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CARE WORK
AT HOME AND ABROAD

Analize – Journal of Gender and Feminist Studies *is an on-line, open access, peer-reviewed international journal that aims to bring into the public arena new ideas and findings in the field of gender and feminist studies and to contribute to the gendering of the social, economic, cultural and political discourses and practices about today's local, national, regional and international realities.*

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The journal publishes studies, position papers, case studies, viewpoints, book reviews from practitioners of all grades and professions, academics and other specialists on the broad spectrum of gender and feminist studies.

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Editorial: Care work at Home and Abroad

Mălina VOICU and Delia Bădoi
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Demographic changes, technological development and the transformation of social policies addressing the new societal challenges are among the factors that are re-shaping care work in the past decades around the globe. Population ageing and international migration led to a significant transformation of population structure, the growth of life expectancy conducing to an extended number of seniors in need of long-term care, while international migration supplied labour force involved in care work in affluent societies and dried it out from home societies of immigrants. Technological development contributed to the extension of a healthy and independent life of seniors and eased the care work by providing medical treatment, appliances and equipment that reduced considerably the amount of work required by long term care. On the other hand, part of the care work performed mainly by women, such as emotional work or looking after children's education is not so much re-shaped by new technologies.

The new developments of social policies generated by the increase in women employment, the transformation of the traditional family pattern and marketization of care work changed family's contribution, as well as the roles inside family in care provision.

Post-communist societies, Romania among them, are particularly affected by these trends, due to the intersection of demographic change and the reconfiguration of social policies during the past three decades. The growth of life expectancy, low fertility rate and massive external migration put significant pressure on care providers, while the restructuring of welfare system after 1990 led to the reduction of state involvement in the provision of care.

The current issue looks at gender roles and housework division from very different angles, shedding light on how gender roles are negotiated and renegotiated under the impact of current societal challenges, as well as on the implications that derive from the readjustment of the gender roles. Although the main focus of this issue is on post-communist countries, the connection between gender roles, the gendered division of housework and its consequences is analysed from a comparative perspective by most of the articles. The articles approach a wide range of topics, using both qualitative and quantitative methods and combining the analysis of gender policies with historical analysis for explaining how post-communist transition intersects with various societal trends, such as international migration, the salience of religious identity in the context of rising religious diversity or the efforts of building a common European gender policy framework.

The articles

This special issue of Analize Journal welcomed both theoretical and empirical contributions tackling the connection between demographic change, the transformation of care work and gender roles in post-communist societies.

Pogan provides an overview of the connection between the gender policies employed by the EU member states and gender roles and the gendered division of housework. Building on the main theoretical approaches in the field, the author shows how the gender policies adopted by the EU member states translate into gaps between men and women concerning employment, earnings, care work and housework. Using administrative data provided by EUROSTAT, the paper underlines the big disparities existing among the EU member states concerning gender roles. Although the approach is a comparative one, the article focuses on Romania and shows that in spite of the very low gender gap on the labour market, Romanian women still carry the burden of care and housework at home.

Voicu inquires on the association between religious identity and housework, considering also how communist past may impact on the gender division of chores. The approach is a cross-sectional comparative one, employing large scale survey data coming from the International Social Survey Programm 2012 and using multilevel regression models. The paper builds on the idea that religious identity intersects with gender identity and people "do gender" to "do religion". Thus, employing tradition gender division of housework, that is rooted in the religious prescription of gender norms, is a way to display your religious identity and this mechanism is more salient in the case of Muslims because Islam is a lived religion and their day to day behaviour is important for displaying religious identity. Also, the paper shows that the gender gap in housework is deeper in case of post-communist countries, because of the uneven division of gender roles within the household promoted by the communist states.

Perini looks at the intersection of several social vulnerabilities affecting the lives of female migrants from Ukraine involved in paid domestic work in Poland. The article employs a historical perspective, analysing how the migration of Polish women for working abroad created a niche on the informal labour market in Poland for immigrants originated in Ukraine. Thus, the status of illegal immigrant combines with the one of a worker on a black labour market in precarious jobs as homemaker and care provider exposing women to important social risks. Moreover, this vulnerability is booster by the communist past and the strong traditional family pattern existing in Poland and relying on the Catholic tradition.

'Nannies that care. An emergent socio-professional category between legal regulations and working arrangements' by Ionela Baluta and Anca Dohotariu is based on qualitative research on nannies' work understood as part of the childcare process. The article investigates how the care workers are related to childcare, to the relationships with both the parents they work for and with the children they take care of. However, the care work goes deeper and acquires the understanding of the economic constraints, as well as the social and cultural factors that contribute to this solution to childcare provision. Besides, the authors formulate theoretical statements regarding the contractualisation of the 'care' occupation that can be often identified and observed as 'informal' work. To reflect more on the nannies' individual choices and professional trajectories, the authors conducted 31 interviews with nannies living and working in the Bucharest – Ilfov region. The content analysis reflects the social dynamics of care working arrangements and gender roles in the current social values and practices regarding the childcare process in Romania.

Delia Badoi in 'Gender regimes and precariousness in the neoliberal academy: The specific case of Romania' examines how the neoliberal requirements and new managerial changes are affecting the employment situation in the Romanian higher education. She investigates how these changes are affecting the gender representation in higher education in terms of the structure of gendered career opportunities interconnected with the care issues and work-related precariousness. Her analysis on secondary data from the EUROSTAT, Labour Force Survey, National Statistics Institute of Romania, MORE 3 Survey and labour policy analysis intended to critically expose an example of 'privileged' precariousness of the academic work in a comparative context of Romania and the European Union countries. One of article's conclusion is showing that the interrelations between gender, care and precariousness (Canizzo, 2017; Busso & Rivetti, 2014) have an impact on career and life prospects that affects women differently than men - emotionally, intellectually and socially (Murgia et al, 2018, Ivancheva et. 2019, Cardozo, 2016).

This special issue opens the door o further investigation of how gender roles and housework transformed in the past three decades. However, many areas remained unexplored and future research should focus on new developments of gendered housework division in the context of transnationalism and Europeanization, by looking at the convergence and divergence of gender roles and gender norms in Europe.

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Gap and Convergence in the Gendered Division of Labour

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Abstract

When using comparative glasses for women and men, the life-courses of the two genders are frequently defined and described by "gaps", "inequality" or "discrimination". Gender mainstreaming is obvious in most European strategies, programs or directives and national governments and stakeholders from across the civilized world decide, act and legislate preoccupied by the "gender issue". For many years the roles of women and men were clearly delimitated, until the last decades, when the boundaries between what should be assigned to the two genders started to become blurrier and questionable, due to scientific, technological, economic, demographic and alert social transformations. For Romania, the period after the revolution of 1989 was marked by roles` reconfigurations, because economic and political instability, lower state control concerning both work and family, the opened boundaries, followed by European integration, influenced all life sectors.

Considering such trends, this article aims to describe the actual context regarding the gendered housework and care distribution, in the broader framework of labour division, using both previous empirical findings and data issued at European level. The analysis will also involve the summarization of existing theoretical perspectives regarding the subject, together with European policies concerning gender strategies. Although the general trend is towards convergence, especially when looking at paid-work, housework and children upbringing are still defined by gender imparities, even if the gap diminished slightly in this domain also, with various patterns among individuals, cohorts and countries.

Key words: gender, housework, employment, labour division

1. The context

Labour division can be understood in terms of paid versus unpaid work. While the first type was deployed outside the house by men, unpaid work, consisting of housework and care, was generally and for many years unquestionably assigned to women (Sullivan in Risman et al 2018: 377-378). The demographic, technological, economic and social accelerated transformations of the last 30 years reshaped distinctions between what was generally attributed to men and women, while family roles, structure and functioning also undergone through some changes that made the need of paid care a first page research topic, for both academia and general public (Williams and Brennan, 2012). Such reconfigurations are the matter-of-course consequence of demographic trends toward greater life expectancy, especially in rich countries and population aging, migration and depopulation for poorer areas, low fertility rates (Armenia in Risman et al 2018, 475-476). Furthermore, scientific and technological development foster the provision of adequate medical treatment for large categories of health issues, together with other up-to date equipment contributing to longer lives for elderly people, although the need for care, especially emotional one hasn`t yet find a replacement. There are also other demographic trends that tend to impact the labour division landscape, such as migration, which can "bring along significant and highly remarkable contribution to the welfare of the European Union's Member States, both in the years to come and on the longer term, offering viable solutions to the lack of workforce, providing high-skilled professionals for the European developing economies, and ensuring aid in solving the issue of aging population throughout the European continent" (Porumbescu 2019: 38). Nevertheless, poorer origin countries of those immigrants lack workforce, contributing to extra-burden on the shoulders of the ones left at home (Williams and Brennan, 2012).

All above mentioned factors, predominantly met in occidental cultures, reoriented entire states` economy, making services, an area where women are predominant, a key sector in their functioning (Eurostat 2019). Although computers technology and artificial intelligence tend to replace human work in many domains, from factories, production and supplying chains to online commerce or financial services (Pouliakas, 2019), care work, even if we refer to children, old generations or other categories in need is still human-based and mostly performed by females (idem). The work done inside the extended family decades ago, for free, is now replaced in some cases by paid work of someone from outside the family.

Considering these trends, European stakeholders and nation-states try to adapt to the changes they entail through different strategies and policies which many times involve public sphere but fail to adequately regulate the private domain (Laperrière & Orloff in Risman et al 2018). Furthermore, research shows that women continue to accomplish the majority of household activities, even if they share the breadwinner position with the partner, meaning that housework divides between the two partners to a lesser extent, but variable among European countries (Voicu, et al 2008). Family has also been seen as an institution fundamentally described by gender inequality (Armenia in Risman et al 2018), but these inequalities change over time, in a different rhythm.

Different patterns of housework and labour distribution between the two partners are sometimes associated with variations in gender attitudes toward gender equality, which can be observed at both individual level and country level and scholars link changes in gender beliefs to modernization. Here, the structural perspective of Wilensky (2002) is better explaining the change in gender attitudes and beliefs at individual level, while Inglehart`s value-orientated explanation is more suitable in describing national-level variations, according to Bergh (2006). Inglehart and his colleagues see modernization, economic development and democracy as the prerequisites for more egalitarian gender beliefs being part of the general shift toward tolerance (Inglehart et al 2002). Their perspective can be understood in the broader idea of considering technological development as a key factor in reducing inequality (Bell 1973). Empirical research showed that gender ideology proved to be less affected by women`s participation in the labour market, compared to attitudes towards women employment in Romania (Voicu & Tufiș 2012). The results of the same study reported that between 1993 and 2008 an ascending trend towards sharing egalitarian beliefs characterized Romanian population.

Religious background was also among the formulated and tested hypothesis regarding gender inequalities, different patterns in gender beliefs and the division of housework (Lesthaeghe 1983; Voicu et al 2008). A European level analysis based on the data from the second wave of the European Social Survey investigated the influence of religion and technological development on the sharing of domestic work (Voicu, et al 2008). Aimed here were the country`s level of technological development together with religious orientation and behavior, while controlling for the other factors that research and theory address when explaining housework division. According to cross-national comparisons, post-communist countries proved to be characterized by a more

equalitarian sharing of domestic activities, while Catholic societies are less egalitarian in housework sharing (*ibidem*).

Nevertheless, research found a decreasing trend regarding women`s housework, together with a much lower increase of men`s implication in this kind of activities, doubled by an increased trend of men`s implication in childcare, at global level. Those trends, together with cross-national variation, especially regarding women, can be easily observed in the following figure:

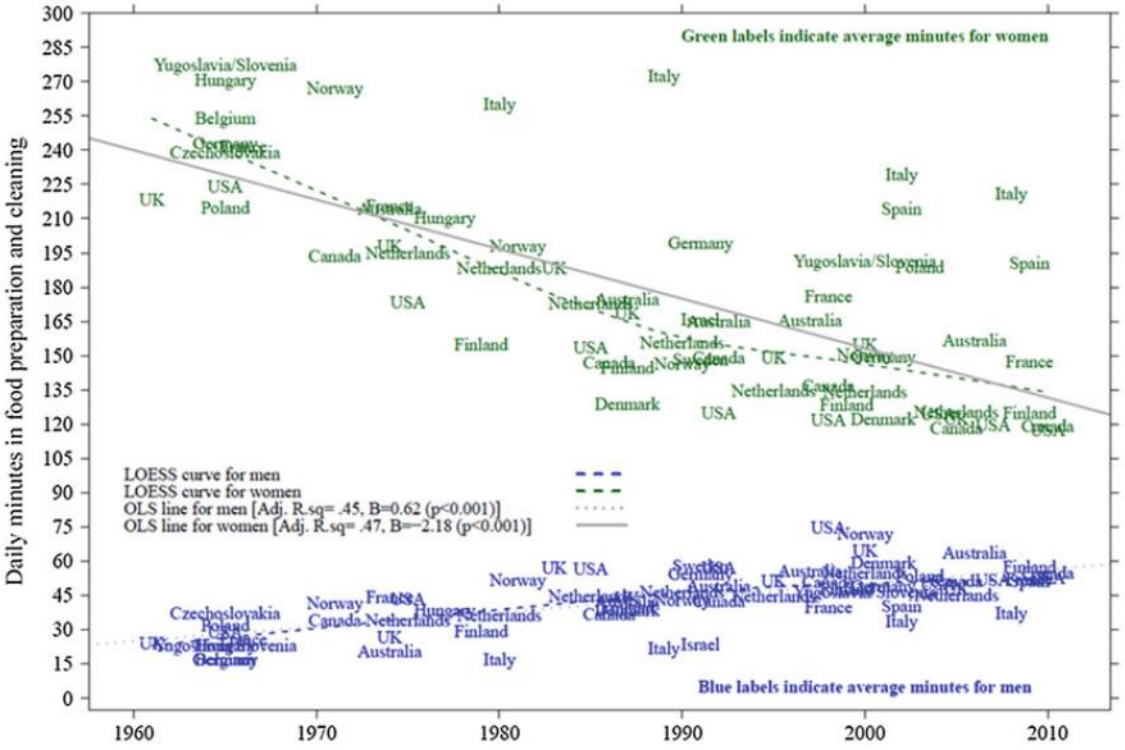

Figure 1: Average minutes in core housework for women and men (1961-2011), (Altintas and Sullivan 2016)

Considering the actual context and trends regarding housework, in the following section we will focus our attention on the theoretical models that aim to explain the division of household activities.

