Crozier, 1964; Hickson et al, 1971; Perrow, 1970) come especially to claim most power within the organization.

The value of the resources/services the organizational members/subunits bring into their organization, and thus, the distribution of power within the organization, are determined by 1) the importance of the resources/services to organizational problems (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1974), 2) the substitutability (replaceability) of the resources/services (Hickson et al, 1971; Mechanic, 1962; Jacobs, 1974), and 3) the degree to which the organizational members have the ability to utilize and mobilize the resources at their disposal (Pfeffer, 1981). The resources/services which are needed to solve two most critical organizational problems – organizational dependence and uncertainties – are regarded as most important. The resources/services which are most difficult to obtain, or the ones which are hard to replace for specific functions are also valuable. But the provision of valuable resources/services is not enough to solve organizational problems. Power accrues to those members/subunits with the ability to control these valuable resources at the most important time in the most critical situation.

Compared to exchange theory, the conceptualization of power by RD theory is more comprehensive. As discussed earlier, exchange theory focuses only on a micro-level exchange between two actors. A power relationship, however, does not exist in a social vacuum. Various external factors serve as both opportunities and constraints to the actors in a power relationship. Such external factors as the group of actors who exchange influences with the focal actors respectively, the structure of the group which encompasses the interaction between the actors, and the specific condition under which the exchange between the actors occurs indirectly influence the power relationship between the actors. Therefore, an actor's power can not be fully understood by limiting the analysis only on a relationship between two actors without considering the effects of the external conditions on it. RD theory, taking larger structural factors into account in its analysis of power between organizational actors and subunits, provides more plausible and comprehensive conceptualization of power.

Both exchange theory and network analysis are criticized on the ground that they confuse power with potential of power. Viewing possession of sources/determinants of power as power, exchange theory and network analysis do not specify the purpose of

power and the conditions under which power is exercized. In contrast, RD theory explains about the outcomes power brings and the conditions under which power is used. Pfeffer (1981) for example demonstrates that power is likely to be used when there is a large disagreement between actors and when a critical resource is not equally available to competing actors. (See Pfeffer and Salancik, 1974, and Pfeffer, 1981, for more detailed discussions.) If power is a process by which an actor, who has a potential of influence, uses his ability and realizes something, both exchange theory and network analysis look at only the half of the process, while RD theory is more fully concerned with the whole process.

RD theory, however, still suffers criticisms by Williamson and Ouchi. Transaction cost analysts Williamson and Ouchi (hereafter TCA) are also concerned with organizational survival, the problem which largely stems from the fact that an organization has to deal with other organizations. TCA recognizes importance of transaction cost efficiency of organization whereas traditional theories emphasize only production cost efficiency (Williamson, 1975).

To RD theory, critical resources for an organization are an independent variable, and power, a dependent variable. In contrast, to TCA, efficiency is an independent variable, and critical resources, a dependent variable. According to RD theory, the members/subunits which have the most critical resources for organizational survival come to have most power.

RD theory, however, does not explain how certain members or subunits come to possess valuable resources in the first place. In other words, valuable resources are simply given. In response to this reasoning, TCA argues that the members or subunits, the role of which is most important for organizational efficiency, are assigned to the positions which enable them to control critical resources. TCA insists that the reason for certain members/subunits to possess critical resources is because the control over the resources by the members/subunits is most efficient for the organization.

To support the TCA's reasoning, Williamson exemplifies the transitions of power from the all-purpose merchants to the specialized merchants, and from the specialized merchants to the integrated manufacturers in America. The all-purpose merchants were the wealthiest, best informed, and most powerful at the time. The specialized merchants, after the take-over from the all-purpose merchants, were the most important segment in the economy.

Williamson (1975) asks RD theory: 1) why would the all-purpose and later the specialized merchants ever permit economic activity to be organized in the ways that would remove power from their control? and 2) why did power leak out selectively — with the merchant role being appropriated extensively by some manufacturers but not by others? RD theory is quiet to these questions. Williamson says the transitions must be explained in terms of efficiency (for more detailed criticism of the RD theory, see Williamson, "The economics of organization: the transaction cost approach", American Journal of Sociology, 1981, Pp 572-73).

