



Around the Clock: Time and Precarity in Family Life

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Abstract. *This article is based on a qualitative study of middle-class Lithuanian women and men's experiences of precarity related to time deficit. Drawing on the theoretical framework of time as an indicator of precarity, we analyze 39 biographical interviews with middle-class individuals of the specific birth cohort of 1970-1985. Three aspects of their precarious lives, such as 1) long working hours and unsocial work schedules; 2) the lack of quality time with children; and 3) their attitudes towards time deficit and coping mechanisms, are examined. Our analysis suggests that Lithuanian middle-class families have fully adopted the family model promoted by neoliberal economies by privatizing all risks and assuming all responsibilities for their welfare. To adjust to the culture of individualized risks and maintain acceptable living standards related to children's education, leisure and holidays, these families invent efficient time management strategies that often turn into tiresome jobs.*

Keywords: *precarity, family life, time, time deficit, precarization.*

Introduction

The last two decades saw an increase in research on precarity and precarious life. Most attention has been paid to precarious employment and economic dimensions of precarity while family lives, life course trajectories, and inter-generational processes have not been sufficiently examined (Bourdieu et al. 1999; Kalleberg 2011; Vosko 2006; Ba' 2018). Scholars agree that people living precarious lives encounter similar effects of socioeconomic vulnerability and existential and social precarity produced by insecurity, instability, chronic tension, risk and constant competition (Tsianos, Papadopoulos 2006; Arnold 2013). Many factors, including employment, income size,

household structure, access to social services and welfare, social and emotional support networks, and broader sociopolitical conditions, have been considered in defining and conceptualizing precarious life.

Judith Butler (2004) and Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2016) associate precarity with economic and political decisions often not dependent on people's will. In Butler's opinion, precarity is influenced by concrete political decisions that contribute to the destruction of social, material, emotional and psychological support networks that help people survive and flourish. According to Eriksen (2016), in the contemporary world, individuals feel powerless because of their inability to participate in decision-making processes that directly affect their lives and environment. Moreover, the financialization of different sectors, the increasing deficit of democracy amidst the growing power of corporations, the ideology of exponential growth of money, technological progress, production and consumption also add to citizens' sense of powerlessness. Some scholars (Castel 2003; Rizza 2000) argue that precarious life makes people anemic, apolitical, strongly individualistic and socially and economically vulnerable. Paradoxically, despite all the negative effects of precarity, individuals attempt to construct and reconstruct their identities that reflect their precarious ways of being (Fulin 2004; Armano 2010; Murgia 2010).

The 2007–2008 crisis made researchers rethink the precarity produced by the capitalist system. Austerity measures implemented during the crisis (O'Hara 2015; McCluskey 2018) limited welfare state spending to foster private financial initiatives and investments. Significant cuts in public services and the decreasing salaries of public sector employees followed (Radice 2011). The economic decline and austerity contributed even more to the precarization of life because both an increased unemployment and the lack of social security disorganized the labor market and created a niche for occasional, unsystematic and poorly paid jobs (Thornely et al. 2012; Tyler 2013; Clark, Heath 2015; Berntsen 2016). The crisis did not significantly change the lives of the people stuck in unstable and insecure jobs. However, the number of employees that held, before the crisis, steady jobs had to adjust to a less stable and unpredictable life path.

These developments affected people's private lives, including family practices. The precarity that families experience increasingly clashes with the idea of a good and secure life to which people are still attached. This clash creates both frustrations and new ways of coping with increasingly precarious lives. Because of the shrinking of the welfare state and public services, every social risk has to be privatized. Each family is forced to deal with it individually within the confines of its resources and capabilities. Families as independent and autonomous "organizations" must have more

inner resources to meet their needs amidst the conditions of instability and insecurity (Wilson and Chivers Yochim 2015).

One of these essential resources is the time which plays a vital role in families' lives because it becomes a means of their management and control. Moreover, it is a value unit that generates economic, social and emotional profits. In the era of the expansion of non-traditional work forms, "work time" merges with the time of personal life, making individuals simultaneously perform various work and family tasks. It results in individuals' overwork, disappointment, concentration deficit and deteriorating relationships. All this also leaves an imprint on family life.