2. Theoretical models regarding the division of housework

Ann Oakley (1974) is among the first scholars who addressed the routine, boring and unwanted tasks of household labour, usually assigned to women, bringing the division of housework in the sociological arena. Previous research saw the two domains, of family care and paid work outside the house, as two separate spheres, classically differently assigned to men and

women. Such a biologically conditioned segregation was both functionally efficient and economically advantageous, according to Becker`s trade model based on the assumption of economic rationality (Becker 1981). This model was appropriate for the middle-class society of the 1960`s, where modernization and industrialization brought jobs for men in factories, mines and sometimes public sector. For agrarian societies, as is the case of Romania and lower classes, the first years of the previous century were characterized by a greater similarity between the two genders concerning their work, as the activity of both women and men was mainly orientated toward economic survival and agriculture was the main provider.

The publication of Hochschild and Machung (1989), "The Second Shift", referring to the work that has to be done at home, after the "first shift" on the labour market, revealed that even if women entered the workforce, having jobs "outside the home", domestic duties still remained mainly their responsibility. Nowadays, different patterns, spread around the globe, influenced by individual level and country level causalities can describe the distribution of housework, still mainly defined as unequal. Various theoretical perspectives try to explain the division of household work and care, being frequently grouped in two main categories of approaches - the ones that use individual-level explanations and the ones that employ country-level factors.

Housework division was seen as a result of an economic negotiation between the two partners, determined by the market income (seen as a result of paid employment) of the spouses, from the partners` relative resources perspective. Thus, according to this rational path, the partner with the highest wage will be less involved in house chores, and women`s employment will lead to fewer domestic tasks for them (Becker 1981). Continuing and developing the partners` relative resources theory, the marital bargaining perspective brings additional understanding, introducing new instances beyond economic negotiation in the division of housework (Blood & Wolfe 1960). The market income of the partners` in is not the only resource under discussion according to this theory, because other individual resources can also add to it and influence negotiations of paid-unpaid work. The two spouses are seen in a dependency relation which is firstly defined by a housekeeper wife and a breadwinner husband. The female partner`s enrolment in paid work, outside the house, is expected, according to the dependency theory, to generate for her greater bargaining power inside the family, which will be translated into less housework.

Another approach that addresses individual-level characteristics in explaining the division of domestic duties is considering time availability as the main key in this equation. According to

the time availability perspective, the two partners rationally distribute their house chores depending on the free time each of them has, without considering the gender (Voicu, et al 2008: 366).

Moving the emphasize from rational economic models to rather subtle aspects as values and attitudes, the gender ideology perspective assumes that domestic duties are shared between the two partners differently, according to their traditional or egalitarian gender ideology. Worth mentioning here is the doing gender perspective of West and Zimmerman (1987), seen as a derivate from the "gender displays" concept of Gofman (Sullivan in Risman et al 2018: 379). "Doing gender" refers to the continuous process that builds gender through everyday interactions and behaviors, the intimate couple relations being a fertile terrain for "doing gender" while the routine housework contributes to the consolidation of the gender beliefs and attitudes, which will impact future interactions.

Although presented separately, the above-mentioned perspectives can be used as complementary lenses in addressing and understanding the gendered division of housework. Even if gender may seem a rather private issue, scholars have early understood that this territory of personal and couple negotiations and interactions is also molded by external determinants, united under the umbrella of country-level factors. Frequently discussed in this context are culture and structure, translated into cultural norms and institutional factors that shape the gendered division of work, both paid and unpaid, in the house or outside the house. Furthermore, the disciplinary and redistributive functions of the state, manifested through social provision or legislative regulation were understood as shaping gender relations (Laperrière & Orloff in Risman et al 2018: 227).

The institutional vehicles used by the welfare states in order to promote or protect their desirable, valuable norms, attitudes or behaviors in a certain period of time also interact with individual-level factors, above explained. Scholars mention here the time lag that interferes between the three pillars – culture, structure and action and emphasize the bidirectional relation regarding them, as the "influence that macro-level norms and regulatory systems have on individual-level socialization and interaction is recursively linked to the influence that marital and peer interaction has on the public discourse" (Sullivan in Risman et al 2018: 381). This perspective is useful in understanding the changes in housework division (micro-level) as a consequence of transformations suffered by the regulatory systems (macro-level) and shifts at cultural level.

Nevertheless, welfare states became aware, decades ago, of the general importance of gender in defining their political regime, legislative tendencies, economic forecasting, as the silent, necessary and usually unpaid housework, mostly performed by women arrived as a well-consolidated theme in the public discourse. But things were not always the same, as this interest and social awareness are the result of feminist scholars who emphasized the contribution of women`s housework, contribution on which both men and states relied, considering it available so that husbands could participate in the paid workforce, while wives had to face multiple challenges and barriers or remain silent and unpaid in their housework and care, a "second-class status" (Laperrière & Orloff in Risman et al 2018: 229).

Despite the actual acknowledged existence and importance of the "gender issue" in any developed economy, trends in beliefs and behaviors are not uniform, neither within countries, nor between countries and time positioning is another criteria that can describe variation (Voicu & Tufiș 2012; Lee et al 2010; Inglehart & Welzel 2005).

3. Policies and strategies addressing the gendered division of labour

Gender mainstreaming is a common feature of actual European policies, while gender equality is frequently mentioned as a central objective of the European Union, according to the Treaty on European Union, where the second article enumerates solidarity and equality between women and men among pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance and justice as common values of the Member States (Treaty on European Union 1992). Moreover, the third article of the same treaty enumerates full employment together with a balanced economic growth as actions meant to be implemented at the Union level. The European Commission uses The Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019 as the framework for the actions towards gender equality. The areas on which this strategy focuses are: "increasing female labour market participation and economic independence of women and men, reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women, promoting equality between women and men in decision-making, combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims, promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world" (European Commission 2017). The key areas of action mentioned in the Gender Equality Strategy emerged from the Gender Equality Barometer (2017). According to the recorded answers, approximately three quarters (76%) of the Europeans considered that tackling inequality between men and women should be a priority for the European

Union. The proportion of those who see actions regarding inequality between the two genders as a "must to" for creating a fairer society is even greater (91%). We can see from these directions of action that labour market feminine participation is clearly set on the wall, while housework remains in the back, as we can deduce that gender equality and women`s rights promoting may also refer to the private domain.

One remark has to be done here, regarding the legal status of the European legislation, which is not directly mandatory for the member states, unless nation-states adhere to these regulations and then adopt internal legislative acts that transpose European regulations into national law.

After introducing some of the key European strategies and legislative instruments that address the gender balanced division of labour, in the following section we will see, using the data issued by Eurostat, how different or similar men and women are regarding the work they do, inside or outside the house, the time dedicated to such activities and disparities in their earnings, shifting the analysis from the desires` level to the achievements` one.

4. Gender gap or gender convergence in the division of labour

Eurostat aims to provide a "statistical portrait" of the life of men and women in Europe, stating in its online publication preamble that there are large differences between the lives of female and male European citizens, but there are also similarities (Eurostat 2019). We will begin with the data about housework and childcare, focus on employment patterns, careers and earnings afterwards, with some remarks regarding education, as it influences both labour-market implication and housework, indirectly.

The average employment rate for men in the European Union in 2018 was about 74%, while for women was around 63%, with Romania situated below these values, closer to the end of the ranking. For the same year, 2018, unemployment rates were oppositely distributed, as more women were unemployed than men (7.1% compared to 6.6%). On average, more women than men had part-time work arrangements – 3 women out of 10, 1 man out of 10. Part-time work is seen as an aspect contributing to a better work-family balance.

Besides the employment rates and the proportion of part-time work, management and decision positions held by women and men are frequently analyzed. Although the trend for the last decades was an increase in the number of female managers, the gender gap persists, as the share of women in such positions was not over fifty percent in 2018, in any of the Member States

(Eurostat 2019). The European average of female managers was around 34%, with Romania situating slightly under it (32%). Such data show than men continue the occupy higher positions than women, in all European countries, despite all actions aimed to foster gender-balanced working environments and management. Furthermore, mangers proved to be the professional category defined by the largest pay-gap, at the European Union`s level. Thus, European female managers receive approximately three quarters from the income of a male manager, when speaking about hourly earnings (Eurostat 2017). All other categories of professions were characterized by the same direction of the pay-gap, women earning on average 16% less than men, with various patterns, differing according to labour market sector and country. In Romania, female workers enjoy some of the smallest differences in earnings, compared to men – 3.5% (Eurostat 2017). These comparisons regard the hourly pay, not the total amount of women`s and men`s earnings, as different work arrangements could less impact such an indicator, which still remains sensitive to other individual features, concerning education, previous experience, availability for longer hours and legal constraints. Eurostat (2017) also tells us that occupational gender segregation still affects labour market and women are underrepresented not only in management positions, but in other better-paid sectors, while their number outrages the number of men in domains characterized by lower earnings, as clerical support workers or services and sales workers.

Obviously, the access to a certain profession is conditioned by a series of structural and institutional contingencies, together with individual factors, as competency, aptitudes, interest or availability, for example. Nevertheless, education plays a key role here and the European actual trend is the higher proportion of women than men with a tertiary education level (Eurostat 2018). When looking at the numbers, we see that regarding basic education about 22% of both women and men with ages between 25 and 64 have at most completed lower secondary education level. The equal shares of men and women with low education level completed could be explained by legislative policies concerning alphabetization, because in Europe elementary school became compulsory years ago, so children of both sexes were included in the educational process.

If we shift our attention to the medium level of education, represented by upper-secondary education and post-secondary non-tertiary education, the pattern slightly changes, as more men than women, 48% compared to 44%, had completed the medium level of education in 2018 (Eurostat 2018). Regarding tertiary education, the balance changes, the data from the same report showing that the share of European women who graduated tertiary education was above the share

of men. Thus, 35% of European women and 30% of men aged 25 to 64 had successfully completed tertiary education in 2018. Despite the fact that the share of women that have completed tertiary education outnumbers the proportion of men, in Europe, management and decision positions are still to a greater extent occupied by men. Considering the European context, obviously preoccupied to foster women inclusion in the upper positions, one may expect that the imbalance regarding these higher positions will change in the following years, if we see higher education as an access key to these positions.

Women implication on the labour market is certainly also conditioned by the work that has to be done at home, as other scholars emphasized this interrelating previously – "Women's exit from the labour market, therefore, is less structured by age or the opportunities and constraints of the labour market and more by household care needs" (Vlase & Preoteasa 2017: 9). Moreover, the European statistical bureau draws attention on the different occupation rates, in relation with the number of children (Eurostat 2018). Employment rates are greater for women with one child (72%) compared to women without children (67%) and almost imperceptibly increased for those with two children, reaching 73%. When the number of children is at least three, women employment rates decrease to 58%, while for men is situated around 85%. In the case of masculine population, the fathers of two children registered the higher employment rates, of about 91%. From this data we can see that the increasing number of children increases the differences in employment rates between women and men, with the female population looking after children and the household. Therefore, our analysis will move to data regarding the division of such activities between the representatives of the two genders, among the European countries.

Analyzing housework and childcare activities, Eurostat data for 2016 show us that 9 in 10 women aged 25 to 49, mothers of under 18 children, were involved in their children`s care on a daily basis, while only 68% of males did that. The most egalitarian countries from this perspective proved to be Sweden, with 96 percent of women and 90 percent of men declaring that they take care of their children on a daily basis, together with Slovenia (88% for women and 82% form men). On the opposite pole, Mediterranean countries, Greece and Malta registered the greatest differences between the two genders regarding childcare. Here, the proportion of females involved in childcare activities daily was almost double than that of men`s – 95% for women and 53% for men in Greece, and 93% and 56% in Malta. Romania was situated bellow the European average (92% of women and 68% of men), but the difference between males and females was greater than

the average EU difference. Here, 89% of females declared that they are involved in childcare daily, while only 55% of males participated in such activities.

Figure 2. Daily childcare and education of children, 2016 (% of adults aged 25-49 taking care of and/or educating their children everyday)
(https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/womenmen/bloc-3d.html?lang=en)

Sweden and Greece were again situated at the two opposite ends of the scale measuring involvement in cooking and housework, where the differences between the representatives of the two genders were even larger. Thus, for the entire European Union, 8 in 10 women cooked and/or did housework daily, while 3 out of 10 men were engaged in such chores. Greece held the top position regarding the largest differences between women and men (85% compared to 16%), followed by Italy with 81% of women and 20% of men). In this case, for Romania the differences between men and women regarding housework and cooking are smaller than the European average, showing a smaller gender gap than in other countries.

Figure 3. Daily cooking and housework, 2016 (% of adults aged 18 and over cooking and/or doing housework everyday) (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/womenmen/bloc-3d.html?lang=en)

Worth mentioning here is the situation of Greece, where the difference between the unemployment rates of women and men was the largest among the European countries (24.2% for women and 15.4% for men). Furthermore, Sweden, described by an egalitarian division of domestic duties is the country that leads the ranking of employment rates, for both women and men. Here part-time work arrangements are common for both genders.

The data presented in this section are convergent with previous research that draw attention on the existing gender gap regarding household work, while the labour market disparities concerning men and women work enrolment reduced for the last decades (e.g. Voicu, et al 2008).

5. Conclusions

The dual-earner couple seems to be the modal family in European countries and Romania also, with different patterns regarding the type of employment (full-time or part time, for example). In the same time, availability of technological apparatus meant to ease humans` work reduced the time and effort consumed with domestic labouring, but many activities still have to be accomplished by men and women while care and children upbringing remain defined by human

interaction. European strategies aim to foster gender-balanced policies, women inclusion in the workforce, fighting thus their dependency, reducing the gap in earnings, pension and promoting on discriminatory criteria. Such recommendations can be translated into national legislation and they interact, from the country level, with individual factors that shape gender beliefs, the gendered division of labour, in general and housework and care in particular.

From the data above discussed becomes obvious that higher employment rates for women does not necessary involve a corresponding increase in men`s housework activities. While labour market can be certainly defined by trends towards greater convergence between the representants of the two genders, household chores, together with childcare register a much slighter pace in the rhythm of change. Furthermore, the change is rather defined by decreasing rates of women implication in housework activities, than by men's greater involvement in this sector, as Altintas and Sullivan (2016) showed.

For Romania, the agrarian background, together with the communist period, defined by a full-employment policy, may contribute to a greater similarity between women and men regarding the labour market, compared to other European countries. Previous studies showed that women`s participation in the workforce is associated with more equalitarian gender beliefs (Alwin, Braun and Scott, 1992). Furthermore, economic insecurity that followed the communist period, made the need for two wages an acute one, determining Romanians to find jobs inside or outside the country. Nevertheless, at home, the natality-forcing policies could only bring supplementary burden on women shoulders and foster inequalities. The impact of such country-level characteristics is obviously shaped by individual-level features, as discussed in a previous section. Investigating such explanatory interactions could be seen as a following step of this article, because the aim of the present paper was to explore and describe how labour division is structured for the two genders, in terms of gap and convergence.