It is unlikely for an actor to be able to possess a valuable resource without having

some power. Especially if an actor is able to obtain desired outcome by the use of the resource, the ability to secure the valuable resource already implies that the actor has power regardless if the actor has an intention to use it, or if the actor is in a relationship with another actor or in an organizational context. RD theorists Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) define power as "the ability of those who possess it to bring about the outcomes they desire". As Williamson and Ouchi point out implicitly, the reasoning of RD theory is tautological. RD theory defines power (the ability to bring about a desired outcome) by power (the ability to secure a valuable resource), both of which, in fact, refer to the same concept.

D. Weberian Perspective

Most literature on power treats authority as one of the forms of power, but for Max Weber, power and authority are different in many ways. He defines power (Macht) as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests." (Weber, 1947). And then he defines authority as the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons by virtue of the legitimate exercise of imperative control.

Roughly speaking, for Max Weber, power is a one-way ability to realize one's will without regard to others, while authority is an ability to command one's order through negotiated or compromised procedures with another actor (actors) involved. So far as power and authority are the ability of an individual to draw compliance with his will, these two concepts are similar, but compliance with power and compliance with authority rest on different motives.

Weber, whose main concern is with a legitimate power - authority, does not clearly explain the process through which a person comes to have power over others. He simply describes the motives for striving for power on economic, psychological, and social grounds. People strive for power as the means for obtaining economic benefits, social honor, prestige, and legal advantages. These benefits may be a consequence of power. But, at the same time, power may be a consequence of any one of them or of a combination of them.

In terms of motives for compliance, Weber's concept of power is similar to that of social exchange theory or of RD theory. He says that compliance with power rests on self-interested motives on the part of a person who complies. According to Weber, compliance with power comes about for either one of the two reasons: 1) people comply in anticipation of some kind of benefit in doing so, or 2) people comply because there is no alternatives but to comply (1947; 326). In the case of authority, however, people's compliance is based on a sense of obligation to comply. Compliance with authority requires a certain degree of belief or attitude as a precondition that the compliance is appropriate. Thus, in distinguishing two types of domination - domination through power and domination through authority, Weber says:

> In its purest form, the first is based upon influence derived exclusively from the possession of goods or marketable skills guaranteed in some way and acting upon the conduct of those dominated, who remain, however, formally free and motivated simply by the pursuit of their own interests. The latter kind of domination rests upon alleged absolute duty to obey, regardless of personal motives or interests (1986; 30).

To put it differently, according to Weber, compliance with power originates from the person who commands the compliance, whereas compliance with authority originates from the person who complies. Weber believes that a powerful person manipulates the condition(s) for exchange, especially economic exchange, or employs physical/psychical sanction(s) with an intention to draw compliance. In this regard, compliance with the wishes of the powerful is not a voluntary action. Rather, this type of compliance is a reaction to the condition set up by the powerful. But in the case of authority, people comply because they have at least a minimum sense of voluntary submission – a belief in legitimacy of the command.

Although Weber distinguishes between power and authority as being based on different motives for compliance, he believes that many similar motives are shared by the people who comply with power and those with authority. Because of the close relationships among social, economic and legal orders, no power rests solely on the manipulation of any one of these orders, and no authority is entirely dependent on belief in legitimacy without resting on some degree of motives of self-interest. People are believed to comply voluntarily due to their beliefs in the validity of the orders in the system of authority. Weber, however, acknowledges some exceptions. For example, involuntary compliance with military discipline is still considered a subjection to authority by Weber. Therefore, the difference between the two concepts is simply a matter of degree of belief (of people) in legitimacy. What is important is the fact that in a given case the particular claim to legitimacy is, to a significant degree, treated as valid, and that this fact confirms the position of the persons claiming authority and that it helps to determine the choice of means of its exercise (Weber, 1947).

Weber's distinction between power and authority seems plausible. But, a careful examination reveals some confusions. Weber uses two criteria for defining a certain behavior as an "imperative coordination". To the extent that a behavior meets both of the following conditions to "a certain degree", it is called a compliance with authority: 1) a behavior is motivated by a certain degree of willingness to submit. Weber said, "A criterion of every true relation of imperative control is a certain minimum of voluntary submission, that is, an interest (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience." (1947; 324); and 2) a behavior is motivated by a person's belief in legitimacy of the order given.

