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Signification of Income in a Doctor's Life Theater

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Abstract

Materialism has been invading in every aspect of human life. Materialistic character is believed to be harmful if affecting on professions which fundamentally bring humanity values such as a medical doctor. This research aims to make understandings of the signification of income in a doctor's perspective. Doctor is a humanist profession, and differs from accountant materialistically taught from the beginning. This research employs dramaturgy method in need to data analysis. The result in this research showed that income in a doctor's perspective covers spiritualism income, mercy income, sincerity income, inner-satisfaction income, and materialism income. Humanist income denotes that, for a human being, income is a sufficiently physical-need fulfillment as a gift from God which is mercifully, sincerely gained and distributed to reach the primary goal that is inner satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

A medical doctor is a unique profession if analyzed from the perspective of accounting. This profession is considered to be unboundedly determining the "tariff" which defines that this profession is free to impose the amount of desirable "income" from each patient the doctor serves. Doctor essentially has the dilemma in answering the patients' question about incentive payment (Labig & Zantow, 2007; Pearson & Hyams, 2002) which positively gives

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impacts on the amount of income the doctor obtains. Furthermore, Szech (2011) factually claims a doctor freely determining the tariff in accordance with the “quality” the doctor performs. The patients (illustrated as consumers) do not really understand the “market” situation so that “a bad doctor” may be always existing in the market and getting more “profits” by low quality performance.

Human always demands for money income in fulfilling his needs of life. Modernity development has made materialism increased and has affected human perception on money income. It is said to be harmful if money income becomes the major goal in all aspects of human life. Indoctrination of materialism is very dangerous if possessed in the profession (that should be humanist) such a doctor. Doctor is a profession which is basically established through humanist value¹. In farther development, it is often humanist of a doctor admixed with materialism². Health industry, primarily hospitals, has been influenced by some changes in case of technology and market structure (Sari, 2008). These changes have impacted on the goals of the hospitals, turning giving helps to others in the beginning into orientating profits. Bigelow & Arndt (2007) state that health industry with self-interest and opportunistic value absorbed develops to be materialistic because of the modern economy development. Orientation of the doctors toward income in the health industry environment seems to also be influenced.

This research aims to make understandings of the proper signification of income for the doctors. The profession as a medical doctor is chosen by a reason that this profession has the fundamental value of humanism, differs from the profession of accountant that in the beginning has been brought with the materialism value³. It exposes the signification of income from the doctor’s perspective considered humanist, and consequently results different understandings with the one in accountant’s perspective of modern life nowadays. It uses dramaturgy method to analyze the data. Dramaturgy method is applied to gain data holistically. The data are then analyzed through some analyses of a doctor’s life stages so that the result of the research can be holistically obtained.

2. Dramaturgy Method as the “Stages” in the Research Method

Dramaturgy is an attractive method to analyze individual (in micro-context). Goffman (1956) introduces dramaturgy concept with theatrical performance extracting themes of interaction among human being. Human acts are illustrated through an analogy of drama and theater. Goffman (1956) claims that daily interaction can be comprehensively understood if we consider a person as the actor on the stage. As an actor, a person can play a role and manipulate the instruments of properties, the stage, the clothes, and the symbols to get the best result as desired by the actor. For a doctor, the doctor suits and stethoscope will be the required “the costume” and “property” to bring on the stage when facing the patients as the audience.

Goffman (1956) says that “self” is the result of dramatic interaction between actors and audience. “Self” is a dramatic influence emerging up in the situation performed. Ritzer & Goodman (2004) denote that when interacting, an actor will show a self-feeling acceptable for others. Human behaves like performing on the stage to give convincing impressions to all people (Audifax, 2008). Goffman’s Dramaturgy also focuses on implicit expressions which are more theatrical, contextual, non-verbal, and unintentional. The signification of meaning is to get impressions through the other’s acts like as mimic on faces, gestures, and action quality. This non-verbal impression has a more accuracy than the verbal expression (Basrowi & Sadikin, 2002).