The rapidity of social and demographic transformations, as extensive migration, population aging, changing in family patterns and functions, all request further research aiming to explore how paid and un-paid work can meet in a favorable way for both women and men, what strategies mitigate this interaction, how roles restructure for certain categories of persons (single parents; double caregivers –children and elderly; unemployed or refugees, for example), focusing in the mean while on country-level structures and institutions that influence such relations.

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Religion and Housework Division: The Interplay Between Religious and Gender Identity

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Abstract

This article focuses on the connection between religion and gendered division of housework, approaching the relationships based on individual and contextual religious dimensions. Building on social identity theory, the paper looks at how religious practice and identity connects with housework division and what happens in countries with high religious heterogeneity. The research hypotheses are tested using multilevel regression models, employing data from International Social Survey Program 2012 and from the Quality of Government dataset and they are partially supported by the data. The results show that religious identity matters for housework division, but the effects differ depending on religious denomination.

Keywords: housework division, religious identity, religious diversity, quantitative methods

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Despite the significant advancement toward more gender equality in most countries around the globe, the division of housework still remains unbalanced, with women doing a significantly greater part of the lion share as compared to men. Although empirical data proves that women's employment has grown in the last decades in virtually all societies (Wilensky 2005), and people believe more and more in gender equality (Inglehart 2018), at home, women continue to spend more time doing routine work, such as cooking, cleaning, buying groceries, and doing the laundry (Dotti Sani 2014; Geist and Cohen 2011).

The existing literature employs individual as well as contextual factors to explain the persistence of a significant gender gap in chores division. First, one can include the unbalanced power relations within the couple (Davis and Greenstein 2013), with men holding stronger positions in negotiating their contributions to housework division due to their better positions in the labor market, higher incomes, and better education (Parkman 2004; Bianchi et al 2000). An alternative explanation emphasizes the time available for doing housework, which again favors men who usually spend more time at work and less time at home as compared to their female partners (Geist 2005; Presser 1994). A third approach stresses the contribution of gender ideology in explaining this gender gap, with attitudes and value orientation being responsible for the way

couples divide tasks at home (Fuwa, 2004; Geist 2005). Among the contextual factors, the existing literature refers to gender equality at the macro level (Fuwa and Cohen 2007; Geist 2005), for example, in the welfare regime and social policies, by instance universalist welfare regime stimulating the equal share of housework, while the post-communist one having the opposite effect (Hook 2006). Although research on the topic covers a wide range of factors, the existing literature tends to neglect the contribution of cultural factors in shaping housework division.

Besides socio-demographic variables and macro level factors, the literature considers also the role played by culture in shaping housework division among partners, religion being one of them. Religion and family are very closely intertwined, and literature provides strong evidences for how they support each other (Roebuck Bulanda 2011; Wilcox and Jelen 1991; Yadgar 2006). While family socializes the next generation in a culture promoted by a given religious tradition (Housekneckt and Pankhurst 2000), most established churches support traditional family values and emphasize traditional gender roles and gender ideology (Friedland 2002). Thus, one can expect that religiosity and religious organizations endorse an unbalanced housework division due to their preferences for traditional gender ideology. However, many other aspects related to the connection between religiosity and housework division need to be addressed and explained.

The current paper focuses on two aspects related to religiosity and religious culture and their nexus with chores division, namely, the individual religious identification and the level of religious diversity in a country. To my knowledge, no other study approaches these two topics in a comparative perspective and, therefore, the current research aims at answering two questions. First, is there any connection between religious identity and housework division? Second, what is the impact of a country's level of religious diversity on the gender gap in housework? The paper builds on the idea of the intersectionality between gender identity and religious identity and claims that individuals "do gender" because they want to "do religion," and they want to prove their belonging to a certain religious denomination by behaving according to the norms prescribed by that religion (Avishai 2008). On the other hand, living in a country with a high religious diversity may threaten the survival of the religious groups (Voicu, Voicu, Strapcova 2009) that support and strengthen the pro-fertility norms (Inglehart 2018) that reside in traditional gender roles and the rejection of gender equality. Therefore, one can expect that a higher religious diversity goes hand in hand with an uneven gender division of housework.

I test the research hypotheses using data provided by the International Social Survey Programme's module "Family and Changing Gender Roles IV," collected in 2012, and by the Quality of Government dataset in 2013. The first dataset provides survey data collected at the individual level informing about housework division, religious identification, and religious behavior, while the second dataset offers information about the religious diversity in a country. After controlling for the effect of gender ideology and church attendance, the multilevel regression models employed in the current analyses support the research hypotheses, showing that both Catholic and Muslim religious identities are significantly associated with a gendered division of housework. At the same time, the higher the religious diversity in a country, the more uneven the division of housework.

This paper consists of four parts. The first part presents the theoretical background approaching the nexus between religiosity, religious diversity, and housework division and formulating the research hypotheses. The second part introduces the data and variables used in the analyses and methods employed. The third part is dedicated to the results and their interpretation, while the final section draws several conclusions based on the empirical findings and suggests some ideas for further research.

Review of the literature

Theoretical framework

The existing literature points out the contribution of two types of factors in explaining the variation in housework division: individual- and country-level factors.

The approaches focused on individual factors are usually divided into three categories: relative resources, time availability, and gender ideology. First, the relative resources, or the economic dependence, model assumes that housework is unpleasant, and people try to avoid it (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). Thus, those with more resources and higher bargaining power use these elements in negotiating their share of housework within the couple (Knudsen and Waerness 2008). Education and position in the labor market play an important role here, with the partner having the higher income and human capital performing less housework (Fuwa 2004; Greenstein 2004; Presser 1994). Consequently, employed women do less housework as compared to housewives because they have a higher bargaining power (Fuwa 2004; Knudsen and Waerness 2008).

Second, the time availability approach builds on the idea that the housework division is the outcome of the rational decision-making process within the couple (Becker 1993), and the time dedicated to housework depends on the time availability of each partner (Geist 2005; Presser 1994; Ross 1987). Therefore, the partner who spends less time in the labor market can devote more to chores. The empirical research points out that the time spent at work has a greater impact on chores division as compared to employment status (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010).

Third, the gender ideology perspective explains the patterns of housework division by the values and attitudes shared by the partners (Voicu, Voicu, Strapcova, 2009). Traditional gender ideology allots the lion's share of the housework to women, with the female partner traditionally in charge of cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry, while the male partner is supposed to be the breadwinner of the household (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). The modern gender ideology that allots similar roles to both genders tends to reduce the gender gap in performing housework. The gender construction, or "doing gender," perspective derives from the gender ideology model (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). This approach holds that individuals behave according to their gender ideology (West and Zimmerman 1987) and they "do gender" to express their identity. This perspective is rooted in the symbolic interaction theory and holds that gender roles and gender identities are created through social interaction and explains why couples keep a traditional pattern of housework division when the relative resources and time availability models would predict a more even chores division (Erikson 2005; Knudsen and Waerness 2008).

Several other factors are employed to explain how couples divide the housework, among them the household's structure. Larger households accommodating a bigger number of members, as well as the presence of young children, make the domestic work more demanding and increase the time spent on housework (Presser 1994). In addition, age has a significant impact; people belonging to older cohorts are more inclined to share domestic tasks in an uneven way, with women doing more than men (Hank and Jürges 2007).

Both a country's institutional arrangements and its prevailing cultural norms play a role in shaping the pattern of housework division (Treas and Lui 2013). First, in countries, where women are empowered and have similar positions as men in the social structure, a smaller gender gap exists in housework divisions, as it happens in Sweden or Denmark (Balatova and Cohen 2002). In addition, political factors, such as welfare regimes in conservative and post-communist countries, have a less balanced division of housework (Fuwa 2004; Geist 2005), while the national pattern of female employment proved to be relevant too (Treas and Tai 2012). The cultural norms refer to factors like tolerance toward divorce or cohabitation (Balatova and Cohen 2005).

Religion and housework division

The connection between religion and family is well documented in the literature, emphasizing the association between religious beliefs and practices and the preference for traditional gender ideology and gender roles. (Christiano 2000; Roebuck Bulanda 2011; Wilcox and Jelen 1991; Yadgar 2006). While family socialises the next generation into the ingroup's religious culture (Housekneckt and Pankhurst 2000), religion promotes traditional gender ideology and supports the survival of the traditional family model (woman = homemaker, man = breadwinner) (Goldschndeider and Goldschndeide 1988; Porter and Emerson 2013). Thus, the institutions of family and religion support each other, each reinforcing the social norms and behavior needed for the successful survival of the other.

However, the relationship between religion and family is complex, and its influences occur through various channels. Roebuck Bulanda (2011) shows that there is a direct relation between religiosity and family behavior, as well as gender ideology, and this also holds true in the case of housework division. Religiosity is a multidimensional concept covering different aspects, such as religious identification, religious beliefs, and religious behavior (Stark and Glock 1968). The relation between religious beliefs, church attendance and housework division are moderated by gender ideology, as religious beliefs are strongly associated with traditional gender ideology (Voicu, Voicu, Strapcova, 2009), which, in turn, makes people adopt a traditional pattern of housework division. Moreover, church attendance ties the individual to the religious community and increases the community's social control over individual family behavior, which points to a direct effect of religious behavior on housework division.

On the other hand, the relation between religious identity and housework is a direct one but more complex and varies from one denomination to another. Religious identity is strongly interconnected with gender identity. According to identity theory, the self includes multiple identities, which cover three different layers: person identities, role identities, and group identities,

and which determine how an actor behaves in various social contexts (Carter 2014). Gender identities are diffuse and crosscut all three layers of self, masculinity and femininity being involved in any type of human interaction (Carter 2014). Gender identity is achieved during the first years of life and becomes a reference for behaving in different contexts. Thus, gender provides a stable repertoire of actions that an individual can use in various social contexts, a toolkit like the one provided by culture for individual life strategies (Swindler 1986). Therefore, an individual can select actions related to their gender identity and use them when performing role identities or when behaving according to social identities.

By design, religious identity is a social identity and helps actors create social bonds with their fellows. Moreover, religious identity is dynamic and actively constructed by social actors in response to internal conflicts and external pressures (Peek 2005). According to the concept of "everyday lived religion," religiosity is not restricted only to formal churched religious practices (McGurie 2008). Instead, religiosity is embodied in various daily life practices that contribute to the production of religious identity and play the role of identity markers. Moreover, when individuals identify strongly with their ingroup, they act as group members (Ellmers 1993). Thus, by performing the actions prescribed by religion in daily life, individuals "do religion," and this distinguishes religious and nonreligious persons (Avishai 2008).

Thus, religious identity can employ gender and tools related to gender identity to stress an individual's belonging to a certain religious group. For instance, Islam prescribes domestic roles for women and places them at home as housekeepers, which keeps women from the MENA region outside the labor market. In this case, the women assume a traditional gender role because they want to stress their religious identity (Hayo and Caris 2013). In the same way, people behave at home according to what their religion prescribes regarding gender roles and divide the domestic work accordingly to stress their belonging to a religious community. Thus, one can say that people "do gender" because they "do religion".

Moreover, "doing gender" implies that individuals act according to the prescribed norms and gender expectations of their ingroup culture. However, these norms can vary from one group to another and from one culture to another because gender norms are not universal but are culturally dependent (McInnes 1998). Therefore, "doing gender" can lead to different results in the case of different religious groups. Although all great religious traditions emphasize traditional gender ideology, different denominations stress different aspects of traditional gender ideology (Roebuck Bulanda 2011). Therefore, "doing gender" might have different outcomes depending on religious denomination. For instance, Catholics stress the role of mother as caregiver (Christiano 2000), Evangelical Protestants emphasize the male authority within the family (Bartowski 2001; Ellison and Bartowski 2002), and Orthodox Christians promote female obedience (Voicu, Voicu, Strapcova, 2009).

On the other hand, Islam encourages the traditional gender ideology similar to other religious traditions but differs in one respect that may have significant consequences for "doing gender." While Christian denominations emphasize the ideological and moral aspects of religiosity, Islam is more focused on "doing religion" as a "way of life" rather than a collection of

theological writings (Alghafli et al. 2014; Jeldtoft 2011). Thus, being Muslim is not only a question of belonging but also of question of behaving as Muslim and, consequently, "doing gender" is more important for Muslims as compared to other denominations.

However, beyond individual religiosity, a country's religious culture may have an impact on the gender division of housework too. Religious diversity impacts national patterns of housework division in several ways. Social diversity challenges social identities by dividing societies into "us" and "them" and fosters potential threats to ingroup cultures and social identity (Steele et al. 2002). Moreover, religious diversity creates impermeable intergroup boundaries because religious identity is acquired early in life, and it is strongly bound to individual identity. Further, religious conversion is not very easy or undertaken very often (Brubaker 2013). According to the social identity theory, when intergroup boundaries are impermeable, people tend to behave as group members, which boosts social identities (Ellemers 1993). Thus, a higher religious diversity makes individuals behave as group members and protect their ingroup culture, which, in turn, impacts family behavior and domestic practices, because family transmits the ingroup culture to the next generation via cultural transmission mechanisms (Bisin and Verdier 2000).

Thus, the effect of religious diversity is twofold. Literature points out that housework, especially food preparation, is an important means of expressing the ingroup culture for ethnic groups (Perry-Jenkins et al. 2011; Pinto and Coltrane 2009), and religion shares similar features with ethnicity regarding cultural maintenance and heritage identity (Ward 2013). Therefore, in context of higher religious diversity, people may follow the prescriptions of their own religious group regarding domestic practices and housework, to preserve their own culture. In this case, the effect of diversity on housework division is a direct one. However, in the case of higher religious diversity, housework can be an identity marker used by individuals to show their belonging to a specific religious group. Accordingly, the connection between religious diversity and housework division is moderated by individual religious identification.

Consequently, one can expect, based on the literature review presented above, that:

(H1) *Religious identity is associated with a traditional division of housework, even after controlling for the effect of gender ideology*.

(H2) *The association differs depending on the religious denomination, with the impact of Muslim identity being stronger as compared to the Christian religious denominations*.

(H3) *The housework division is more traditional in countries with a higher level of religious diversity.*

(H4) *Religious identity associates significantly with an uneven housework division in countries with a higher religious diversity*.