In contrast, Weber excludes two types of compliance from authority: 1) a compliance on opportunistic grounds or for reasons of material self-interest; and 2) a compliance from individual weakness and helplessness because of a lack of acceptable alternative (1947; 326). By classifying in this way, Weber tries to distinguish compliance with authority from compliance with economic power based on monopolistic position. In contrast to the latter where a power subject has no alternative but to comply, in the

former a power subject has some freedom of choice between compliance and non-compliance (1947; 326).

This classification is somewhat confusing. First, Weber's distinction between power and authority, using voluntary submission as a criterion, is ambiguous. A person may comply with an order voluntarily not only in the case where he finds the obedience pleasant per se, but also in the case where the negative consequence of disobedience is too severe. With regard to the concept of voluntary submission, Wrong explains:

> .....when Weber makes voluntary compliance based on interest a criterion of domination, he clearly does not mean to exclude a power subject's interest in avoiding the imposition of painful physical sanctions when confronted with a credible threat of force from a power holder. The actual application of force to the body of the power subject is all that the criterion excludes (1979; 38).

According to Wrong's interpretation, any compliance other than those drawn from the actual application of painful physical sanctions such as torture and the deprivation of basic biological needs is considered voluntary. This interpretation is misleading. For Weber, to be voluntary is to have some freedom of choice. Weber says that a social relationship in which involuntary compliance is required has originated in a formally free contract. He says, "The position of a bureaucratic official is also entered into by contract and can be freely resigned, and even the status of subject can often be freely entered into and (in certain circumstances) freely repudiated." (1947; 326).

Problem lies in Weber's reasoning that the compliance stemming from one's interest in avoiding physical or psychic sanctions or social disapproval is more voluntary and freer than the compliance stemming from one's interest in avoiding economic misfortune. Weber may think that a person who complies with the order of his superior has more alternatives and more freedom to decide what course of action to take than does a person who complies for fear of economic sanctions. To the extent that a person values avoidance of economic loss much higher than the displeasure of putting himself in a subordinate position, he may be willing to comply, even in the case where the person does not have any other choices as a result of monopolistic constellation of economic benefit by the power holder.

However, even in a situation where a power subject is given many or free choices, if the benefit of compliance is not much greater than what he would lose by not complying, he may be unwilling to comply. In this sense, voluntary submission does not depend on the number of choices or the degree of freedom a power subject is given, but on the salience of benefit as a result of compliance compared with the negative consequence of non-compliance.

Second, Weber suggests that the legitimacy of an order may be ascribed in the following ways:

> a) by tradition: a belief in the legitimacy of what has always existed; b) by virtue of affectual attitudes, especially emotional, legitimizing the validity of what is newly revealed or a model to imitate; c) by virtue of rational belief in its absolute value, thus lending it

the validity of an absolute and final commitment; d) because it has been established in a manner which is recognized to be legal. This legality may be treated as legitimate in either of two ways: on the one hand, it may derive from a voluntary agreement of the interested parties on the relevant terms. On the other hand, it may be imposed on the basis of what is held to be a legitimate authority over the relevant persons and a corresponding claim to their obedience (1947; 130).

Weber's second criterion for authority is legitimacy. A given order draws compliance from people because they consider it legitimate. There, however, may be a situation where most members of a group or society considers a given order legitimate, but a particular individual does not. The person complies not because he believes the order carries legitimacy, but because he wants to avoid disapproval from his fellow members. In this case, the compliance rests on the group pressure, not on the person's belief in legitimacy of the order. Arendt (1986) equates power with authority by arguing:

> Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is "in power" we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name (1986; 64).

Weber thinks that a belief in legitimacy is necessary in an authority relationship. But without a consensual support of the group where the power holder and the power subject belong, the order may not be upheld.