This article examines Lithuanian family lives by using time as a central organizing concept that points to how their lives become increasingly precarious and how precarious lives are normalized. For our research, we use 39 biographical interviews with married or partnered middle-class men and women of the specific birth cohort of 1970–1985. The active period of the family life course of this cohort (partnership formation, childbirth and child-raising, and marital life) progressed under the conditions of the emerging neoliberal capitalism and social transformations in the decades beginning from 1990, the transition from socialism to capitalism. This cohort of people had started a new epoch of Lithuanian families; however, there is a real gap in its knowledge. Moreover, the research on the ways in which precarity has been socially and economically entrenched in Lithuanian families remains very limited.

The article begins by introducing the key concept –time as a precarity indicator – which frames our analysis. Afterwards, we explain the methodological choices, research context and procedures. In the article's main body, we analyze the biographical interviews with Lithuanian men and women about their family lives. Our analysis foregrounds time as a significant indicator of precarity in Lithuanian families.

Time and Precarious Life: Theoretical Considerations

Time has been turned into a currency in contemporary societies because it is incessantly marked, allocated, divided, consumed and gainfully spent. The changing labor relations partially determine this attitude: employers see their employees' time as a purchased commodity to be gainfully utilized, and employees are obliged to achieve specific results within a shorter period. The imperatives of speed, productivity and efficiency are oriented towards maximum time exploitation with no impediments, particularly those related to employees' private lives (Thompson 1967).

Moreover, the nature of paid and unpaid family work has also changed. Home obligations are increasingly thought of as work, and paid work is often considered an extension of homework. Despite this change, paid work remains prioritized because of its financial rewards, prestige, security, career benefits, and importance to personal identity. Therefore, long work hours at a job are normalized and justified, but household work still seems problematic because it is unpaid and consequently worthless (Hochschild 1997).

The cultural notions of good and bad parenting also influence the planning and organization of time. Time allocated to children becomes the primary measure of good parenting (Hays 1996; Townsend 2002). If paid work requires an excessive amount of time, parents who spend, in their view, insufficient time with their families feel that they wrong them (Kelly et al. 2010). Time here is not merely a quantitative measure because the quality of time spent with children also matters (Garey 1999; Nomaguchi et al. 2005). So-called intensive motherhood (Hays 1996) and involved fatherhood (Coltrane 1996; Townsend 2002) require considerable time resources, personal competencies and everyday efforts. However, time remains a profoundly gendered notion. Despite the pressure that fathers feel about participating in their children's lives, women still spend more time planning their extracurricular activities and making their leisure exciting and valuable (Lareau 2003; Singh 2004). Researchers have noted that working mothers particularly encounter time shortages: around half of working women mention that they lack time to reconcile their professional and family obligations (Bianchi 2009; Milkie et al. 2009).

The issue of time viewed in the context of work-family reconciliation is also double-edged. On the one hand, this reconciliation is difficult because of the interference of paid work in family life (work-to-family conflict) and, on the other hand, the family obligation could impede paid work requirements (family-to-work conflict). Small or disabled children, ill people in need of care or family members' deteriorating health are the most frequent cause of family-to-work conflict. Again, women who are often primary family caretakers experience this conflict most intensively.

An excessive allocation of time for income, financial earnings and profits (work-to-family conflict) push individuals into a vicious circle: on the one hand, social norms and imperatives of good parenting wear people out and frustrate them; on the other hand, their weariness and fatigue prevent them from achieving the desired professional goals (Eriksen 2016). The fear of lagging what is regarded as an appropriate time for paid work and family penetrates the people's minds, making them restless and hyperactive. Although families organize their present as an investment into the future,

the present itself becomes a burden because of an endless list of plans and objectives challenging to achieve.

Thus, we argue that not only the lack of economic, social and cultural capital but also the deficit of time resources significantly affects the precarization of family life. Families with insufficient resources face more challenges in allocating time to necessary everyday tasks and desirable activities. Because of time deficit and the lack of different capitals, lower-class families encounter direct effects of poverty, deprivation, worsening health, work discrimination and diminishing access of their children to quality education while middle-class and well-to-do families experience more latent consequences such as overwork, deteriorating psychological health, exhaustion and tension between the genders (Williams and Boushey 2010). Despite the different standing of these families, precarization affects their lives, resulting in increased vulnerability, insecurity, and uncertainty.