Data measurement and methods

Data and methods

The analyses included in this paper are based on data from the International Social Survey Programme module "Family and Changing Gender Roles IV" carried out in 2012 in 38 countries. The questionnaire provides information about the housework division within the couple and about

religious identification and religious practices, as well as other relevant control variables like the sociodemographic background of the respondent and his/her partner. Due to the missing data on some relevant variables included in the analysis (some countries did not ask all the questions included in the master questionnaire), as well as on religious diversity in several countries, the current paper makes use of 28 countries. The list of countries and the sample size by country is provided in Table 1. The country-level variables were retrieved from the Quality of Government dataset, and they provide relevant information for 2012. The sample used in the analysis includes only people living as a couple (no matter the legal status). The dataset does not provide information regarding the sex of the partner, and I assumed that all couples are heterosexual ones. Listwise deletion of missing data was employed in all models. The final sample size at the individual level was 8564.

Because testing the research hypotheses involves both individual- and country-level variables, the paper makes use of multilevel regression models run in SPSS 23. Six different models have been estimated. The first model is the empty model, which includes only the dependent variable. The purpose of this model is to assess the amount of variance existing among countries. The second model contains only the individual-level variables, excepting gender ideology, while the third model includes only the individual variables but includes gender ideology. The purpose is to assess the mediation effect of gender ideology on religious identity and religious practice on one side, and the target variable on the other. The fourth model tests for the cumulative effects of the individual- and contextual-level variables, while the fifth model includes cross-level interactions between individual religious identity and religious diversity at the country level. The last model checks the random slopes for two independent variables.

Dependent variable

The ISSP 2012 questionnaire provides information about the tasks performed by the respondent or the partner in the household. This analysis focuses on four tasks that are routine work usually performed by women, such as preparing dinner, cleaning, shopping for groceries, and doing laundry (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). The respondents were asked to indicate whether these tasks are always performed by the respondent, usually performed by the respondent, about equally by the respondent and the spouse/partner, usually performed by the spouse/partner, or always performed by the spouse/partner. Tasks performed by a third person were recoded as having an equal share among the partners. I followed Geist and Cohen (2011) in recording the scale to tap the gender gap in housework. Thus, I assigned the value of -2 if a task was always performed by women and -1 if the task was usually performed by women. Equal share tasks and those completed by a third person were recoded as 0. Tasks usually done by men were assigned the value of -1, and those always completed by men the value of -2. The resulting scale ranges from -8 to +8, with negative values pointing to an uneven division of housework where women performed more than men, while positive values indicated that men assumed a higher share than women.

Independent variables – individual level

Several dummy variables capture the effect of religiosity, one standing for the monthly church and other three for the effect of religious identification with Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Muslim denominations. Gender ideology is captured by an index built as the average score of the individual's answers to the four items measured on a five-point Likert scale. The four items are "A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works" / "All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job" / "A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children" / "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family." The scale ranges from 1 to 5. Higher values point to greater support for gender equality and have a good cross-country reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha having an average of 0.714 and a standard deviation of 0.08 and ranging from 0.828 in Germany to 0.441 in India.

Three dummy variables allow controlling for the effect of relative resources: one recording the woman's employment status, one the man's status, and the third pointing out if the woman has a higher income compared to her partner. The effect of the time availability model is checked by two variables. A dummy variable indicates whether the woman works longer hours than her partner, while the answer to the question "How often during the past three months did you come home from work too tired to do the chores that needed to be done?" was measured on a four-point scale, ranging from 1 "several times a week" to 4 "never" to capture the pressure exerted by the regular working schedule outside home.

Several additional variables control for the effect of sociodemographic background, such as age measured in years, gender tapped by a dummy variable (in which the value of 1 indicates a male respondent), number of persons in the household, and number of toddlers in the household. The effect of education is checked by a variable ranging from 0 to 6, namely, from no formal education to upper-level tertiary education (Master's, PhD). This variable is derived from the country-specific scales measuring education based on the ISCED-97 grid (additional information is available in the ISSP Background Variables Guidelines (http://www.gesis.org/issp/issp-background-variables/).

Independent variables – country level

Religious diversity is measured using fractionalization indexes proposed by Alesina et al. (2003). The index indicates the probability that two randomly selected individuals from a given country will not belong to the same religious groups and ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating a higher diversity. The Gender Equality Index is based on the Gender Inequality Index proposed by United Nation Development Program (additional information can be retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii and points out the effect of a general level of gender equality in a country and takes into account three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and the labor market. The index ranges from 0 to 1 and was recoded so higher values indicate a higher level of gender equality. A dummy variable stands for the effect of living in post-communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for dependent and independent variables

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Individual level				
Housework	-2	2	-0.86	0.78
Church attendance	0	1	0.34	
Catholic	0	1	0.42	
Muslim	0	1	0.02	
Orthodox	0	1	0.02	
Gender (male=1)	0	1	0.48	
Woman employed	0	1	0.54	
Man employed	0	1	0.70	
Woman works longer	0	1	0.43	
Woman has higher income	-3	3	-0.83	1.49
Age	15	96	49	15
Education	0	6	3.27	1.58
Too tired from work	1	4	2.60	1.05
Persons in household	1	27	3.50	1.88
Toddlers in household	0	9	0.36	0.73
Gender ideology	1	5	3.05	0.98
Country level				
Religious fractionalization	0.14	0.86	0.42	0.21
Gender Inequality Index	0.05	0.62	0.22	0.15
Eastern Europe	0	1	0.25	

Results

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that, in every country included in the current analysis, women do more housework then men. However, the disparity is not the same everywhere. Northern Europe displays the most equalitarian pattern of housework division between the two genders, while the difference between time allotted by men and women to do chores was the lowest in Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland, as well as in Canada, Austria, and Venezuela. One should notice, however, that in Venezuela, the dispersion is among the highest in the countries included in the study, which points to a very big heterogeneity and the absence of an established national pattern.

Table 2. Sample size and housework division between men and women by country mean and standard deviation

	Mean	SD	Sample size
Argentina	-0.924	0.796	223
Austria	-0.677	0.699	342
Canada	-0.642	0.694	93
Chile	-0.997	0.864	164
Croatia	-1.061	0.700	228
Czech Republic	-1.081	0.719	533
Finland	-0.660	0.617	398
France	-0.958	0.748	629
Germany	-0.884	0.717	461
Iceland	-0.630	0.635	440
India	-0.283	0.812	95
Ireland	-0.822	0.797	332
Israel	-0.816	0.734	356
Japan	-1.266	0.703	298
South Korea	-1.127	0.807	327
Latvia	-0.868	0.737	237
Lithuania	-0.874	0.606	231
Mexico	-0.777	1.070	183
Norway	-0.642	0.630	553
Philippines	-0.974	0.881	247
Poland	-1.067	0.648	246
Slovakia	-1.070	0.614	282
Slovenia	-0.976	0.660	244
South Africa	-0.985	0.825	208
Sweden	-0.563	0.690	354
Switzerland	-0.899	0.725	411
United States	-0.711	0.813	241
Venezuela	-0.668	1.021	208

At the opposite end are the Asian countries, namely, Japan and South Korea, and several countries from Central and Eastern Europe, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Croatia. The data also confirms previous findings, which suggest that, despite the higher level of economic development, Asian countries still lag behind Western Europe and North America when it comes to gender equality (Inglehart, 2018; Schutz Lee et al., 2010). Moreover, the results point clearly to the persistence of the communist legacy in Central and Eastern Europe, where, due to

the policies promoted by the former communist regime, women gained rights equal to men in the labor market, but not at home (Gal and Klingman, 2000; Heitlinger, 1985). Consequently, although the female employment is quite high in the region, the pattern of housework division is still a traditional one. India is an outlier, displaying the lowest level of gender disparity, although the literature does not document a very modern gender ideology, and further investigation is needed regarding the pattern of housework division in this country. Although India seems to be an outlier, the results of the multilevel regression models (available on request) do not change if India is excluded.

Table 3. Unstandardised coefficients for multilevel linear regression models: dependent variable housework sharing between women and men

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Intercept	-0.878 ***	-0.675 ***	-0.938 ***	-0.961 ***	-0.962 ***	-0.859 ***
Individual level						
Church attendance		-0.046 **	-0.031	-0.036 *	-0.036 *	-0.033
Catholic		-0.066 ***	-0.047 *	-0.050 *	-0.051	-0.047
Muslim		-0.224 ***	-0.227 ***	-0.225 ***	-0.593 **	-0.574 **
Orthodox		-0.019	-0.001	0.004	0.004	-0.006
Gender (male=1)		0.355 ***	0.362 ***	0.363 ***	0.363 ***	0.373 ***
Woman employed		-0.042	-0.050	-0.039	-0.039	-0.027
Man employed		0.108	0.112	0.120	0.120	0.083
Woman works longer hours		0.163 ***	0.156 ***	0.156 ***	0.155 ***	0.148 ***
Woman higher income		0.061 ***	0.059 ***	0.058 ***	0.058 ***	0.063 ***
Age		-0.009 ***	-0.008 ***	-0.008 ***	-0.008 ***	-0.008 ***
Education		0.061 ***	0.052 ***	0.052 ***	0.053 ***	0.050 ***
Tired from work		-0.015 *	-0.021 **	-0.021 **	-0.021 **	-0.023 ***
Persons in household		-0.032 ***	-0.029 ***	-0.030 ***	-0.030 ***	-0.031 ***
Toddlers in household		-0.014	-0.023	-0.024 *	-0.023	-0.021
Gender ideology			0.082 ***	0.083 ***	0.083 ***	0.081 ***
Country level						
Religious diversity				-0.290 *	-0.296 *	-0.406 ***
Gender inequality index				0.795 ***	0.802 ***	0.860 ***
Eastern Europe				-0.200 **	-0.199 **	-0.269 ***
Cross-level interactions						
Muslim*Religious diversity					0.916	.901
Catholic*Religious diversity					0.004	.009
R_1^2		.208	.204	.251	.251	
R_2^2				.526	.525	
BIC	70353	21062	19794	19775	19774	19704
Random effects						Variance components
Gender ideology						0.006 *
Gender (male=1)						0.032 **

*** p <.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05; valid N level 1= 8564, valid N level 2 = 28; for empty model F Test = 574, p <.001

The results of the multilevel regression models, shown in Table 3, indicate that there is a significant variance among countries with respect to housework division. The F Test for Model 1 (empty model) is highly significant (F Test = 574, p <.001); therefore, multilevel regression models are appropriated for testing the research hypotheses. Model 2 includes individual-level independent variables, and the variance explained by these variables is only about 20%. One should note that Model 3 tests for the effect of individual-level independent variables, but it also controls for the effect of gender ideology. This extra control does not result in an increase in the explained variance, which remains 20%, as in the previous model. Model 4 controls for the cumulative effects of individual- and country-level independent variables, while Model 5 includes

cross-level interactions between individual religious identity (Muslim and Catholic) and the country's level of religious diversity. The interaction with the Orthodox identity was omitted because the main effect of Orthodox identity on the target variables is not statistically significant. The variance explained by the country-level variables is approximately 52%, whereas, the variance explained by the individual independent variables has slightly increased too. One should mention that adding the cross-level interactions does not result in an increase in the variance explained, as long as the effect of the two interactions proves to be very weak and not significant. The last model employs random slopes for gender and gender ideology based on the Schwarz's Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), which went down from Model 1 to Model 6. Thus, one can say that the last model has the best fit.

Hypothesis one states the connection between religious identification and housework division. The effect of religious identity varies depending on religious denomination, as expected. The effect of Catholic identity is significant in Model 2 but diminishes once we control for the effect of gender ideology and becomes not significant when we control for the interaction with religious diversity at the country level. The results point out that, in the case of Catholic denomination, traditional gender ideology, which comes with religious socialization, plays a leading role in shaping the domestic pattern of housework division. Identification with the Orthodox denomination has a very weak effect and is not significant in any model, thus, it has no effect on the way couples belonging to this denomination divide the chores. Hence, one can say that Catholics "do gender" because they acquire traditional gender ideology as part of their religious socialization but not because they want to show their religious identity, while the Orthodox denomination does not exert any influence, either direct or moderated, on gender ideology by how their believers divide the housework.

As stated in the second hypothesis, Muslim identity has a strong significant effect on housework division even after controlling for the effect of gender ideology and for the interaction between Muslim identity and the country's religious diversity. In fact, the effect of Muslim identity doubles after controlling for the cross-level interaction. The results provide clear evidences that Muslims "do gender" to stress their religious identity and not only because their religion emphasizes traditional gender ideology. Moreover, religious diversity does not interfere with their identity, as long as the effect of interaction is weak and not significant. No matter how diverse the country is, Muslims will display their gendered behavior to stress their belonging to the Muslim denomination. In other words, they "do gender" to "do religion".

Model 4 to Model 6 provide clear evidences that a country's religious diversity impacts the way men and women divide the chores. As expected, people living in countries with a higher religious diversity practice an uneven gender division of housework. The effect persists even when the control for gender ideology is included, showing that it is not only the gender ideology effect that matters but also the fact that individuals tend to protect their ingroup culture from external threat by employing traditional practices related to that culture. They "do gender," not only because their religious group supports the idea that women and men have different roles at home, but because "doing gender" is part of the ingroup culture, is a cultural practice, and they use it to

protect their culture. The third hypothesis is fully supported by the data. However, the interaction between religious identity and religious diversity is not significant for Catholics or Muslims. The effect of religious diversity is, therefore, not moderated by an individual's religious identification, but is a direct effect of people "doing gender" in the context of a high religious diversity, not to show off their identity, but to preserve their ingroup culture.

The effect of control variables related to religiosity partially confirms the findings reported in the literature. Although the effect of church attendance is statistically significant in Model 2, it decreases and becomes not significant when controlling for the effect of gender ideology in Model 3. This shows that church attendance per se does not influence the pattern of housework division, but gender ideology does. Church attendance only exposes people to a traditional gender ideology, but the social control expected due to the closer connection with a community of religious believers who practice traditional gender roles division does not have the expected effect.

The effect of other control variables is similar to that reported by previous studies. Thus, households where the woman earns more than her male partner practice an even distribution of housework, as predicted by the relative resources theory. However, the partner's employment status does not exert a significant effect on the target variables. On the other hand, if the female partner spends more time in the labor market, the chores division is more even, which provides support to the time availability approach. Moreover, if the respondent considers his or her engagement in the labor market a burden and has no time to do the chores, then the division of the housework is uneven. Other individual sociodemographic variables behave in the expected way, with men reporting a significantly more equal division of housework than women. Moreover, education seems to reduce the gender gap in housework, while age has the opposite effect, as well as the number of members in the household, due to the increase in the total time needed for the chores in larger households. The number of toddlers, however, has no significant effect.

At the aggregate level, the results provide findings consistent with those reported by the previous research. The overall level of gender equality in a country matters significantly for the way people divide housework, with countries scoring high on gender equality promoting an even division of housework. As expected, the dummy variable tapping the effect of communist legacies has a significant negative impact on housework division, proving that, even two decades after the communist regime vanished, the policies promoted for half a century have an imprint on the private lives of former communist citizens.