For both exchange theory and RD theory, 1) the value of a resource/service and 2) the substitutability (replaceability) of a resource/service are the main factors determining power in an exchange relation. Both theories state that the more critical a resource/service is on which others depend for a desired consequence, and the harder the resource/service to replace, the more power the person who can command the resource/service has. But Weber does not view indispensability as a critical source of power. Weber says:

> The fact that bureaucratic organization is technically the most highly developed means of power in the hands of the man who controls it does not determine the weight that bureaucracy as such is capable of having in a particular social structure. The ever-increasing indispensability of the officialdom, swollen to millions, is no more decisive for this question that is the view of some representatives of the proletarian movement that the economic indispensability of the proletarians is decisive for the measure of their social and political power position. If indispensability were decisive, then where slave labor prevailed and where freemen usually abhor work as a dishonor, the indispensable slaves ought to have held the positions of power, for they were at least as indispensable as officials and proletarians are today. Whether the power of bureaucracy as such increases cannot be decided a priori from such reasons (1946;232).

At first glance, this statement appears to run against the reasoning of social exchange theory and of RD theory. Weber, too, agrees with the idea that one can increase his power by monopolizing expert knowledge and skills. That is why people are sometimes unwilling to share their secret resources. But what is important to Weber's idea is that the indispensability of resource is not the sole determinant of power. The people equipped with the weapons of legislative initiative, the economic interest groups, and the established political order serve as obstacles to one's claim of superiority (of power) for possessing an indispensable resource. Weber thinks that a person can not claim power, no matter indispensable his resource is, if his resource is not related to other critical resources such as legal and economic resources. This reasoning is different from exchange theory and RD theory. Exchange theory to a significant degree, and RD theory to a lesser degree, ignores social, legal, and economic orders in analyzing power.

3. The Concept of Power

Various perspectives on power were reviewed in the previous section. Most theorists adhering to exchange theory and network analysis define power as a potential of control, or a status of an actor, via possession of valuable resource(s) or position(s) (Blau, 1964; Cook, 1977, 1982; Cook and Emerson, 1978; Emerson, 1962; Freeman et al; 1979-80; Homans, 1974; Marsden, 1982). Whereas, scholars of RD theory and Weberian theory define power as a capacity to realize the objective of an actor (Pfeffer, 1981; Weber, 1946).

Power is too a complicated concept to be defined in a single sentence. Power is a process between/among actors in which 1) the potential of control/influence emerges via possession of bases of power, 2) the purposeful actor(s) with the potential of control, attempts something by having other actor(s) do or not do something, and 3) a certain outcome occurs as a consequence of the attempt. In this processional phenomenon, some scholars focus only on the possession of control – potential, and others on the realization of outcome – capacity. I define power as an action whereby one actor achieves his objective(s) by using his control over resource(s) or his position of authority to elicit the cooperation of others.

I agree with Arendt (1986) on the idea that such concepts as authority, persuasion, influence, force, and manipulation are not different from power. They, as subtypes of power, share the same characteristics of power – resting on the bases of power, being exercised for certain goals, and bringing about certain outcomes. They do not differ in essence or function, only differ in the mode of how power is exercised. In the next section, I elaborate on several characteristics of power.

A. Intentionality

Most of exchange theorists and network analysts view power as a potential for

action. This potential is based either on the status of an actor, or his possession of
valuable resource(s). These authors wrongly equate power with the bases of power.
The bases of power are neither actual power, nor a sole determinant of the desired
outcomes which individuals realize.

First of all, it is an empirical question whether actors, possessing the determinants/
bases of power, are aware that they have them, or have an intention to use them.
Criticizing this view, Pfeffer (1981) argues:

> Another issue involved in evaluating power distribution by assessing the distribution of
> the determinants of power is that some social actors, who might be potentially powerful,
> may not recognize the determinants or the fact that they possess them. In this sense, the
> power is not recognized, and hence will not be used. Even if power positions are
> recognized, organizational actors may choose not to employ their power..... In the case in
> which power is not recognized, however, it does not even exist as a potential to be
> employed (1981; 48-9).

Burt (1977; 3) also criticizes the approach which equates power with the bases of
power, "The major drawback to equating power with the control of resources is that
such a conceptualization of power does not specify whether or not an actor will use
his resources to determine the outcomes of events which affect other actors in the
system".