Research Methodology

This article analyzes 39 biographical interviews with 26 women and 13 men born in 1970–1985. Thirty-four informants had a university education, three – higher professional education and two – secondary school education. The majority of them lived in the two largest cities of Lithuania (10 in Vilnius and 17 in Kaunas or Kaunas region) and middle-size cities (10 in Alytus). Twelve informants resided in the countryside or small cities (Pakruojis, Panevėžys and other rural areas). The interviews were conducted in April 2018 – January 2019. The whole sample was comprised of 88 interviews, but we chose only informants who, based on their educational background, employment and the amount of economic, cultural and social capitals (Bourdieu 1986a and 1986b), could be ascribed to the middle-class. The interviewees professional occupations included salesperson, kindergarten teacher, high school teacher, lawyer, business owner, dressmaker, sculptor, civil servant, university lecturer and researcher, manager in a private company, auto mechanic, educational consultant and warehouse worker. We should note that the application of standard models of social stratification in Lithuania as a post-Soviet state is quite complicated. Studies of social stratification in Lithuania have shown that the situation in our country differs significantly from other capitalist countries, where education is one of the most important indicators of social class, which leads to a higher social status and better life chances. Therefore, it is necessary to rely more on the principles of self-identification (Matulionis 2005), i. e., how informants themselves perceive their class position. Following this principle, we selected

the interviewees according to their self-identified class position, including family income, educational background, professional occupation, cultural consumption, social connections and emotional investments in children.

We used an interview guide with eleven sets of questions focusing on different aspects of family lives ranging from the family history to parenting styles and childrearing practices. The issues of family social, cultural and economic capitals were also covered. For the purpose of this article, we chose the parts of the interviews that most explicitly focus on the establishment of a family, the decision to bear children, parenting styles, childrearing pleasures and difficulties, the division of roles in a family, career trajectories, financial needs, subjective sense of security and attitudes towards their own and their children's futures. The median duration of the interviews was two hours. All interviews were audio-recorded and fully transcribed. The informants' names were changed to secure their confidentiality.

In interpreting the interview data, we followed the standard procedures of qualitative analysis (Kvale 2006). We carried out the thematic review of the informants' experiences and feelings around precarity manually to identify commonalities and differences in their attitudes towards family lives. In doing it, we attempted to interpret how personal histories, family practices and the perception of security influenced the interpretations of their lives.

Empirical Findings: Precarious Lives of Middle-Class Families

This chapter analyses biographical interviews with middle-class families that seemingly live normal lives but become increasingly vulnerable economically and socially. The political and social instability, frequent but uneven reforms of education, healthcare, social security sectors and the flexibilization of the labor market in Lithuania directly influence the lives of families that spend a considerable amount of time and effort to adjust to the situation. Although low-income families and parents involved in precarious labor remain the most vulnerable, the changing structure of labor and shrinking services of the welfare state also contribute to the precariousness of middle-class families.

Social, economic and cultural resources that middle-class families accumulate help them cope with precarity. For this reason, any economic, social or personal crisis that may result in the loss of these resources places these families at greater risk of becoming destitute or at least losing the ability to maintain acceptable living standards. The loss of resources limits their possibilities to find time for household chores and hobbies, leisure, self-education and personal improvement.

Paying the most attention to time deficit that significantly contributes to the precarization of Lithuanian families, in this chapter, we focus on three aspects: 1) long working hours and unsocial work schedules; 2) the lack of quality time with children; and 3) the interviewees' attitudes towards time deficit and their coping mechanisms with it.

Long Working Hours and Unsocial Work Schedules

The lack of time in families is most often due to long working hours and intensifying work requirements. The imperatives of speed, efficiency, and productivity define the working life of many Lithuanian employees. Most informants experienced the pressure to do their jobs more efficiently and even encountered their employers' suggestions to cut down on their parent and spouse obligations at home. For instance, a 38-year-old single mother talked about intensifying work requirements that did not correspond to her time resources and skills. She compared her work to a prison where she was forced to work long hours and could not afford time for her personal life. She even felt humiliated when she needed to ask for a day off: "... and how much overtime she [the superior] demanded and wanted that we would come to work at six in the morning although work starts at eight. And if you came at seven or half-past seven you would feel as if you were late. She looked at you angrily all day long" (Informant no. 1, 38-year old). Asked why they had to start work at six if the official start was at eight, the interviewee answered that the tasks were demanding and impossible to perform physically.