Dramaturgy separates the individual performance into two fields, frontstage and backstage. The front stage is a part of the appearance and manner completed with supporting setting. On the frontstage arena, individual will show the ideal figure (performance as demanded based on social status). A doctor, for example, has a routine in the setting of practical room and its properties. The doctor’s performance is suited with white coat and stethoscope which function as the stimuli to distinguish a doctor from the other staffs. The manners performed by a doctor are high self-confidence, unemotional and calm, and maintain a good relation climate to patients. When being interacted with a restless patient, the doctor will manage impressions on the “frontstage” to convince the patient that “everything is going to be fine”,

¹ Simply summarized from the Doctor’s Oath and The Indonesian Code of Medical Ethics

² Bigelow & Arndt (2007) call it as *self-fulfilling theories* in which social environment greatly influences on and forms behaviors of individual

³ Kamayanti, Triyuwono, Irianto dan Mulawarman (2012) write how accounting education loads of materialism values.

even though on the backstage, the doctor is unsure about healing the patient. By contrast, the backstage is a covered place and hidden from anyone's attention. On the backstage, individual can be more relaxed and freer from the other's attention. Individual can be what he or she really is when being on the backstage (Audifax, 2008). Continuing the example about a doctor, when having break at work, the private office of the doctor can be such a room to undress his/her white coat, sit relax, talk to team or the other doctors. The doctor can unmask his/her "ideal" figure and become an ordinary human who interacts with his/her colleagues when being on the backstage.

Dramaturgy method is used in order to understand the meaning of income in the doctor's perspective. The strength of the dramaturgy method is the ability to portrait the reality of individual as it is and can be used in micro-context (individual). Dramaturgy is taken into this research because of its relevance to the role of individual. Unlike other methods, dramaturgy is hoped to be easy in gathering more deeply aspects of the informants in order to unlock the concept of income. Dramaturgy has the strong strategy to see an actor in many perspectives and is suitable for this research. The main actor in this research is Doctor Wago. The supporting actors are patients (Mr. Min, patients in social work, critically ill patients and former patients), colleagues, and medicine detailers.

3. The Result of the Research

This research focuses on understanding the meaning of income from the doctor's perspective and orientates individual. Every doctor has various understandings so that this research cannot be generalized. The data in this research are taken from a doctor, named as Doctor Wago as the main actor, supported by the other doctors, his colleagues, patients, medicine detailers, and the others. This research is intensively conducted to obtain a variety of data necessary for both on the frontstage and on the backstage.

3.1 *The Frontstage of Doctor Wago: Patient Oh Patient*

The rendezvous with the patients is very vital on the frontstage of a doctor. The frontstage becomes a place for income resource. The tariff determination obliged to patients is still a contemplation of a doctor on the backstage to be brought to the frontstage. The frontstage acting of Doctor Wago is filled with the interactions between Doctor Wago and his different patients. The income resource on the frontstage for Doctor Wago is considered equitable still⁴. Doctor Wago gets income based on the number of patients he serves. He faces different type of patients. By seeing different patients, he also plays different roles to master. Many "faces" Doctor Wago should show to manage his patients' impressions. The data about Doctor Wago's income on the frontstage has been always observed. But, the most interesting in his acting on the frontstage is when Doctor Wago gives free services personally or when he serves in the social work for free healing.

Scene 1 is taken when Doctor Wago serves one of his patients with free medical checkup, medical action, and free medicine. The patient is an underprivileged and a freelancer who often works for Doctor Wago's family. Even though his patient, Mr. Min, always requires medicine for each month, Doctor Wago sincerely gives him free, not only medicine but also medical checkup and blood test. Doctor Wago does not account for costs, and helps him for free.