It is reasonable to assume that there is a strong relationship between the
determinants/bases of power and actual power. But in spite of the actors' awareness
of their possession of the bases, unless they have an interest in using them for
certain purposes, their potential would not be exercised, and no actual power would be
manifested. Where no individual or event is influenced due to lack of initiation by a
potential power holder, there is no power phenomenon. Also, in the process where the
determinants of power are transformed into real power, many factors such as
psychological, situational, and systemic factors play a role. Actors with the same bases
of power may differ in their actual capacity of realizing interests depending on the
situational or systemic conditions where they are placed, or on the differential degree
of psychological readiness/eagerness.

Secondly, the possession of determinants of power and the intention to use them are
one thing, and the exercise of power is another. If the determinants of power are an
actors' actual power, those who possess the same bases of power must have the
same amount of power. But, depending on the skills how to utilize the bases of
power, individuals with the same bases may achieve different outcomes.

Coleman (1973a) thinks that human behaviors are purposive actions. He says that
actions of the actors in the system control the outcomes of events, either wholly or
partially; and the action is selected through the conscious choice of the actor, choosing
that action which he believes will lead to the outcome most beneficial to him.

However, there are limitations in viewing human being as a perfectly rational and
purposeful actor. To reach a high degree of rationality, human being should have a
complete knowledge of the courses of action open to him, and the consequences the

actions will bring. Simon (1947) says, "Rationality implies a complete, and unattainable, knowledge of the exact consequences of each choice. In reality, the human being never has more than a fragmentary knowledge of the conditions surrounding his action, nor more than a slight insight into the regularities and laws that would permit him to induce circumstances." Thus, many authors believe that human being is purposeful within his limits of control and knowledge (Coleman, 1973, also see the boundedrationality perspective of Cyert and March, 1959; March and Simon, 1958; Simon, 1947). Man, with only partial control of the outcomes of the event he desires, will choose that action which according to his estimate will lead to an expectation of the most beneficial consequences (Coleman, 1973).

Likewise, the exercise of power is regarded as a purposeful action. French and Raven (1959; 150) view power as a potential of influence of a social actor, O, over another social actor, P, which may cause a change in P's behavior, opinion, attitudes, goals, needs, values or all other aspects of the P's psychological field. They even add, "The influence exerted by an act need not be in the direction intended by O." (1959; 152). Such a definition is not satisfactory for the study of social power. That which simply brings about a change is an energy. Energy itself does not carry an intention or a purpose, but it is an arbitrary source of change. In power relations where people act purposefully, "intentionality" is an essential element.

If man has complete power over the process which he thinks will lead to the outcome he desires, there must be a perfect causal relationship between his intention and the outcome. When we say a causal relationship, there should exist a sequential relationship between a cause and an effect. Power, to be considered the means for realizing one's objective, should come first, and the outcome should occur afterward as a consequence of power.

In viewing power as an actor's actual capacity to bring about an intended outcome(s), some detailed conceptual discussions are needed. Power does not always produce intended outcomes only. As Wrong argues (1979; 4), intended efforts to influence others often produce unintended as well as intended effects on their behavior. How should we then treat the outcomes produced as a consequence of power, but not wanted by the power holder? From a general standpoint, it is not reasonable to exclude those unwanted outcomes from the capacity-outcome concept of power. However, if we do not distinguish between intentional and unintentional outcomes, there is no point at which we can draw a line for a domain of social power. It is worth citing the insightful discussion of Wrong (1979):

> Intentionality is often understood to include all outcomes that are anticipated or foreseen by the actor. But there is a difference between acting in order to achieve a certain outcome and recognizing that other effects will unavoidably result from the action which are incidental to the outcome sought by the actor. These anticipated but unintended byproducts of the action may from the actor's standpoint be regarded as inconsequential, as undesirable in themselves but a price worth paying to attain the end for which the action was undertaken, or as secondary gains insufficiently attractive to justify undertaking the action. However, so long as the effects were foreseen by the

actor even if not aimed at as such, they constitute an exercise of power in contrast to unanticipated (and by definition unintended) effects (1979; 5).