Similarly, a 33-year-old man had to leave his previous well-paid job and choose less popular and less-paid jobs because of the increasing workload and long working hours. In his new job, he experienced more pleasure and spent more time with his family. However, to compensate for the loss of income, the man had to find additional work, which also interfered with his family time:

... at school, as I have already mentioned, I didn't have many classes, perhaps three or four hours [per day], but I had ten hours in a furniture factory.... I tried to work around eight hours there but there were always those emergency situations when it was necessary to finish something for the next day, and I had to spend ten hours there.... To tell the truth, you would feel a constant pressure to speed your work up, and it was still impossible to finish everything. And if you did everything on time you would get additional work and had to work at night.

Informant no. 2, 33-year-old

As this example demonstrates, jobs which middle-class individuals get in Lithuania do not always match the perception of middle-class jobs. In the case of the last informant, as a high school teacher, he had to get a carpenter's job just to make ends meet.

Some interviewees complained about the disastrous effects of flexible working hours that lessened their chances to reconcile work and family obligations. Although flexible work hours with somewhat flexible work tasks might seem beneficial for employees, they, in fact, deprived them of clearly defined work schedules and the possibility to plan their family time. Flexible work hours turned into so-called unsocial work schedules: work in the evenings, nights and weekends that inevitably negatively impacted workers' psychological health and family life. According to a woman working in the service sector, because of the long hours (her jobs would either start early in the morning or end late in the evening), she could barely see her children:

... it would happen that [children would ask] "Where is the mother, where is the mother?" but the mother was absent; she was at work from 6 am to 1 am.... And later trucks would come with flowers, and I had to leave for work at 6 in the morning, and I would return only around midnight. In a word, I would leave and come back while my children were asleep.

Informant no. 3, 42-year-old

Moreover, not only the flexible character of work but also spatial and territorial distances determined unsocial work schedules. For instance, some informants worked far away from their residence place (some even in a different town) or public services they needed were located at a considerable distance from their home. This labor mobility was advantageous professionally but created tensions in families: a mobile family member could rarely fully participate in the household work, childcare and childrearing. Accordingly, a family member who worked closer to home had to take up more family responsibilities, and the equal opportunities of both parents to be involved in family activities diminished over time.

Reflecting on her husband's involvement in household chores since he had started his job in a different city, a 34-year-old woman stated that she could no longer drive their children to school. Since she did not have a driver's license, she would take children to school by bus that would take much more time than a car drive. Her husband also had to be relieved of other household tasks:

Before he would do vacuuming and dishes although he did not like to prepare food, but now I am doing everything because he doesn't have time. He returns home around eight in the evening, very late, he is just tired.

Informant no. 4, 34-year-old

Our research also demonstrates that women often chose jobs and schedules not because they liked them but because they best fit their family needs. According to 45-year-old mother, after her child started school she could not divide her workload into full 2.5 days as she had done before but instead spread it to half of a day every weekday, which also was inconvenient for her:

...since I work only a half of a load, I used to work only two and a half days per week and had the rest of the week off, but now I have a different schedule since I have to pick up my child from school

Informant no. 5, 45-year-old

As this example demonstrates, time deficit is also related to gender inequality when women feel more responsibility than men for their families, limiting their professional prospects. In contrast, men choose better-paid jobs that prevent them from the more hands-on approach in family life. In some cases, men did not return home from work for long periods because of the distance or their jobs abroad. Despite financial benefits, women had limited career opportunities. Moreover, intimate relations between partners and emotional support of children lacked in this type of family. Women assumed most responsibility for their families while their “breadwinner” husbands often experienced feelings of abandonment, alienation and loneliness.

The Lack of Quality Time with Children

The quantity and quality of time spent with children that serve as a measure of good or bad parenting (Hays 1996; Townsend 2002) is another crucial aspect of time deficit. Only those parents who spend valuable quality time that increases their children's knowledge and skills and their social and emotional capital (Garey 1999; Nomaguchi et al. 2005) deserve the title of “good parents.” Consequently, certain idleness and non-purposive everyday activities are devalued because of this understanding of “useful” time. For instance, a 36-year-old divorced woman raising an eight-year-old son favored active leisure time for her child in order to further his academic achievement:

I am inclined to let him choose what he wants. I could still see that he does not have a clear inclination to any activity. We will see. The most important thing now is to study and to learn to study because he is lazy and we are still learning how to study. We try to spend weekends together, to do something, to go hiking or swimming or just go somewhere.