The other scene shown on the frontstage is when Doctor Wago participates in a free medical healing as a social work committed by one of the religious communities in his city. He often becomes a "weekly" doctor in giving healing service to that community. In the weekly healing activity, the patients just pay for Rp 5.000, - to get services and medicine from the doctors. That amount of money is not given to the doctors, but to the community. Scene 2 captured in the research is when free medical healings are held by that community 2-3 times in a year. At the session of medication, the doctors who jointly give health service can be 10 or more people, with more than 100 patients it reaches. In such kind of program, all doctors receive no money income. Though so, Doctor Wago still takes routine in giving free medication even though he does not gain any income (money). On the frontstage, Doctor Wago serves

⁴ It is said equitable if the nominal shows reasonable limits in accordance with the circular letter of Malang Raya Branch Board of Indonesian Doctors Association which determines the minimum amount Rp 25.000,00 for services of general practitioner of individual private practice of each visit of patient, excluding operational expenses covering leasing for practice, administration, emergency medicine if necessary, assistant's wage, and/or income tax.

his patients with full responsibility. On the backstage, Doctor Wago says, "In this case, what can I do as a service to God who already gives me all? This is just a help. What really needed are knowledge, brain, and stethoscope only, and no other fees." This story indicates that even though Doctor Wago does not create money income, but the willing to serve to God from his profession as a doctor seems to be factually real.

Scene 3 on the frontstage is illustrated when Doctor Wago makes efforts to help a critically ill patient. He does struggles with full strength for salvaging the patient without thinking about whether he will or not receive money income. In his time of education, even though Doctor Wago did not receive money income at all, but his efforts to help the critically ill patient was not half-heartedly done. When facing a patient in emergency, Doctor Wago will do his best to save the patient, especially the one critically ill. Doctor Wago always prays and surrenders all to God. He realizes that all he has done is merely human effort, and everything is back to God the Almighty. When the patient is successfully saved, he releases a feeling in form of relief in heart.

Scene 4 is depicted on the frontstage in which Doctor meets his former patient. His former patient enthusiastically talks a lot to him when meeting each other. In fact, his former patient had been treated long ago. But he courageously responds Doctor Wago when chatting. The frontstage of a doctor merely ideally connects to his patients. But here, behind the frontstage, there is a colorful backstage. All understandings on the frontstage can be described in scene by scene on the back stage. Why does Doctor Wago serve the patients with free medication and medicine? Why does Doctor Wago want to routinely work for those patients in the social programs without receiving money income? And, why does Doctor Wago pray before trying to save the life of patients, not counting for money income to achieve if he successfully helps the patients? Those questions irritating the frontstage can be answered through what happens on the backstage. Many surprises appear on the backstage unseen to the other people. A variety of scenes visible on the backstage is served to complete the holistic understandings towards the meaning of income in the profession of a doctor.

3.2 Mercy and Sincerity Mix Together on the Backstage of Doctor Wago

Various scenes on the frontstage still remain questions to the holistic understandings. In Scene 1, Mr. Min has left the place. When being asked about why Doctor Wago serves Mr. Min with free medication and medicine, the answer is short, "*Lha wong ma Pak Min ae aku mosok minta uang obat. Sakno Pak Min e. Anggep ae mbantu orang ngak punya. Lagian, obat e ya ngak mahal-mahal soro.*" ("Why should I ask for fees from Mr. Min? Let's say that I help a person underprivileged"), said Doctor Wago. This expression stated on the backstage when no more session with the patient on the frontstage. Scene 1 indicates sincerity and mercy to the other people who really in need to a profession of doctor as Doctor Wago has. The backstage in scene 2 about free medication also bears Doctor Wago's expressions, "*Kalo pengobatan kayak gini ya ngak dapat apa-apa. Tapi yang penting, sementara ini, ini yang bisa kulakukan buat Tuhan*" ("It is nothing to count for this kind of medication. But, the most important for this time is that I am doing what I can do as a service to God"). Scene 2 depicts Doctor Wago does not receive materialism income, but his willing to serve to God through his profession is real. The backstage in Scene 1 and 2 is loaded with his service to the community without thinking about the amount of income he does or not accepts. Scene 1 and 2 indicates that there is income specifically different from merely money income.