Wrong treats those unwanted effects as the outcomes of power, as long as they are foreseen and regarded by the power holder as necessary costs for the desirable outcomes. Then how should we treat those outcomes produced by a power subject on his sycophantic assumption that the power holder would like them to happen? It is methodologically difficult, but we may have to include those outcomes of anticipatory reactions in the domain of power, if there is a verifiable evidence that the power subject was influenced by the power holder in doing so. To attribute anticipatory reactions to power, the power subject must be convinced of the power holder's capacity to control him and must modify his behavior accordingly (Wrong, 1979). Between A (power holder) and B (power subject), as long as the anticipatory reactions are based on a communication between A and B which is adequate enough for B to unmistakably conceive A's intention and actual capacity, the anticipatory reactions are regarded as the outcomes of power. But it is desirable to exclude those anticipatory reactions which were based on B's ill-perception of A's intention or A's capacity. This conceptualization is to avoid, on the one hand, the danger of an extremely simplistic approach of the behaviorists who are only concerned with the direct outcomes by power holders. This conceptualization is, on the other hand, to avoid the approach of those who intuitively believe, without a justifiable evidence, that power is mostly exercised indirectly "behind-the-scenes".

Scholars also debate on observability of the outcomes of power (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962, 1963; Cobb, 1984; Lukes, 1974; Wrong, 1979). Should we include only those overt and observable outcomes in the capacity-outcome concept of power, such as behavioral changes? Or should we also include those covert and unobservable outcomes too, such as attitudinal changes or the "behind-the-scenes" exercise of power? In fact, observability of outcomes is not important. The important matter is whether or not the outcomes are measurable. Here I take a stance for an argument that to be scientifically true, a statement must be accompanied with a verifiable evidence. Although there is a good reason to believe that a certain relationship exists between events, if there is no evidence, we can not prove the relationship. So, regardless of the physical observability of outcomes, if the outcomes are measurable with convincing evidences, they should be included in social power.

B. Capacity

Wrong (1979) presents three elements of power: extensiveness, comprehensiveness, and intensity. Extensiveness of power refers to the number of power subjects over whom a power holder can command his power. Comprehensiveness of power refers to the number of scopes in which the power holder controls the activities of the power subjects. And intensity of power refers to the severity of the command of a power holder which the power subject(s) would obey without resistance.

Comprehensiveness and intensity of power need some clarification. With regard to comprehensiveness of power, besides mere number of issues over which one has control, the importance of the issues also has to be considered. The relative importance of issues is hard to measure objectively. But just for an argument's sake, suppose that there are two actors in a relationship, A and B; A can kill B if A wants to (a control over life-and-death matter), and B can decide what to eat for both A and B in everyday life. In this case, it is hard to say that the power of A and the power of B are equal in comprehensiveness simply because they have an equal number of issues over which they have control.

Another element is intensity of power. Intensity refers to the degree to which a given command is obeyed without being resisted. Imagine a relationship among three actors, A, B, and C. A is more powerful than B if A can successfully make C spend $100 for A, while B can make C spend only $10 for B. But the assessment of power of A and B without considering how much A and B have to invest to make C obey to their will is an inadequate way of measuring intensity of power. That example is similar to determining the relative strengths of two boxers by watching them knock down their opponents, without counting how many punches they have to throw. Suppose that A threw 500 punches to knock his opponent down, and B, 10 punches. We can not say A and B are equal in strength simply because both boxers knocked their opponents down. To measure intensity of power, we must examine how much investment an actor has to make to realize his objective – the cost.

Man, as a purposeful and rational actor, would perform those actions which expectedly bring best outcome to him. If the cost for his desired outcome exceeds the value of the outcome, the rational actor would not perform an action toward the outcome. The concepts, such as cost and value, are very subjective. But each individual has his own standards by which he calculates the relative benefits of the outcomes. For example, if an actor cherishes presidency more highly than the costs for becoming a president, he would willingly spend his time and energy to become a president. But if an actor values the monetary income he earns as a businessman more highly than the prestige of a president, he would not run for presidency. In this sense, the definitions only focusing on the capability of actors for realizing objectives have a drawback. A description of power omitting the concept of cost is not appropriate.

Some authors include, in their definitions of power, a concept of resistance/conflict between actors (Emerson, 1962; Pfeffer, 1981; Weber, 1946). They view power as an ability to overcome the resistance of other actor(s). Probably, these authors have an idea that power is more than a mere ability of an actor to demand/impose only those things that are acceptable to the other actor. The exercise of power by an actor may or may not face resistance, depending on the power subject's psychological state and on the structural context in which the power holder and the power subject are located.