Conclusions

This article focuses on the connection between religion and the gendered division of housework, approaching the relationships based on individual and contextual religious dimensions. Building mainly on social identity theory, the paper looks at how religious practice and religious identity connects with housework division and what happens with chores division in countries with a higher religious heterogeneity. The research hypotheses are tested using multilevel regression models and employing data from the ISSP 2012 module "Family and Changing Gender Roles IV," and from the Quality of Government dataset.

The research hypotheses are partially supported by the data. The current results show that religious identity matters for housework division, but the effects differ depending on religious denomination. Orthodox identity has no connection with housework division, while the negative effect of Catholic identity vanishes after controlling for the cross-level interaction with religious diversity. Muslim identity proved to have the most significant impact on chores division, as predicted by hypothesis two. This effect becomes even stronger after controlling for gender ideology, contextual factors, and their interaction with religious diversity. Thus, according to our results, Muslims "do gender" to "do religion," and not simply because their religious teachings assign different roles to men and women. "Doing gender" is, in the case of Muslims, a way to show off belonging to their religious group, an identity marker similar to the dress code promoted by their culture.

The results show that, in the case of Muslims, religious identity intersects with gender and reinforces traditional gender roles. Thus, the intersection between religion and gender makes a significant contribution to the preservation of a traditional gender division of work among Muslims. Moreover, the effect is not moderated by the religious context, and it persists even after controlling for contextual variables, which means that Muslim identity has an imprint on gendered behavior not on the contextual influences related to the country's level of gender equality or degree of religious heterogeneity.

However, the current sample does not include countries with Muslims religious majorities. With only a few exceptions, the countries considered were Christian. If one considers the minority-majority interplay as a trigger of religious identity, the impact of Muslim identity on housework division may be the outcome of the minority status shared by Muslims in these countries. The same rationale can be employed for explaining why Christian religious identities do not lead to using gendered practices as religious identity markers. Basically, people belonging to Christian denominations do not need to show off their identity to preserve and protect their ingroup culture because they represent the majority, and their identity is not under threat, while Muslims are religious minorities in these countries. Further research should also include countries where Muslims represent the majority and check the impact of Muslim identity on housework division.

On the other hand, the data shows that a country's religious diversity is associated with an uneven division of housework. As stated by the third hypothesis, the relationship is a direct one, with people practicing a traditional division of housework to preserve the culture of their religious ingroup. The results do not provide support for the fourth hypothesis because religious identity did not prove to be a moderator between religious diversity and housework division. Thus, people use housework to preserve their ingroup culture and, by "doing gender," they transmit to the values and behaviors promoted by their religious tradition to the next generations. However, they do not "do gender" in the social context of a higher religious heterogeneity to show off their religious identity and, not simply because they believe that private areas belong to women, and men should not interfere.

The current research represents a snapshot that depicts the connection between religious diversity and housework practices at one moment in time, but the modern world is very dynamic

and, due to international migration flows, a country's religious composition may change over relatively short periods of time. The political events in the last few decades, such as the falling of Berlin Wall and the strong influx of non-European migrants in Western Europe and North America, together with the continued secularization of highly advanced Western democracies, had a significant impact on the religious composition of the Western world. On one hand, traditional Christian denominations lose ground due to secularization, while international migration flows bring significant influxes of people of non-Christian denominations. In this context, religious diversity increased in Western Europe and North America, and this puts pressure on the institutions of traditional families and religious groups. Thus, further research should look at the connection between religious diversity and housework division from a longitudinal perspective and analyze the overtime changes. Moreover, the substantive content, and not just the amount, of diversity should be considered too, as in the case of the current study. Namely, future studies should look at the substantive differences existing among religious groups and analyze whether the cultural distance among religious groups matters for family life and family behaviors.

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"Geographies of Power": Gender Role in Migration from Perspective of Care Work: The Case Study of Poland-Ukraine Border

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Abstract

Within the theoretical framework proposed by Pessar and Mahler (2003) on the impact of the "geography of power" on gender relations in the processes of migration, the paper wants to highlight the importance of the process of negotiation of the gender relationships across national borders and how the interaction of this issue with other factors can contribute to shape migrants' identities – especially of migrant women- as well as their living conditions.

At the base there is the finding that, although –generally speaking- globalization means freedom to cross borders for capital and goods, the freedom of movement for people still depends on their place of birth and on their economic condition (Anderson 2000; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002). In this scenario, the research takes into consideration the case of Poland in relationship with Ukraine. As a former country of emigration, Poland is part of the global system but, starting from its entrance in the Schengen area, it is possible to observe how the rules of the "hierarchies of migration" are now working: Poland, in the last decades, instead of being a country of emigration, has started to become a country of immigration, capturing migrants from the other side of the border, particularly from those countries, like Ukraine, where the gap between the income level and the cost of living has become too huge to afford decent life conditions (Lutz 2008). The stereotyped figure of the woman seen as just a mother and as the only caretaker of the household and the family in catholic and traditionalist countries like Poland, is one of the central elements around which the research is built, reveling both the asymmetry between migrants and native women inside the "new" families and the problem of connection of the migrants women with their own "old" families abroad (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2001). In this sense, starting from the historical framework of traditional roles in the Catholic family, the research will examine the relationship between native women and migrant women in the framework of the "geography of power", in which the elements that make up the border within and through which the analysis develops are represented by the legal / illegal dichotomies, Shengen / non-Shengen, and old / new migrations.

Introduction

After the integration in the European Union (2004), Polish labor market has changed its main features in function of the opening up for foreigners, decided by the government, in 2006. The decision to facilitate the access to the Polish job market was mainly taken because of the shortage of local labor force, resulting from the huge wave of Poles' emigration in 2004 and the consequent desire to plan and pursue a sustained and remarkable economic development. To the

purpose of this research, the effects of the liberation of such incoming migrations fluxes have been taken into consideration, especially with regards to the care and household sector that has undergone evident changings with the arrival of a consistent number of women migrants who have replaced Polish women in those tasks previously considered traditional for the *Matka Polka*'s role: children care, elder people assistance, house-keeping *et similia* (Aziz 2015).

In this scenario, it is important not to underestimate that fact that, in so doing, Polish women have been given the opportunity to pursue better career aspirations and advancements that in past times were not even considered as an option (Blair-Loy and Jacobs 2013).

The methodological approach adopted in this research includes a wide literature review combined with an ethnographic research on the field, using semi-structured interviews with a group of migrant women from Ukraine, in order to gather, as far as possible, the most realistic and updated profile of what is the current situation of the labor care sector in Poland scanned through the lens of a gender perspective.

The Feminization of migration and the role of women in the family

The division by sex significantly determines many areas of social life, such as sexuality, family, education and the economy. It also sets the social roles, status and prestige as well as it is deeply involved in the social division of labor and in the establishing of hierarchies. Feminist researchers and activists believe that the low prestige of the work related to care and to social reproduction is the result of unjust social order, which in times of global economy and migration also manifests itself on such a scale. In the gendered approach to migration it is important to question how gender roles and relations are negotiated across national borders and how the interaction with other factors may shape the identity and the living conditions of the people involved. Patricia Pessar and Sarah Mahler (2003) proposed a theoretical framework called *Gender Geographies of Power*, which consists in dividing into three basic building blocks the impact of gender relations in the processes of migration: the geographical scale, the social location and the geometry of power. The authors point out the large role of the State in shaping gender relations in the transnational space. Other researchers and scholars (for example Lutz 2008) have pointed out that a very important factor involved in the shaping of the life condition of migrants is the issue of *legality*, which basically can be translated into an enforcement of the human rights. The status of being *illegal* enhances susceptibility to abuse by others; fear of immigrants caused by this situation forces them to live outside the law and exposes them to the danger of oppression and violence. With regard to migrant women, illegality increases the risk of sexual harassment, rape, and forced prostitution. In many countries the status of illegality is associated with the lack of access to basic health care, to education and to the difficulty in finding an accommodation (Święćkowska 2008). Migrants – mostly women- who leave their countries to work in private homes or are employed in other services related to care marked by strong gendered hierarchies, are rarely in the position of challenging the dominant order of power. The observations made by Mirjana Morokvasic show that migrants, both women and men, rely on traditional relationships and hierarchies between the sexes and preferably try to use them for their own purposes than to

challenge or deny them (Morokvasic 2007).

Globalization and new division of labor

If we take a look at migration statistics in general, we can notice that most of the migrants are men. So here we have a question: why the topic about feminization of migration has started to become more and more popular? Until the Sixties, women constituted 47% population of migrants on the world and to the end of XX century their participation in migration increased at 49 %. In Poland the difference is even clearer: men – 72% women – 28%. The growing phenomenon of female migration in recent decades arises in the context of global economic and political changes. Generally speaking, these changes have brought widening economic inequality between countries as well as inside them (Castells 2007).

The reduction of family income due to the economic crisis has been depleting entire social groups, especially in the middle and lower classes. The repercussions of this situation, combined with the consequences and neoliberal reforms imposed by the Union on countries already in crisis (Social Watch 2009), appear more serious on women, since they are traditionally responsible for the family well-being: according to some analysts, in the economy Polish crisis the sector of illegally paid labor has boosted, as many entrepreneurs, especially the small ones, try to minimize labor costs and avoid taxation and other costs related to formal hiring. This phenomenon affects women more than men, since women are most often hired for low-paid jobs, particularly in the private services sector (e.g. retail). Other problems of gender equality are the contraction of the clothing sector, with a high female concentration, and the low mobility in the labor market caused by the high cost of rents, especially in small towns in economically depressed areas (Sperl 2009). Financial management and related cuts in education, health and social services affected especially women, because if on one hand this has meant losing their jobs or part of the income, on the other hand, a low level of welfare has meant the withdrawal of the State from promoting social reproduction, pushing these responsibilities back on the families' shoulders, especially on women (Brodie 2009; Ewig 2009).

However, while globalization means freedom to cross borders for capital and goods, the freedom of movement for people depends on their place of birth and on their economic status. The migration policy of the European Union, the United States and other countries belonging to the so-called "first world" determines the hierarchies in the world of migrants, as well as the shape of sexual relationships (Anderson 2000; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002).

Poland, as a former country of emigration, is a part of this global system, and at the same time it is an example of the shifts in the hierarchies, following inter alia as a result of geopolitical changes and border policies of the European Union.

The changing of the political system in 1989, with the incorporation of Poland into the global capitalist economy and the partial opening of the borders, has enabled women and men to migrate in order to find a job, possibly in Western Europe, undoubtedly one of the ways to survive during the transformation process, and according to the worldwide trend, it was characterized by a high degree of feminization. Women in Poland, as in other countries undergoing the same process

of structural adjustment, were strongly hit by the change due to high and long-term unemployment as well as lower wages than men in a general situation of deterioration of the economy in the country before 1989 (Święćkowska 2007). So, one way to deal with this critical situation was the seasonal migration, made possible by the opening of the borders in Western European countries for tourism which, for many emigrants from Poland, meant a partially legal status. In this way, during the Nineties, women from Eastern European countries, significantly replenished the market of domestic work and care in Western Europe, joining a global army of housekeepers and nannies. Due to their partial status of legality, to a relatively small cultural and physical distance from their country and due ability to quickly learn foreign languages and with no problem of discrimination due to the color of the skin, they were in a better position than immigrants from Africa or Asia (Rosińska-Kordasiewicz 2005).

What is more, a characteristic feature of Polish migration for employment in the nineties, especially in the first half, was that the people who were leaving came from small towns with primary and vocational education, without the knowledge of foreign languages, and without previous experience of migration, which increased their vulnerability to negative exploitation and other forms of use and injuries. A lot of women decided to leave and to work as permanent household, mostly in southern Italy or Greece, which is a type of employment characterized by a high risk of abuses by employers (Anderson 2000; Rosińska-Kordasiewicz 2005; Święćkowska 2007). The situation changed after Poland's access to the European Union, joining the Schengen zone, in terms of legality, but not in terms of type of job: like for other immigrant from Eastern European countries, Polish women are employed, mostly, in the area of the social reproduction, especially in private houses since, in order to take care of elders and of children, there is currently no other solutions than hiring immigrant women, putting into operation all those informal migration networks already active in that type of economic sector (Federici 2009).

But, over time, even in Poland, with the born of a new middle class, the phenomenon of hiring migrant women for care duties has become a crucial issue, involving in this case women from Ukraine. So, in the last decades, Poland, instead of being a country of emigration has started to become a country of immigration able to capture migrants from the other side of the border, particularly from those countries, like Ukraine, where the gap between income level and cost of living is too huge to afford decent life conditions.

Home and family in terms of Gender approach

In the Polish social imagination, and also among some feminist researcher, the image of the house and the housework seen from the perspective of middle-class family is still dominating, whose model took shape in the nineteenth century with the development of the towns and the industrial trade. Still nowadays, one of the most incisive reason for Polish women's professional inactivity is the influence of family duties on making decision regarding disengaging from professional activity, permanently or temporarily, influence which is – according to the literature – higher than in other EU countries (Męcina 2018).

Nineteenth-century capitalism and political relations have shaped specific pattern of family, characterized by the typical division of responsibilities, functions and social roles between sexes. This division is presented as the distinction between the public sphere and the private sphere, where home, family and women found themselves on the side of what is private, while professional work, political activities and the men found themselves on the side of what is public. In the classical model of nineteenth-century bourgeois, a man has a recognizable profession, while his wife deals with the organization of the household and of the growing of the children, often with the aid of servants, housekeepers, or nannies. In the twentieth century, especially after the World War II with the automatization of household tasks and other politico-economic changes, the number of hired household helpers generally dropped, while the number of male breadwinners' families increased. It is in this context that women fully experience the contradiction of a growing individualization of society. Although this phenomenon now represents the cornerstone of relational dynamics, some points of friction can be traced on which it has not yet fully taken hold, and in which therefore there are elements of contradiction between models and expectations on the one hand and daily practices from 'other. An exemplary case is represented by family life: although the drive towards individualization has also emerged in this area, traditional forms of organization still remain. On the one hand, a "rhetoric of equality" has spread that produces new bases for gender socialization, whereby women make new self-images and life plans their own: the family continues to be considered a value, but the emphasis is placed on autonomy, independence and personal space. On the other hand, however, the routines of daily life do not always follow this rhetoric: this contrast becomes explosive when men and women live together, making women experience a fracture between myths and practices of modernity (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Inside this framework of general contradictions, risks and instability, the Polish case can be outlined: during the time of the People Republic (1947-1989), in conjunction with the State encouraging women to enter the labor market, a system of so- called women's double burden of professional work and care work was developed, in which the socialist State, in large part, supported the families by the elaboration of a network of nurseries and kindergartens and after-school activities for children.