In scene 3, after the critical moment, Doctor Wago comments "*Semua yah tergantung Tuhan. Bukan aku sing isa nentuno. Masio sini wes usaha kayak apa, kalo memang wes dipanggil Tuhan, isa opo.*" ("All depends upon God. I am not the one who determines. I do my best, but I cannot do anything if God takes the patient away"). His submission to God is clearly illustrated in this scene. Doctor is a profession assumed to be very close to spiritualism values. The backstage of scene 4 shows that Doctor Wago is very delighted when a patient becomes healthy after medication and still remembers him. "*Ya kalau ada orang sembuh trus ketemu di jalan, nyapa trus bilang saya sembuh setelah periksa di dokter, itu rasanya wow gitu*" (Yeah, if there is a patient recovered from illness meets me on the way, then greets me and says that he is getting healthier after medication done by the doctor, I feel really great"). The inner satisfaction of becoming a doctor lies in the recovery of patient under his care. Scene 3 and 4 implies the different values from a merely money income.

On the backstage, there is intrigue in various scenes. Scene 5 for instance, when gathering with his colleagues, a question and more questions about how much income they can get are parts of their talk. Doktor Wago sometimes seems to be worried when being together with his other friends (other doctors). A talk about BPJS (*Badan*

Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial, in English: Social Security Administrator) as the warmest topic amongst them. “*Lah wong dana buat operasi iku mepet pet... kalo biaya gawe lain-lain e ngak cukup ya gaji e dokter e seng dipotong. Harusnya gaji dokter dll e iku cuman Rp 500.000,00 an.. iku wes mesti dibagi kabeh (Maksudnya dokter bedah, dokter anastesi, perawat anastesi, perawat operasi). Iso-iso ben operasi, kita cuman dapet Rp 150.000,00 – Rp 200.000,00. Itu kalo biaya lain Misal e biaya ruang operasi, obat, dan lain-lain... sudah cukup. Kalo ngak cukup, ya gaji e sini yang dipotong lagi.*” (“If the operation fund urges, and if the funds of the other works are not enough, the doctor’s wage is cut. The doctor’s wage with some other items is merely amounted around Rp 500.000,00 and that should be divided also (for surgeon, anesthetist, nurse-anesthetist, and nurse-surgeon). What we can gain is maybe around Rp 150.000,00 to Rp 200.000,00. It doesn’t include the payment for operation room, medicine, and so on. If it’s insufficiently managed, the wage of doctor will be cut for more.) as told by Doctor Wago’s friend. Those problems emerge up worries about the amount of income they will get under BPJS Program. The possible income resource is also one of the main talks with his colleagues. One of the Doctor Wago’s interesting statements is “*Iyo.. Sekolah angel e koyok ngene ngak dibayar blas, malah mbayar.. Padahal kerjo e kene soro koyok ngono. Ntik lek wes kerjo mesti isuk sampe malem.*” (Yes,... Hard process at scholl seems to be unable to pay, but employees should be paid. Though like this, it is more ethical to work together from morning to evening). When with colleagues, there appear some thoughts about money income. Doctor’s environment in fact supports for building concerns regarding the amount of income earned.

Scene 6 shows a very obvious intrigue. When Doctor Wago meets with medicine detailers that offer promise of willing to give money income by a condition, Doctor Wago should be able to "sell" medicine as much as they specify. Mode like this is mostly found in the practice of pharmacy and doctor (Hermawan, 2013). Unfortunately, Doctor Wago refuses “selling” those medicines. He answers “*Emoh ah aku*” (“I do not want it that way”) when a medicine detailer comes to him and offers him more income if he sells medicine as demanded quantity. Doctor Wago des not want to force the patients to pay for medicine that they do not really deed just for the condition of getting more income.

There lie many stories on Doctor Wago’s backstage visible only to hidden observation. The life theater of Doctor Wago about income has been exposed. Various scenes of Doctor Wago show many values in his understandings or significations about income. Doctor Wago does not only orientate on money income. He expresses various meanings of income beyond money income seen on the surface through the doctor’s perspectives.