First, whether or not a given command will face resistance partly depends on the deliberate calculation of reward and punishment by the power subject. Man is also purposeful and rational in that he performs actions on the basis of the anticipation of

success. Coleman (1973a) says that one of the characteristics of man as a purposive actor is that when an actor performs actions, he believes that the actions must have some effect on the outcome. Man uses his power for his objective only if he expects that the power will lead to his objective. Also, between two actors in conflict, an actor will resist the request of the other only if he thinks his resistance will overcome the undesirable request, or he anticipates beneficial consequences by so doing even if he can not overpower the other. Thus, in power relations, to the extent that an actor believes that he does not have enough capacity to overpower the other, or that his resistance will not bring any beneficial consequence to him, he will not resist, even if the unwanted request is very illegitimate. Resistance is not an inherent phenomenon in power relations.

Second, the existence of resistance to a given command partly depends on the cultural and structural context. As some functionalists argue, if a group of people delegate in consensus power to a certain person for a collective good, it is less likely that there will be a resistance to a given command. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) insist that to the extent that a person (group of people) creates and reinforces social and political values which are harmonious with his interest - (mobilization of bias), that person has power. Power is the capacity to overcome resistance. Yet, the more effective power is the ability to make the power subject not resist in the first place by modifying his perceptions, values, or beliefs.

Power also includes one's ability to make another actor believe that he can influence the other actor negatively or positively. An actor A convinced another actor B that A would employ a positive/negative sanction according to B's reaction to A's order. After B submitted to A in anticipation of a positive or negative sanction, the expected sanction is not followed. Even in this case where A deceived B, we can attribute power to A in a sense that A realized his will by successfully convincing B in accordance with his will.

C. Relativeness

If people were seeking outcomes independently of each other, power phenomenon would be simple. But people exercise mutual influence and control over one another's conduct in all social interaction (Wrong, 1979; 3). The activities of other actors who are seeking outcomes may block objectives sought by the focal person.

Power is a relational concept. It can be said that A has power over somebody (B) (Emerson, 1962), or over a certain event/issue (Cobb, 1984; Goldman, 1986), but it is awkward to say that A has power with no reference to another person or event. Power is relational in that 1) power is a phenomenon which takes place between/among actors, and 2) an actor's power is relative to that of another actor(s). For a power relationship to exist, actors should be connected with each other directly or indirectly (Bachrach and Baratz, 1963; Emerson, 1962; Gaski, 1984; Marsden, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981).

Since power is a phenomenon between actors, the positions individuals occupy in a

larger social network serve as an important factor affecting the individuals' relative power (Aldrich, 1982; Benson, 1975; Cook, 1982; Emerson, 1981; Freeman, 1977, 1979; Freeman et al, 1979-80; Marsden, 1982; Marsden and Laumann; 1977; Pfeffer, 1981). Benson (1975) says that in inter-organizational relations power is not only explained by the pairwise dependencies between organizations, but also by the links maintained by organizations to the larger environment upon which both are dependent. Likewise, an actor's power can not be assessed by limiting the focus only on the A-B relationship without considering the group of actors who form interaction networks with A and with B respectively.

Everything being equal, the position through which individuals can control the flows of information and resources provides an advantageous weapon to the occupants. But, with the same position, individuals may obtain different amount of power according to the skills and strategies they employ (Dahl, 1986; Pfeffer, 1981; Cook, 1982). Cook says that since the occupants of the sole position in a social network are assumed to be equally powerful, any observed differences in outcome would have to be attributed to differential bargaining skill or some other individual difference factor. Also, the occupants of the position may have different motivations, values, personal philosophies, and understandings of their position. In this sense, the analysis of power by some network analysts is too simplistic. Burt (1977, 1980), for example, treats the actors with structurally equivalent position as having the same amount of power without considering personal differences between them.

Power is also relational in a sense that the amount of power an actor can command is partly determined by the amount of power the other actor has in the relationship. Emerson (1962) argues that saying "A has power" is not accurate because power operates between actors. So, he recommends a statement, "A has power over B.".