Starting from the Nineteenth Century, the bourgeois family model was widespread and applicable also among the proletarian peasant families where women, besides the care duties, were compelled to find a paid job outside the family, due to the impossibility to cope with just one earning. They were employed in factories, farms and in the typical tasks of the country work, and for them, a family model in which women were not compelled to work, was perceived as a clear synonym of social advancement. Even today, the frame of the "bourgeois family", with its characteristic division of responsibilities and functions, still dominates the social norms and expectations, although in the last decades there have been large changes both in the labor market and in the family structure. The most evident consequences of this obstinate focus on the "bourgeois model" are – first- to ignore other family forms (e.g. mothers who raise children alone or mixed families) and – second- to put women in a contradictory position and in the impossibility to meet the social expectations (Žarnwoska 2006).

Migration and employment in private houses from a historical perspective

Working in other people's houses is a phenomenon as old as civilization. It took different forms depending on the historical period and the prevailing power relations and property. However, fundamental changes in the dynamics of the social relations, associated with hiring work at home occurred in the last two centuries, in accordance with the development of Capitalism in its various stages. During the pre-capitalism, work as domestic servants in large part was exercised by men. Hiring them was often connected with social status of the employer. Men worked more often in aristocratic families, while the bourgeoisie hired mostly women. The increase in employment of women as domestic servants in the nineteenth century was associated primarily with the growth in demand for this type of work in the homes of enriching bourgeoisie, but also with greater availability of other activities for men. The II Industrial Revolution brought as a consequence not only a strong urbanization, but also the feminization of the domestic servants. This process was associated first with an increase in the number of poor people, especially young women excluded from the market of gainful employments, and second with the increasing number of wealthy families in the cities who started hiring domestic help (Moya 2007). These changes have weakened the earlier paternalistic tradition because servants gradually began to be perceived as workers and not as members of the patriarchal household and both the feudal work and the natural exchange were replaced by periodically paid jobs.

Helma Lutz points out that in Germany the huge number of young women immigrated in the cities induced public interest and there were public talks about the civilizing mission and re-education of girls from rural areas (Lutz 2002). At the end of the XIX Century it seemed necessary to give them a specialization and a lot of training institutions were created. Lutz underlines the continuity as well as the discontinuity in the development of paid domestic work: while at that time the scenario was dominated by internal migration from the countryside to the city, in the XX and in the XXI Century the migration takes place on an international scale. But there are also other differences: while formerly migrations were dominated by young women, and the period of service was sometimes between youth and early marriage, now among the household help is much popular to hire older and married women who have children and a family at home to maintain. This means that today the domestic help is supposed to have a better education than before and, in some cases, the reason why they accept to work as domestic helpers, is that as migrant women, although holding a study degree, they are unable to use their titles in the new country due to validation/correspondence problems (Marchetti 2016).

Deficit of housework and global labor market

The problem of household tasks becomes evident in the XX Century, especially in its second half, thanks to feminist movements for housework wages (Del Re, at alii, 1979). Ironically, as a result of the XXI Century globalization, homework and caring has become a cheap product, that can be purchased and the global market for migrant labor has large resources of these services. In this new scenario, many other feminist requests related to the socialization of care duties and to

the sharing of the domestic work suffered a big defeat. However, with the increase in employment of women in many countries the question of reconciling work, family responsibilities, and especially motherhood started to be popular topic of public debate, although not always talking the problem in a proper way. This is the case of Poland, that, in recent years has seen several campaigns promoting work-life balance for women only, combining paid work and unpaid domestic labor, which many of them do not want to agree or are not able to cope with, due to the double responsibilities (Blair-Loy, Jacobs 2003). As a result, women's relatively high professional activities in presence of familiar burdens are now limited by the decreasing protection of their jobs, not only cutting the number of child-care subsidies but also by lowering or eliminating other form of support such as, for example, maternity leaves and working time demands (Męcina 2018). The situation is aggravated by the inadequacy of the support from the public institutions in the education of children and by the lack of sufficient institutional care for the elderly in aging societies. All of this together adds up to more and more noticeable deficit of domestic and care work. In wealthy families is solved by hiring household help, recruited mainly among immigrant women whose participation in migration has increased significantly in recent decades. The dynamically growing market for services, domestic work and care in the countries of the rich North corresponds with the increasing feminization of migration from the poor South (Yeates 2005). Zlotnik (2003) notes that in the 1960s women constituted 47 per cent of all international migrants; by 1990 that number had increased to 48 per cent and in 2000 to almost 49 per cent. Nevertheless, when taking Europe into account, in 1990 female migrants constituted almost 52 per cent of all migrants and by 2000 the figure had reached 52.4 per cent (Duda-Mikulin 2013). Characteristic for the contemporary migration is also a high proportion of migrant women who are deciding to migrate alone. This is partly due to the fact that their children and other family members do not receive permission to leave their country. This, in turn, is the result of the immigration policy in most developed countries, which is programmed to accept temporary and seasonal migrant workers and reduce or prevent accepting permanent families. Another factor that may be inclined to single emigration are economic conditions. Emigration pays off only because there is a significant difference in wages and cost of living in the country of origin and the country of destination. The money earned and saved (often at the expense of quality of life) on emigration have greater purchasing power in the country of origin, allowing migrants to maintain the family, build a house or pay for children's education, which would be difficult in the country of destination. What is called "circular migration" is established: women work for few months at destination and then find a replacement (a relative, a friend or simply a co-national) and go back home to take care of their own families (children, elderly parents) and then they leave again. The circulation of migrant domestic and care workers goes against their settling down and thus avoids the related integration challenges that European societies would face if migrant domestic carers would bring their families over. However, at the same time, circular domestic work poses important integration challenges for the people involved as they somehow belong nowhere, they hang in-between the two countries (Marchetti and Triandafyllidou 2013).

Taking into consideration the female shares of migrants, it is not to be forgotten that there is also a huge part of women who migrate simply because they see no other motivation than following their husbands or partners, having like this to reinvent themselves in a new country basically starting from zero. Some put great effort to learn the local language as a first big step to integrate into the new society and culture, while others simply adapt to the situation accepting low paid jobs and limiting their social relations to the ring of fellow nationals mostly met thanks to the activity of those sub-communities mentioned before (Askola 2012). So it is evident that the global market for domestic work and care is characterized by high complexity and high segregation: household and caring consist of many different activities, arranged in a kind of hierarchy, which corresponds to the specializations and divisions of gender and ethnicity of employees. At the top of the hierarchy are located butlers and nannies, who are educated in special institutes, e.g. in the UK. As graduates of these reputable schools they can expect to work on the exclusive employment market. Butlers, mostly men, have salaries that are among the highest in the area of domestic work, while nannies and babysitters with a diploma after reputable institute obtain better jobs than other types of nannies. The choice of a nanny and a babysitter is usually made considering the nationality and the language of the candidate: In the UK, nannies and babysitters are traditionally recruited from English-speaking, local women or originating in Australia and New Zealand (Cox 2007). In Germany, in addition to the German language, for childcare other languages are also chose, for example Spanish, the knowledge of which may be beneficial in the future (Lutz 2008). Ethnic assignment of roles and specialization varies depending on changes in social, economic, geopolitical and immigration policy and border and / or the specific nature of migration networks. Countries that until recently were primarily countries of emigration, like the Mediterranean countries (Greece, Italy and Turkey) have become, in the last few decades, countries of immigration. Since the mid-nineties, women from Eastern Europe and former Soviet Republic (Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia) began to be employed in the homes of the middle class in Turkey, which has been and still is a country of exile. Hiring women from these countries is considered easier and more practical than finding suitable local babysitters. Women who come from other countries are more involved in the care, besides they are better educated than the locally available workforce (Akalin 2007).

The working conditions of immigrants in private homes and relationships with employers

Working in private houses for the most part is informal and takes place in the gray economic zone, which means that it cannot be adjusted for a range of duties, standards, safety and health at work. The informal nature of the work means no social protection such as health insurance and pensions, vacations, sick leave or hedge against job loss. Moreover, the house as a private sphere, where there are not agreed labor standards and where female employees are themselves too employers, is a place loaded with a higher risk of abuse by the latter. Relationships both sides, employees and employers, are based on mutual trust. Employers allow female employees to their own privacy, often by giving them the keys to the apartments, while employed persons must

believe the word that they fulfill their promise to pay. However, the trust relationship is asymmetrical to the disadvantage of the employed.

The size of asymmetry and its consequences for immigrant vary depending on a number of factors. The situation of women working hours is different according to people they are working for. In worse situation they are usually permanent workers who are living together with family of employers.

Anderson (2000) distinguishes four basic factors determining the situation of permanent home help: legal or illegal residence, and legal or illegal employment. In the worst position are usually immigrants who have no right of residence in the host country and are employed illegally. Based on research conducted in several European cities during the second half of the nineties, Anderson noted that in the worst situation are women working as domestic servants in Greece, where there is a very restrictive immigration laws and where there is a large number of illegal immigrant women. Deprived of all rights, women are treated as slaves. Are loaded with excessive obligations and poorly paid, they do not receive support in times of illness. There are frequent cases of humiliation and sexual violence.

Domestic help is permanently connected not only with the performance of certain obligations, but also determines the whole area of personal life. Working and living with family isolates and deprives social contacts and limited private life. Many studies show that immigrant women complain that employers are trying to define their roles in terms of continuous availability for work.

In Poland, there are no established standards regarding hours of work, rest or days off, so this is a matter of individual contracts between employer and employee. Interviews with immigrant from Ukraine who work in Polish houses show similar trends as elsewhere: lengthening and thickening of working time (Kindler 2008; Lasota, 2008). Working and living with the family basically means a direct relationship with the employer and a lack of physical and mental distance. Thus, in the eyes of Ukrainian migrant women, for instance, this is still a better condition than the one they previously had in their home country; not to mention the fact that, thanks to the relatively cheap average cost of living in Poland, they are also able to guarantee their family better living standards. Many migrants come following their husbands, who move to Poland to work as manuals or drivers for private companies and accept job position in those sectors where there is no higher interest and request from the side of Polish women. This transformation has been going almost uncontrolled and migrants' displacement where there is a need of caregivers came as a natural solution in the eye of the "hierarchies of migrations": Poland is now an enriching country which means, among all things, that a huger number of women can afford hiring, legally or illegally, foreigners who can take care of the household and perform duties on their behalf, giving them the freedom of pursuing the career path.

Transnational families and transnational maternity

Todays, migrants operating in the global market of domestic work and care have often their own homes, families and children who remained in the country of origin. By taking care of other

people's houses and /or children they create transnational motherhood and family. The shape of these families and motherhood varies depending on how the family structure is in the country of origin, as well as distances and regimes of migration (Lutz 2008). In countries dominated by small family model and by the traditional patriarchal division of responsibilities, like Poland, it is more difficult to find substitute care for children. It usually falls on women from the close family: the mother, the mother in law or the older daughter; less frequently, the sisters as it is more common in South America and the Caribbean, where families are much larger, and women support each other in raising children. Despite the differences in ways of shaping transnational families, what is familiar to most migrant women is the suffering associated with the separation from family, and especially from children (Lutz 2008).

Motherhood is a central category around which migrants build their identity. How they see themselves in the role of mothers, is, however, often determined by what is the social image of motherhood and what are the standards and the obligations imposed on the figure of the mother by the habits in the country of origin. Expectations in conjunction with the suffering due to the separation from children often cause migrant women feelings of guilt. Requirements and standards of good motherhood are often socially constructed around an imaginary child's needs and ignore the needs and opportunities of women. This picture of mother, strongly marked by morality, dominates in Poland. Part of that is total condemnation of abortion, even in cases where the pregnancy originates from rape or it is dangerous for the health and life of mothers.

It is believed that women, for the sake of the child, should give up their own ambitions, pleasure, or even needs. To meet the pattern of good motherhood women often face conflicting requirements, e.g. to be at work and to be with their child, because how else the child can be provided with good food, clothing, housing, and at the same time physical and emotional closeness. Adopting this perspective, recent studies (for example Alizade 2006), focus on the identity aspects of motherhood in the 21st century, highlighting how women's entry into the world of work has changed the way of living the experience of motherhood - intended as maternity - determining a clear ambivalence between the two "careers" of women - working and private - which see their crucial phases unfolding simultaneously (Bianco 1997). Brown and Roberts (2014) describe this ambivalence of modern female identity as a social phenomenon that derives from the relationship that mothers have with the social institution of motherhood and the social expectations associated with this role, in relation to which the representation of the working mother receives a negative treatment, within a cultural model that idealizes sacrificial motherhood instead (O'Reilly, 2010). An example is the Polish discussion about the problem of "euro-orphans"- children left by parents during the last wave of Polish emigration after joining the European Union. This phenomenon is exemplified by the above-described health deficits as a result of emigration of one or both parents. Media are dominated by a tendency to saddle the responsibility for the care and deficit problems with the same parents, and especially with the mothers. An example of that approach is even findable in an article from "Gazeta Wyborcza" (12 May 2008), a major national daily, considered progressive on moral issues. The article describes the story of a teenage boy whose mother left for work abroad, leaving him in the care of grandparents and father. The reason

for media interest in the history was that the boy was missing and for several days he did not return home. Although the father was in place, the main responsibility for the child's emotional problems was blamed to the mother. Also, the fact that her departure was dictated by economic difficulties, did not affect the accusations. The author condemns morally the woman as a bad mother who does not love her child. Admission to the article begins as follows: "15-year-old Maciek for three days wandering the streets. He was searched by the police, teachers and father but not by the mother - because she went abroad to work. "(Kozerawska 2008). The article is also confirmation of conflicting expectations of the parents of migrant workers. The author cites statistics saying that euro-orphans phenomenon concerns the poorest regions of the country, affected by unemployment, but in the last sentence of the text again blames parents for emotional problems of children. There are quoted words of the director of a secondary school in Lodz, who says, "I know pursuit of money, it will not change. But parents should be aware that love and a sense of security - so important for child – is not available to buy for a bag of Euro. "(Kozerawska 2008). This sentence is an example of the falsification of reality, because Lodz and precincts are characterized by a high percentage of unemployment among women, and so emigration is not likely to be "chasing money", rather an economic necessity.

In addition, in Poland there is still existing legacy of the stereotyped *Matka Polka* (Polish Mother), which means being the perfect role-model mother at home, cooking, cleaning and taking care of children. However, the logic that is constructed and experienced by migrant mothers builds addictive relationships which have negative consequences for their lives, as well as for their children, leading to burdensome mutual obligations, disappointment, frustration and nervous breakdowns.