Informant no. 6, 36-year-old

Parents, particularly mothers, who could not afford enough quality time with their children felt guilty and disappointed. A 34-year-old woman raising three young children would separate time devoted to her children's basic everyday needs from the time specifically dedicated to fulfilling their emotional and social necessities. The latter was considered more important than the former. When she could not spend enough quality time with the children, she thought that she had failed at her mothering:

I really think that I spend too little [quality] time with my children, I mean eye-to-eye time when we draw or play together because I have many household chores...: to do laundry, to clean.... Everything is on my shoulders because my husband no longer cooks and I have to do it.... But I spend this time only fulfilling the children's basic needs. I really feel now that I spend too little quality time with them.

Informant no. 7, 34-year-old

Similarly, another female informant could not afford enough time for the household work or herself because she wanted to pay more attention to her child. To achieve it, she would schedule a separate time for household work and her child but still felt guilty for not being able to devote all her time to the child:

After returning home and having dinner, I want to do some chores ... and [my son] really tries to help me; he washes dishes just to let me finish everything quickly in order to spend time with him. I really understand that we have only an hour until I put him to bed, and I know that I will have to spend it with him regardless of my personal needs.

Informant no. 8, 45-year-old

Some interviewed mothers used everyday rituals such as time assigned explicitly to children to maintain an emotional connection to them, listen to their everyday stories and relax. Besides being somewhat limited, this time reduced women's stress and their feeling of guilt:

... well, every day I have some time for each girl separately.... We talk about her day, then we do this funny back massage with imaginary animals such as a mouse that runs across her back... I stroke her gently, she relaxes and tells me more about what happened to her during the day, we make jokes.... This ritual takes around ten minutes and it helps to scan the mood of the day and it really helps.

Informant no. 9, 37-year-old

Although not only mothers but also fathers felt pressure to spend more time with children and maintain their involved parenting, in Lithuania, as the interviews demonstrate, men were less inclined than women to reflect on time deficit or feel guilty for not being good parents. First of all, some men thought of their family role in very gendered terms: some activities such as tale-telling or lullaby singing were considered female, while the construction of toys was a masculine pastime. For instance, a 44-year-old father of a little girl did not feel any guilt for not spending more time with his daughter because, in his opinion, men were less suited to be with small children than women. He also added that he liked to tell jokes inappropriate for small children. For this reason, he either had to censor himself or relinquish his duties to his wife:

I think I have enough time with my child. It is difficult [because] of my masculine nature that makes you look at a child differently. Sometimes you want to escape all these children's activities because men are not suited for them.... I would like to take up the construction or repair of toys that are more masculine and if it is possible to divide them into [masculine and feminine]. Mothers are better at educating children.

Informant no. 10, 44-year-old

Secondly, other interviewed men would prefer to be involved fathers but could not afford it because of their stringent work requirements. According to a 42-year-old father of three children, a man “should provide for his family and spend more time with children, but I couldn’t do it.... I do not spend enough time with them [since] I have to work; I return home really late and often don’t see my children at all...” (Informant no. 11, 42-year-old).

Lithuanian men and women increasingly shared household chores, but the understanding that a woman had to do them and a man only helped her was still prevalent among both female and male informants. Therefore, more often than men, women cooked, prepared children for school, took them to bed, did laundry and cleaned the house. Women and men shared more equally only household chores like shopping, driving children

to kindergarten or school, and caring for the house surroundings. As the interviews show, men more often than women cleaned a car, paid for utilities and bought or repaired household appliances.

The interviews also demonstrate that older children were very rarely involved in household chores; they did not help their parents and even could not take care of themselves, namely, prepare food, dress or go to school by themselves. It also contributed to the time deficit and exhaustion that parents experienced. Remembering their childhood, the informants would mention that they had to do all sorts of household jobs, including washing dishes, shopping, cleaning the apartment, taking out the trash and helping parents and grandparents in the garden. In their opinion, the current generation of children had fewer responsibilities. Therefore, parents had to spend more time looking after their children, who were supposed to take care of themselves. Although children's schedules were too busy for any meaningful involvement of them in household chores, it was their parents that had to take the blame for not teaching children to be independent and self-sufficient in their everyday lives.