But power is not an absolute concept. An actor, A, has absolute power to the extent that A can do whatever he wants, and gets whatever he wants, without being bothered by any cost in so doing - without sacrificing anything which is a loss to him. If A has absolute power over B, there is no reason to expect resistance from B except when B misunderstands A's absolute power over him. In most social relationships, it is very rare for an actor to get and do everything he wants.

As Emerson himself confesses, a relationship is maintained because it is rewarding to both parties. The exchange relationship which is not rewarding to one of the parties is not likely to last. To the extent that the powerful in a relationship has to please the less powerful to a certain degree to make the less powerful willing to remain in the relationship, and that this behavior incurs some cost to the powerful, the powerful actor is not absolutely powerful. So, in describing power relationship between actors, it is more appropriate to say, "A has more power than B."

D. Situation/Issue Specific

The scope of influence of an actor, in general, is limited to certain issues, situations, and persons (Cobb, 1984; Dahl, 1986; Goldman, 1986; Pfeffer, 1981). Pfeffer argues that

a person is not powerful or powerless in general, but only with respect to other social actors in a specific relationship. An actor may have wider range of sphere than others where he can draw compliance of others and have control over issues, but in general, there is a boundary of power. Beyond the relationship between actors, the external conditions such as political, economic, and social systems in which the relationship is placed also affect individuals' relative power. For example, although two actors have same amount of resources, the actor in a social system where egalitarian ideologies are dominant may face more obstacles than the actor in a system where socio-political ideologies endorse unequal relationship between people. Dahl (1986; 45) asserts that individuals of approximately equal wealth or social status may differ greatly in power because of the differences in access to other resources, such as the greater legality, bureaucratic knowledge, and public affection according to the systems where the individuals are located.

Thus, in comparing the overall power between actors, to say that A is more powerful than B without specifying the nature and the number of the issues and situations over which the actors have control is not adequate. An actor's overall power can be assessed by identifying the amount of control he has over important issues, and the number of important issues he can control. To the extent that A has more control over important issues than B, and that A has more important issues over which he has control than B, A has more power than B. For instance, suppose that there was a manager who was eager to be promoted. He succeeded in persuading his boss to give him a promotion, somehow – the realization of his objective. Even in this case, it is hard to say that the manager has more power than the boss. The reason for this is that the boss generally has more control over more important issues than the manager does.

4. Conclusion

Power is a very complicated and delicate concept. The description of power requires a combined examination of psychological, situational, and structural factors. But most theories failed to provide a comprehensive picture of power by looking at only one or some of the aspects of power.

Exchange theory and network analysis are arguably the best theories explaining social power at both individual and organizational levels. Many authors, however, criticize exchange theory and network analysis on the ground that these theories wrongly equate power with the bases (or sources) of power. The bases of power are neither actual power, nor a sole determinant of desired outcomes. It is an empirical question whether actors, possessing the bases (sources) of power, are aware that they have them, or have intention to use them. Exchange theory and network analysis failed to specify the conditions under which actors utilize the bases of power for desired outcomes.

Weberian perspective is popularly cited in the study of power. However, Weber's

conceptualization of power has some theoretical problems. First, the distinction between power and authority is not as succinct as it looks. In the case of authority, people (power subjects) voluntarily submit to a given order because they see some legitimacy in the given order. However, voluntarism and a sense of legitimacy are not totally lacking in power relations which Weber distinguishes from authority relations.

Second, Weber defines power as one's ability to overcome the resistance of the opponent. Resistance is not an inherent phenomenon in a power relation. To the extent that a power subject believes that his resistance will not bring beneficial consequences, the power subject would not resist no matter how illegitimate he feels the command from the power holder is. Whether a given command will face resistance partly depends on the psychological state of the power subject.

This paper presented a new concept of power. Power is defined as an action whereby an actor achieves his objective by using his control over resource(s) or his position of authority to elicit the cooperation of others. This definition emphasizes an actor's ability to actually realize an outcome, and his intention for exercising power. This new definition differs from the one which equates power with potential of power (ie, exchange theory, network analysis, and Bachrach and Baratz). However, there remain some problems in applying this definition in empirical studies due to methodological difficulties. Further studies in this area are recommended.

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