Temporary migration and the question of emancipation

In studies based on interviews, there are numerous examples of the fact that migration is an experience which makes women stronger, gives them a sense of efficiency, financial independence and it is a way to free themselves from patriarchal and repressive compounds community. Migration also affects family relationships change and transformation of social roles. A phenomenon, well recognized in the literature, is to change the role of women in the family due to her gainful employment. However, as indicated by several studies, although women are the main breadwinners, generally does not mean the reversal of roles between men and women. Rarely observed phenomenon is taking over the roles of women by men.

In modern circular migration gains related to migration apply only to temporary transnational household, so a woman can maintain her position as a family feeder just continuing to work in exile. Return often means addiction again on the income of the husband or reducing the level of consumption. It is a cause of falling into the trap of temporary migrants that extends to infinity (Grzymała-Kazłowska 2001). Another problem is the subordination of the growing financial demands of children, or in their own fantasies about the need to support them, even if they are already adults. By contrast, migrants who break up with their husbands or partners, usually face many new difficulties in positioning themselves independent while living in exile. Majority

of problems affect migrants without residence permits in the destination country. Lack of legality means living in constant fear of deportation, deprives them of basic rights and exposes to violence. The situation of women who have semi-legal status is neither so easy and good, they can live in the house but without rights. Their status is very uncertain even if they are not exposed to deportation. They have no health insurance or pension, and their experience and expertise gained during many years of work in private homes is not recognized. If they break up with partners or family in the country, it generally means a loss of social security, such as health insurance and pensions. For many immigrant women the only way to legalize marriage is, unfortunately, a new relationship, which is already at the beginning marked with the asymmetry.

Breaking the asymmetry: migrant women's road to independence

Only recently, the female perspective of migration has been included within the range of general migration theories. Before, as probably already well-known, migrants were often assumed to be gender-neutral and the reasons behind their migration movements gender-blind (Morokvasic, 1983). Having accepted that, it goes without saying that women's independent choice to migrate does not contradict their key role in the household. On the contrary, it can be better assumed as an extension of their maternal of filial duties since a consistent amount of them move with the main intention to provide their families with better living standards also by sending home remittances. To this extent, it is important to underline the importance of breaking the still on-going power asymmetry that keeps many women prisoners among the boundaries defined by their role as migrants. As Tienda and Booth (1991) pointed out, women's migration can be described as both a cause and a consequence of the restructuring gender asymmetries.

Generally speaking, if compared to the male counterparts, migrant women have less control over their own lives thus, spatial distance and financial independence in some cases can be strategically used to resist gender constraints and patriarchal authority. This is not to say that women are still that much reliant on their male counterpart as they were in past times; specifically referring to Poland some positive changings have recently been noted. For instance, while conducting semi-structured interviews with a group of migrant women, based in the city of Wroclaw, it was possible to evict how nowadays possibilities for women to build up their own future are constantly increasing, especially for those cases of high skilled labor migration.

As a supportive example one of the informants, who came from Russia to Poland following the husband, stated that she decided to start looking for a job only after a while as she was very positive about it because it is really a wide sector and in Wroclaw many hiring companies are present. Furthermore, even when she divorced from her partner, loosing like this the main motivation behind her choice to migrate, she resolved to still continue living her life in Poland independently instead of coming back home to her family.

While discussing about breaking asymmetry, it is important not to forget that it is true that some progresses have been made but still, in the preponderance of cases, social class of provenience and level of education play a key role. Saying it with other words, the higher skilled is the migrant the higher are the possibilities to gain independence, particularly in countries like

Poland where there is still an on-going process of labour market transformation, expansion and modernisation which includes incoming fluxes of foreign investors and capitals, from one side demanding huge number of skilled labour force while from the other creating the conditions for a crescent require of low skilled labour force to replace people in those less-paid job considered as "secondary" type, like in the household and constructor sectors. Pursuing this line of work, another aspect derivable from the observation on the field is that in Poland, as previously mention, there is a growing number of Ukrainian migrants that now represents the highest percentage of migrant community on the Polish soil. This statement is also reflected by the fact that they are issued the highest share of working permits, with a total amount of 192.547 permits released in 2017 by the government (statistics are available on the government official website); not to mention that slice of people who work without a legal contract hence they are not taken into consideration in the numbers presented before. For women belonging to this group the price at stake is totally different, whereas they generally come from disadvantageous situations and in the worse of cases, from zones mutilated by armed conflict. Often, migrate is not even their autonomous decisions they are fully in control of, rather it is seen as a part of family survival strategies. It is unnecessary to say that the living conditions they can afford in Poland, even at their lowest, are often better than the ones they have left in their home country, considering not only the relatively close geographical distance between the two countries but also the social advantages thanks to the cultural proximity with Poland, being both groups of Slavic origins.

Migrants from Ukraine usually find a job in Poland in five sectors: construction, agriculture, commerce, catering and services for household. They accept each kind of job making it difficult to break those boundaries we talk about before. As expected, women are still the most vulnerable and exposed to work-related abuses even though, it is notable in this case, to observe that a similar trapping mechanism works for the males as well, since majority of them are hired, for instance, as car drivers for private taxi companies or for other low paid jobs even when they are entitled with a higher educational degree. To sum up, not only the place of provenience and the social status but also the level of schooling play a key role for migrant women in the process of braking the asymmetry. For so, on one hand is doable to affirm some optimistic implementations have been done but, unfortunately, they applied mainly to those female migrants that belong to the most educated segment of the chain. Furthermore, age and ethnicity (Chant 2000, Tyner 1996) perform an extra role in determining relationship between the migrant worker and the wealthy employee. Migration of domestic workers is a form of demand-based migration founded on the gender division of labor in receiving countries (Lazaridis 2000).

This is not to say that this is a permanent condition: there are many cases where the initial situation of asymmetry ended up in gaining an improved status. The effects are contradictory: women might experience increased autonomy as independent migrants while at the same time being trapped in the new required standards dictated by their condition as subordinated helpers.

Conclusions

The intention of this work was not to provide an exhaustive picture of migration circumstances and figures rather to contribute in the shaping of it through the lens of a gender perspective by donating a different angle, the one of migrant women involved in the care work, also using Poland as a case study. Findings demonstrate that, despite the advancements, presently migrants are still trapped in the chains of the global market which, although differently from the past, is still shaping the roles and the figure required according to the labor market lacks, burdening above all women employed as household helpers with social expectation and duties. Women who come in a foreign country with lower educational level, and thus lower expectations, are the ones keener to be subjected to this kind of pressures and, for so, they also face the hardest path if they want to try to get out from the stigma imposed by the asymmetry caused by position as migrants and subordinated workers. On the contrary, higher educated migrants encounter more opportunities to improve their condition and acquire independence and self-control over their own life, not only related to work. This, in turns, applies peculiarly to those countries, like Poland, where there is ongoing economic transformation that shapes the market's requirements for labor force. To conclude, the fact that a consistent number of studies have been developed around the considered topics, and many more are still in progress, might be interpreted as a synonym that something is changing in the way we consider migration which means it is no more to be intended as mainly a male-centric phenomenon but rather a female one as well, also accounted the statistical data about women's involvement in migration fluxes, as this paper aimed at demonstrating.

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Nannies that Care. An Emergent Socio-Professional Category between Legal Regulations and Working Arrangements[1]

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Abstract:

Drawing on qualitative field research conducted in the Bucharest - Ilfov region in 2013, this article approaches nannies' working arrangements, understood as either formal or informal paid activities carried out as part of the childcare process. First, we focus on the social, political, and legislative context in which nannies' work emerged and developed. This analysis is necessary for a better understanding of the main factors that influence the current social values and practices regarding childcare in Romania (from our interviewees' point of view, but also in close connection with the hegemonic cultural meanings regarding childcare, parenting, and mothering). Second, we examine nannies' individual choices and professional trajectories as important indicators for the social dynamics of current care working arrangements and gender roles. Our aim was to identify, on the one hand, the reasons behind choosing formal or informal working arrangements and, on the other hand, nannies' social practices, values, and cultural meanings related to (paid) childcare. We thus sought to understand the extent to which, in contemporary Romania, there is (or not) a real social need regarding the professionalisation of an occupation that can most often be identified and observed as informal work.

Keywords: nannies, childminding, paid childcare, informal care arrangements, Romania

Introduction

From both an ideological and a political point of view, as well as at the level of public policies, the hegemonic childcare model in post-communist Romania is closer to the neo-familialist model[2]. This model is based first and foremost on long paid parental leave schemes (i.e. until the toddler reaches the age of two or three years old), as well as on an underdeveloped provision of public service infrastructure for children under three. Moreover, this childcare model

[1] This paper is based on our research project entitled "Child minders in Bucharest: a shadowed category between law, employment and social norms", funded by the ERSTE Fellowship for Social Research 2013, available in open access at: http://social-research.erstestiftung.net/publication/child-minders-in-bucharest/

[2] Mahon, Rianne (2002) "Child Care: "Toward What Kind of "Social Europe'?", *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 9(3): 346.

is favourable neither for real gender equality, nor for social and ethnic equality[1]. Finding alternative solutions for parents who are both active on the labour market and willing to develop – as equally as possible – their professional careers may be a significant challenge considering the relatively scant options envisaged by the legislative framework in force and by the available childcare provisions. Moreover, given the importance attributed to family home-based childcare (usually undertaken by mothers) and its association with the best interests of the child, parents' (especially mothers') decisions can be notably influenced by the dominant cultural meanings attached to family, motherhood, and gender roles. In addition, the employment conditions of nannies have only recently been regulated (i.e. since 2017). Nevertheless, both the legislative framework in force and the current family and social policy tools seem to remain unresponsive to the transformation of the activities associated with nannies' care work into a formal profession. In the long run, the professionalisation[2] of this occupation would be very useful not only for parents, regardless of their social status, but also from the point of view of women's participation in the labour market.

Based on qualitative field research on nannies' work, understood as either formal or informal activities carried out as part of the childcare process, this article aims to approach the issue of childcare through the lens of nannies' working arrangements. The analysis of the ways in which these care workers relate to childcare, as well as the assessment of their relationships with both the parents they work for and the children they take care of are very useful in order to understand the economic constraints, as well as the social and cultural factors that contribute to this solution to childcare provision. We also seek to understand the extent to which there is (or not) a real social need regarding the contractualisation of an occupation that can most often be identified and observed as informal work.

After the introduction of our conceptual and methodological framework, we will focus on the social, political, and legislative context in which nannies' work emerged and developed. This brief overview is necessary in order to acquire a better understanding of the main factors that influence the current social values and practices regarding childcare in Romania (from our interviewees' point of view, but also in close connection with the hegemonic cultural meanings regarding childcare, parenting, and mothering). Furthermore, the most important part of our article consists of an analysis of the 31 interviews we carried out with nannies living and working in the Bucharest – Ilfov region. In these interviews, we sought to identify and examine nannies' individual choices and professional trajectories, which could be important indicators for the social dynamics of current care working arrangements and gender roles.

[1] *Ibidem*.

[2] For a more detailed analysis of professionalisation as a concept, as well as a concrete example related to childcare in France, see Champy-Remoussenard, Patricia (2008) "Incontournable professionnalisation", *Savoirs*, 2(17): 51-61 ; Aballéa, François (2005), "La professionalisation inachevée des assistantes maternelles", *Revue des politiques sociales et familiales*, 80: 55-65 ; Albérola, Elodie (2009) "La professionalisation des assistantes maternelles : un processus en cours", *Revue des politiques sociales et familiales*, 97: 71-76.

A brief conceptual and methodological framework

Research related to care and caring analysed through the lens of current societal changes underline the importance of re-assessing the ways in which this universal human need is approached and treated, both at the level of political discourse as well as at that of the public policies, institutions, and social practices within democratic regimes. Joan Tronto proposes a very challenging approach to care as a political concept, assuming that it truly has "a potential in transforming current democratic life"[1]. At the same time, care is in fact a multi-layered transversal issue, with very important cultural, normative, and economic dimensions[2] that have already been tackled by researchers from different areas of specialisation in social and political science.

Childcare thus occupies a privileged place within our field research, having also heuristic value for the analysis of women's participation in the labour market, of the issue of migration, as well as of the reconfiguration of the family institution, especially through the lens of gender equality: "The relationship between employment, care and gender is still contentious, going to the heart of beliefs about childhood and parenthood, men's and women's roles"[3]. Furthermore, childcare is central for the most recent investigations addressing the European social model and the redesign of the welfare state[4], as well as for the societal "gender arrangements"[5], "gender contract"[6], and "gender cultural models"[7].

Economic and social factors, migration, and first and foremost the defamilialisation process in the context of the challenges related to gender equality and the transformation of the male breadwinner model, all these issues contributed to the (re)configuration of three models addressing the care deficit in Europe: the neofamilialist model, the "third way" design, as well as the egalitarian model[8]. Obviously, these models are differently articulated in different countries, taking into consideration the nuances, the characteristics, and also the dynamics specific to each national context. Moreover, at the societal level there are always certain needs of particular social actors and social categories that require adequate solutions, solutions that, in fact, the dominant welfare and gender arrangements model is unable to offer. Whenever the neofamilialist model is dominant, childcare is being addressed through long parental leave schemes and the cultural gender contract is conservative and traditionalist, while the services provided by nannies and child-minders represent a rather informal and marginal solution. Nevertheless, they also constitute

[1] Tronto, Joan (2013) *Caring Democracy. Markets, Equality, and Justice*, New York & London: New York University Press, 11.
[2] Pfau-Effinger, B. & Rostgaard, T. eds. (2011) *Care between Work and Welfare in European Societies*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2.
[3] Kamerman, Sheila & Moss, Peter eds. (2011) *The politics of parental leave policies. Children, parenting, gender and the labour market*, Bristol: The Policy Press, 5.
[4] Mahon, Rianne (2002) *art. cit*.
[5] Kamerman, Sheila & Moss, Peter eds. (2011), *op. cit*., 38.
[6] Pfau-Effinger, Brigit (1993) "Modernisation, Culture and Part-time Employment: The Example of Finland and West Germany", *Work, Employment and Society*, 7(3): 390.
[7] Le Feuvre, Nicky & Andriocci, Muriel (2005) "Employment opportunities for women in Europe", in Gabriele Griffin ed., *Doing Women Studies. Employment Opportunities, Personal Impact and Social Consequences*, London & New York: Zed Books, 17.
[8] Mahon, Rianne (2002), *art. cit.*, 346.

certain social practice that can have heuristic value for understanding the tensions and the dynamics related to the dominant welfare and childcare model, especially in relation to the transversal issue of gender equality.