4. Signification of Income from the Perspective of a Doctor

Doctor Wago’s life theater about income has unlocked the signification of income in various ways. He does not limit his understandings about income through one single perspective known as money income. Scene 1 indicates mercy value in the profession of a doctor. He gets conscious when meeting with patients in need materially. He sincerely gives away free medicine to the patient even though he realizes that his capital would not return back as before. In the terminology of accounting, Doctor Wago has proved to be materially lost (a loss). In fact, he does not really mind the fees for the medicine. He does not count his other operational fees. All is freely given to Mr. Min with “*sakno* (full sense of compassion)” that arises in him. Scene 2 signifies that Doctor Wago sincerely takes a part in most social works even though he should put his own important time away and shares his energy in those social works without being paid for his contribution. The medical service performed is very common to people without differentiation, even he serves his patients with full friendliness. He does not count for how much time he spends and how many patients he serves. Sincerity values have been his part of life (in heart). He does not mind his profit and loss, but he tries to gives the best and the most sincere care as his service to God.

Scene 2 denotes a solid relation between the profession of a doctor and spiritualism. Doctor Wago says that what he serves to patients is a kind of service or worship to God. Scene 3 exhibits a clear relation of a doctor as profession with God that is what the doctor does to patients as cares is finally determined by God. Doctor Wago surrenders all result to God’s authority. Scene 2 and Scene 3 show spiritualism in a life of a doctor. A doctor cannot be free from the Divinity value in his/her profession. Income in a profession of a doctor also signifies the spiritualism of what he/she has done as a part of faith. Scene 4 indicates that the profession as a doctor will have inner satisfaction when successfully healing the patients. This sort of inner satisfaction can be gained in the profession of a doctor. When the

patient is getting healthy, the critical ill patient is getting better, and the patient puts a big trust in a doctor's medication, the inner satisfaction can be reached in heart of a doctor.

In scene 5 and 6, there appears temptation around Doctor Wago in case of human needs. Worries about money income emerge up amongst his colleagues, and the other doctors. He also becomes worried about his money income resource. Doctor's environment seems to bolster this condition. Bigelow & Arndt (2007) label this as self-fulfilling theories in which social environment can greatly influence on and form behaviors of individual. Pharmaceutical environment also predisposes all doctors to orientate in money income. The temptation of "selling" medicines for a more income resource becomes a form of self-fulfilling for doctors. There will be a bigger desire of a doctor to get money income. Money income is still one of the fundamental needs of a doctor.

The results of the research taken from the frontstage and backstage of Doctor Wago show that there is signification of income distinguished from the conventional one of income. Income in the profession as Doctor Wago undergoes is not merely about materialism income, but it has to do with the other significations of income covering spiritualism income, mercy income, sincerity income, and inner-satisfaction income. The spiritualism income performed by Doctor Wago is a kind of submission to God based on his profession and surrenders all the results to God including means of living from his profession. The mercy income is performed in ways of giving medical services to others in need of his hands as a doctor. The sincerity income is exhibited in his care of medical services to other without calculating gains and losses in form of material (money). The inner-satisfaction income is a great feeling inside of a doctor when his/her patient gets better and healthier. The materialism income is still one side considered a basic need by a doctor to fulfill his/her life. Income from the perspective of a doctor denotes that, for a human being, income is a sufficiently physical-need fulfillment as a gift from God which is mercifully, sincerely gained and distributed to reach the primary goal that is inner satisfaction.

5. Conclusion

The signification of income for a doctor does not only concern on money income. Doctor Wago has shown the signification of income in his profession as a doctor. Income also covers spiritualism income in which Doctor Wago runs his profession in forms of service and submission and surrenders all to God, mercy to others in need, sincerity in his medical services without calculating gains and losses, and inner satisfaction after the patient gets well, and materialism income (money income) to fulfill his life needs. Doctor as a profession is basically established under humanity that conveys not merely a signification of materialism income. Income from the perspective of a doctor is a sufficiently physical-need fulfillment as a gift from God which is mercifully, sincerely gained and distributed to reach the primary goal that is inner satisfaction.

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