The quote of a 38-year-old female informant best incarnates the emotion of Lithuanian parents produced by the oft-repeated "I don't have time" excuse:

When you're unhappy at home and your job is difficult and your child is sick and some other [unpleasant] things happen... In fact, I was such a dull unhappy woman with tired eyes who could not enjoy the moment or anything else for that matter. You simply do what you need to do, and you don't have enough strength for anything else, and you are tired because sometimes you have to work on Saturdays and don't have time to rest.

Informant no. 1, 38-year old

This quote also raises a question of the character and purpose of "time for children." Instead of being a pleasurable activity, it appears that this time becomes merely another exhausting job besides paid employment that parents had to put on their agenda.

Victims of Time Deficit and Everyday Coping Mechanisms

As was previously mentioned, the informants, particularly women, would often repeat the phrase "I just don't have time." Women did not have time because of the clash between paid work and childcare and household tasks. Men more often said that paid work was the main factor depriving them of time for their families and their hobbies and leisure.

How did women and men interpret their everyday time and time deficit? Women generally thought of time as a currency to be spent usefully in both their jobs and family, while for men, this currency was only time spent at their paid work. It is possible to presuppose that women felt more substantial anxiety and tension in their attempts to juggle work and family. Most of their time went into maintaining the sense of their family's security and stability in precarious conditions.

Moreover, the female informants transformed their mothering practices into mamapreneurialism (Wilson and Chivers Yochim 2015) by managing their families as constantly evolving businesses, supporting informal employment and advertising the idea of life and work reconciliation. Interestingly, women themselves promoted this “mamapreneural” attitude towards time and attempted to impose it on their husbands/partners and children:

It means that we live in a rush – to earn money, clean the house, take children to intra-school activities, cook and do other things. These are our days. It is also difficult to plan vacations because we often do it on impulse. Perhaps we live this way because everything depends on me, and if something happens, for instance, our car breaks down, everything goes topsy-turvy. Our life is intensive enough.

Informant no. 12, 37-year-old

Most female and male informants considered their own business, remote work and independent employment planning as optimal in reconciling work and family needs. However, despite this advantage, private business and remote work also had some side effects: big responsibility, long working hours, the disappearance of boundaries between paid work and family, reduced leisure, and sleep disorders:

But, in fact, the business is very complex; you could not go to sleep early and there is no respite since you work twenty-four seven..., and perhaps you could earn a thousand euros for yourself. But it is not possible to earn a lot of money, and it's not true.

Informant no. 13, 35-year-old female

When you work at home, it is very difficult to go on vacation. It is difficult to draw the line between holiday, leisure and work.

Informant no. 14, 34-year-old male

Our vacation takes place on weekends. My husband's job influences the duration of our holidays because he works for himself, and we cannot afford to take longer breaks from work.

Informant no. 15, 39-year-old female

Following the sociologists Joan C. Williams and Heather Boushey's (2010) ideas, it is possible to argue that most middle-class Lithuanian families encounter serious problems, including exhaustion, time deficit, and precarious work that interfere with family life. Particularly significant was diminishing time resources in the face of rising living standards. At the same time, these families looked for coping strategies that could alleviate the time deficit.

We distinguished six main strategies. First of all, some informants made their everyday activities repetitive and routine ("We have a routine that we repeat every day. When children are born you have to adjust to them fundamentally" (Informant no. 16, 38-year-old male). The second way to cope with time deficit was to divide family obligations and household chores between the parents. However, this division was far from being egalitarian: women still received more household and childcare work. Thirdly, the informants gave up their hobbies and leisure, such as reading, studying, doing handiwork, going on holidays, engaging in sports, meeting friends and attending cultural events. Fourthly, to cope with the lack of time, they carefully planned their time and extinguished any spontaneity from their lives. The fifth coping strategy was achieved by decreasing their life pace and needs ("...however, it seemed to me that it was more important to find a balance in life and to slow down its pace – not only work and money matters in life. I am trying to balance these things" (Informant no. 17, 39-year-old male). Simple resignation to time deficit could be described as the sixth and final strategy ("I don't have free time at all" (Informant no. 18, 37-year-old female); "How much does my work demand of me? Very much, all my strength, my leisure time, my time with the family and even sleep. Although I get a lot of help, I still have to deprive myself of very many things" (Informant no. 19, 34-year-old female).

Paradoxically, these strategies that emerge as a response to precarious conditions could also strengthen a "culture of insecurity" (Pugh 2015). In this culture of insecurity, both Lithuanian women and men made moral divisions between their economic activity and family practices, and they paid more attention to, in their opinion, morally more valuable activities. Women most often preferred childcare, family's emotional welfare, interpersonal relationships and health, while men favored paid employment. By doing it, the informants attempted to adjust to an

exhaustive list of work and family activities and reduce the emotions of hopelessness and despair.

Conclusion

In this article, we examined time deficit as an indicator of precarious family lives. As the interviews demonstrate, Lithuanian middle-class families of the 1970–1985 cohort have fully adopted the family model promoted by neoliberal economies where the risks were privatized, and all responsibility was transferred to individuals and families. Given the shrinking services of the welfare state, these families became self-reliant units that fought precarity by using their resources and means. They created specific risk managing behaviors in which mothers and sometimes fathers assumed the role of insurance agents managing their family risks. Although the middle-class families had relatively sufficient economic, cultural and social resources and were better equipped to manage risks, nonetheless, they experienced difficulties in doing it.

In order to adjust to the culture of individualized risks, the families needed to succeed in managing their time which was not always possible. Besides paid unemployment, women and men performed a considerable amount of unpaid physical, organizational and emotional work in their families. However, it was women that spend more time and effort in maintaining satisfying family lives. To a large degree, they turned into entrepreneurs (or mamapreneurs) involved in the optimization, rationalization and efficiency of family lives. The men's role remained secondary. In this regard, time or the lack of it was related to the sense of successful or unsuccessful parenting.

The struggle for family stability and security was costly, and it exhausted individuals. An attempt to uphold acceptable living standards related to children's education, leisure, and holidays required excessive time and often turned into a tiresome job. A multitude of activities and the constant time deficit increased individuals' fatigue. The small change in one family member's schedule often significantly affected another's schedule requiring additional efforts and resources and unbalanced life. The research participants lived in a constant hurry called "running and racing" against everyday life. The sense of precarity required families to invent new ways of reorganizing their unstable lives and finding new coping strategies, one of which was an adjustment to everyday risks or crisis ordinariness as if they were a normal thing.

We argue that time will remain a significant aspect in analyzing social inequalities and precarious family lives since the reproduction of inequalities are determined not only by economic, cultural and social capital but also by time deficit. The shortage of time in carrying everyday tasks often prevents individuals from securing stability, life chances and predictable futures and intensifies social inequalities.

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Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, Sociologijos katedra

Laikas ir prekaritetas šeimos gyvenime dirbant visą parą

Santrauka

Straipsnyje gilinamasi į vidurinėsios klasės Lietuvos moterų ir vyrų prekariteto, susijusio su laiko trūkumu, patirtis. Remiantis teorinėmis laiko, kaip prekariteto rodiklio, idėjomis, analizuojami 39 biografiniai interviu su specifinės 1970–1985 m. gimimo kohortos asmenimis. Čia aptariami trys šios gimimo kohortos asmenų prekariško gyvenimo aspektai: 1) ilgos darbo valandos ir asocialūs darbo grafikai; 2) kokybiško laiko su vaikais trūkumas; 3) jų požiūris į laiko deficitą ir jo įveikos mechanizmus. Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidžia, kad vidurinėsios klasės šeimos Lietuvoje visiškai

perėmė neoliberalios ekonomikos propaguojamą šeimos modelį, privatizuodamos rizikas ir prisiimdamos visą atsakomybę už savo gerovę. Siekdamos prisitaikyti prie individualizuotos rizikos kultūros ir išlaikyti priimtinius gyvenimo standartus, susijusius su vaikų mokslu, laisvalaikiu ir atostogomis, šios šeimos išranda efektyvias laiko valdymo strategijas, kurios dažnai virsta nuolatiniu varginančiu darbu.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: prekaritetas, šeimos gyvenimas, laikas, laiko trūkumas, prekarizacija.