Research on childcare is underdeveloped in Romania, and it is also a significant gap in the comparative studies conducted on a European level. There are however numerous publications that, without being focused explicitly on the issue of childcare, certainly contribute to the understanding of the social and political processes intertwined with the dynamics of childcare in post-communist Romania. These publications generally tackle the following issues: the political dimension of the domestic familialism and maternalism; public policies and the design of public structures, regulations, and provisions for childcare; societal and cultural meanings and stereotypes regarding childhood, parenting, mothering, and gender roles. In our reading, these studies can be grouped into four main categories:

a) research on childcare and education through the lens of the normative influences of parenting as a concept[1], allowing us to acquire a better understanding not only of the social and cultural construction of parenthood and parenting, but also of the childcare constraints and educational responsibilities that the current public policy design assign to the parents. The findings of these studies also reveal that, while emphasis is being placed on parental responsibilities (for children's health, education, and welfare) as well as on children's rights, childcare remains limited to the parents' 'duty' to address the complex needs of their children.

b) research on childcare ideals and childcare arrangements through the lens of parents' choices and solutions[2]. For example, Borbála Kovács developed a grounded theory approach regarding the structural, institutional, and societal factors that influence parenting, childcare, and financial earning at the level of family life. More precisely, the author argues that, while childcare arrangements generally depend on both parents, mothers feel more responsible than their partners for concrete daily childcare activities (they are more likely to change their working schedule or their work place, or even to give up on it).

c) research on family policies, in relation to the issues of gender equality and childcare[3]. This strand of publications shows that current family policies and provisions for care are very significant for the local familialism in Romania, promoting essentialist gender roles and conservative family relations. Moreover, a bottom-up perspective on family policies reveals, among other issues, the cultural tension between the ideal regarding women's professional and

[1] Cojocaru, Daniela (2011) "Attending parenting education programmes in Romania. The case of the Holt Romania Iasi programme", *Revista de Cercetare si Intervenție Socială [Review of Research and Social Intervention]* 32: 140-154; Cojocaru, Daniela (2008) "Foster Care and the Professionalisation of Parenting", *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială [Review of Research and Social Intervention]*, 21: 90-101.
[2] Kovács, Borbála (2018) *Family Policy and the Organization of Childcare. Hierarchies of Care Ideals*, Palgrave-Macmillan.
[3] Dohotariu, Anca (2018) "Parental Leave Provision in Romania between Inherited Tendencies and Legislative Adjustments", *Symposion* 5 (1): 41-57; Dohotariu, Anca (2015) "Family Policies, Gendered Norms and Cultural Meanings in Post-communist Romania", *Analele Universității din Bucureşti. Seria Ştiințe Politice,* XVII (1): 119-137.

financial autonomy and the widespread idea that women have to be the primary caregivers for their children.

d) research on the social construction of gender, as well as on gender equality, gender roles, gender beliefs and values, through the lens of childcare and women's participation in the labour market[1]. On the one hand, these studies emphasise the dynamics of the redefinition of gender roles in relation to gender equality – the latter being promoted especially as a result of the influence that European policies have on the Romanian legislation and public policies. On the other hand, it casts light on the difficulties of this reconfiguration, which are related to: 1). ideological factors (e.g. the influence of the communist past and the association of gender equality with neo-Marxism and left-wing ideology); 2). the current configuration of family policies; 3). the hegemonic conservative regime that shapes cultural meanings related to gender, family life, mothering, and parenting; 4). the gap introduced by the communist regime between promoting an egalitarian model on the labour market and in the public sphere in general, and the economic constraints and important gender inequalities visible at the level of the domestic sphere.

To our knowledge, nannies' work has not yet been addressed by any social science research in post-communist Romania. The emergence of this occupation may be approached through the lens of the agency theory developed in the field of gender studies, and thus can be understood as a response of social actors to a need that remains ignored by the public policies currently in place.

Starting from this approach, in 2013 we conducted a qualitative field research, consisting of 31 in-depth individual interviews with nannies working for both high- and medium-income families living in the Bucharest-Ilfov region. While Bucharest is the largest city in Romania, Ilfov is a county that surrounds the capital city, and which has registered a specific development over the last decades.[2] More precisely, an increasing number of middle- or high-income families with children settled in the region, while daily commuting to the capital city for work, reducing thus parental time available for childcare activities. Overall, Bucharest and Ilfov county are an area characterised by an important variety of family childcare arrangements. Whenever parents cannot rely on places in either public or private nurseries and kindergartens[3], or on their extended families'

[1] Poloski Vokić, Nina et. al. (2019) "Gender Inequality: Specific Areas of Gender Segregation" in Poloski Vokić, Nina et. al. *Gender Equality in the Workplace. Macro and Micro Perspectives on the Status of Highly Educated Woman*, Palgrave Macmillan: 37-60; Voicu, Mălina & Constantin, Andreea (2016) "Couple's Status on Labour Market and their Attitudes towards Gender Roles" *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială [Review of Research and Social Intervention]*, 54: 7-22; Crusmac, Oana & Köhler, Isabel (2016) "Gender Mainstreaming and Work-Family Reconciliation. An Analysis of Family Policies in Romania and Germany", *The Romanian Journal of Society and Politics*, 11(2): 49-74; Băluță, Ionela (2014) „Child Care in Post-communist Romania between Familialist Ideology, Labour Market and Gender Roles", *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială [Review of Research and Social Intervention]*, 46: 227-242; Marinescu, Valentina (2002) "Muncile casnice în satul românesc actual. Studii de caz", Iași: Polirom; Voicu Mălina & Tufiș. Paula (2012) "Trends in Gender Beliefs in Romania: 1993-2008", *Current Sociology*, 60 (1): 61-80; Gal, Susan & Kligman, Gail (2003) *Politicile de gen în perioada postsocialistă. Un eseu istoric comparativ*, translated by Delia Răzdolescu, Iași: Polirom; Miroiu, Mihaela (2004) *Drumul către autonomie. Teorii politice feministe,* Iași: Polirom.

[2] For example, in 2019 Bucharest registered a population of around 2.1 million people: https://www.bucuresti.insse.ro, and Ilfov had approximatively 444.000 inhabitants: https://www.ilfov.insse.ro.

[3] Different reasons, often juxtaposed, can contribute to parents' decisions to avoid specialized childcare services, ranging from the limited availability or perceived poor quality of these services in their area, to the idea of home-

(usually grandmothers') help, paid childcare taking place in their own home[1] seems to be the most adequate solution. Qualitative homogenous through saturation sampling and the snowball technique were the most effective ways of building up our sample and getting in contact with the interviewees, although more than 40% of the women we identified as nannies refused to participate in our study. Their reluctance appears to have been based on the negative perception with regard to journalistic investigations, which usually emphasise extreme cases of domestic violence (either abusive nannies or abusive parents making use of paid care services). Interviewees were aged between 24 and 65 years old, as follows: 6 nannies were under 29 years old, 10 nannies were aged between 30 and 49, and 15 nannies were over the age of 50. More than half of them were born in rural areas, and they had low or middle levels of education, except for one nanny, which had attended university. Our field research was based on an interview guide, seeking above all to follow the personal stories of women who chose to work as nannies in the homes of parents paying for their services. The interviews were structured following some central themes, such as: a) the individual (care) work experience on the labour market; b) the relationship with the parents/employers who were paying for their childminding activities; c) the relationship with the child or the children they were taking care of.

In the course of our investigation, we sought to identify, on the one hand, the reasons behind choosing formal or informal working arrangements and, on the other hand, nannies' social practices, values, and cultural meanings related to (paid) childcare. Furthermore, in order to understand the complexity of the social relationships involved within and also influenced by this type of practice, our inquiry was driven by several preliminary research questions: who are, in fact, these nannies? (i.e. we have not identified any men providing paid childcare services in parents' homes!). To what extent can one talk about a possible professionalisation of these services? What are the motivations driving women to work as nannies and how do they perceive their professional status? As for their relationships with parents and the children they take care of, do they contribute to the contractualisation of this occupation and to the reinforcement of its formal aspects, or, on the contrary, do they regard these paid services as belonging more in the informal and domestic sphere of childcare activities?

Legal regulations and social context: a neofamilialist model of childcare

The *Gender Barometer. Romania 2018*[2] is the second quantitative inquiry conducted at a national level on the perceptions, values, attitudes, and social practices related to the dynamics of gender roles after the fall of the communist regime. In addition to the importance of this research

based childcare as fitting best to children's interests and needs. For some details regarding the availability of formal day-care services, see Dohotariu, Anca (2015), *art. cit.*: 128.

[1] A clear definition of "home-based childcare" is available in Ang, Lynn et. all (2017) "A Review of the Research on Childminding: Understanding Children's Experiences in Home-Based Childcare Settings", *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45: 261-270.

[2] *Barometrul de gen. România 2018 [Gender Barometer. Romania 2018]*, Laura Grünberg (coord.), Andreea Rusu, Elena Samoilă, FILIA (Centrul de Dezvoltare Curriculară și Studii de Gen) and CENFORM (Asociația Centrul de Suport și Formare pentru Dezvoltarea unei Societăți Echitabile): https://centrulfilia.ro/new/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Barometru_de_gen.Romania_2018.pdf

for a better understanding of the (re)definition of gender values and roles and of the cultural gender contract that is dominant at the macro level in Romania, unlike the previous similar research conducted in 2000[1], the 2018 Gender Barometer also contains specific questions regarding parenting and the work-life balance. More precisely, from the point of view of gender roles, the belief according to which "the man is the head of the family" remains salient (70% of the respondents in 2018, compared to 83% in 2000), as well as the idea that "it is more men's duty to financially sustain the family" (61% of the respondents in 2018 and 70% in 2000). Hence, although one can observe certain dynamics favourable to the redefinition of gender roles, from more traditionalist relationships towards a cultural gender contract more conducive to gender equality, the Barometer's results nevertheless emphasise the persistence of gender conservatism, especially in the private sphere, whereas more modern attitudes seem to be associated more with the gender contract in the public sphere[2]. As for childcare, most respondents believe that both parents should look after their children (80.3% of the sample: 80.7% of women and 79.7% of men); however, at the same time, 48.9% of women and 49.2% of men participating in the study are convinced that men are not as good as their female partners in being the primary caregivers for children[3]. These responses could be interpreted as resulting from the influence that the current parenting ideology has upon the general opinions of the Romanian population. This ideology persists, however, in being in accordance to the generally accepted conservative approach related to women's and men's qualities and activities at the level of the domestic sphere, according to which biological differences between women and men are undeniable, and thus women's destiny remains closely linked to motherhood. Furthermore, when questioned about childcare, 52% of the respondents declare that they prefer to make use of their extended families' help (usually grandmothers), and only 2.9% of the entire sample indicate a preference for nannies' care work paid services[4]. Hence, childcare paid services seem to be a marginal practice at the macro-societal level, which is generally characterised by still dominant traditional gender roles and values, in spite of the most recent changes favourable to gender equality.

After 1989, family policies were attributed a marginal place on the political agenda, except for parental leave regulations, which had changed more than five times between 1990 and 2011. Although designed for both working parents since 2005, leave entitlements are mixed rights, which depend first and foremost on parents' participation in the labour market. Moreover, they are relatively generous in terms of length and payment (i.e. one of the two parents can choose between one- and two-years parental leave, or even three years in the case of sick children), thus being relatively attractive for a large segment of the population. On the one hand, current parental leave provision is a welfare instrument that largely corresponds to the dominant cultural meanings related to family relationships, maternity, gender roles, or even the idea of the child's best interests. On the other hand, in 2014 Romania registered among the lowest ranks at European Union level from the point of view of average gross hourly wage income in EUR (i.e. €2,03 per hour) and was

[1] *Gender Barometer. Romania 2000* (2000), Bucharest: Fundația pentru o Societate Deschisă and Gallup România.
[2] Văcărescu, Theodora (2018) "Introductive study", in *Ibidem*, 21.
[3] *Ibidem*, 20.
[4] *Gender Barometer. Romania 2018, op. cit.*, 78.

also among the countries with the highest percentage of workers with a low income (i.e. 24.4% as compared to 15.9% in the EU area)[1], as well as with earning disparities[2]. In addition, the public institutional infrastructure for children under three years old is inadequate and underdeveloped: the total number of nurseries decreases from 840 in 1990 to 286 in 2011; in rural areas, nurseries do not exist at all. Consequently, the choice for parental leave provision is also conditioned by financial factors: whenever the family's income is too low and there is no other alternative solution offered by the public system, the option for private nurseries or nannies' paid services is practically unaffordable for a significant part of the population.

The legislative framework is also not very friendly with respect to the development of nannies' professional trajectories and the formal aspects of their occupation. This profession has not been legally regulated until 2014, when Law 167/2014 entered into force. More importantly, this law has not had any legal effects until 2017, when the methodological norms of its application have finally been adopted (H.G. 652/2017). The "Nannies' Law" 167/2014 defines the main professional responsibilities related to this occupation, among which three refer to the child's best interests and needs (art. 2, paragraphs a, d and e), and one refers to the primordial place given to the responsibility of the legal guardian of the child to respect and guarantee the child's rights (paragraph c). There is also only one general reference to the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination (paragraph b), without specifying whether it refers to children, parents, or nannies. Nannies' childcare services also depend on a professional qualification certificate obtained "in accordance with the Governmental Ordinance no. 129/2000 regarding the vocational training of adult persons, amended, completed and approved by Law no. 375/2002, republished" (chapter 2, article 5.2.a), or on some similar professional qualifications. More importantly, the legislation in force stipulates that nannies' activities can take place under two main contractual forms: either an "individual employment contract between the nanny and a legal person", or "providing childcare paid services under the regulations of self-employment" (in Romanian the law refers to "persoană fizică autorizată" – "PFA", which is equivalent to self-employment) – chapter II, art. 7.b.

As for the methodological norms of application of the law (H.G. 652/2017), it is very interesting to notice that it specifies in its first article that nannies' services "fall into the category of work-life balance social services regulated by the Law on social assistance no. 292/2011, in its art. 73, paragraph (2), letter b), and its subsequent amendments", but, at the same time, there is no reference to the extent to which these childcare services, usually paid by parents, could also be financially supported by the State. H.G. 652/2017 also stipulates the necessary conditions for the accreditation of the employment contracts related to childcare: agencies or self-employed nannies are allowed to provide childcare services only under specific conditions of accreditation regulated by the Law 197/2012 (art. 1.2.b), which stipulates the necessary documents for concluding the

[1] According to *Eurostat. Statistics Explained,* available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Wages_and_labour_costs/ro#Lucr.C4.83torii_cu_venituri_salariale_mici, last consulted on August, 12th, 2019.

[2] According to *Eurostat. Earning Statistics,* available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Earnings_statistics#Distribution_of_earnings, last consulted on August, 12th, 2019.

employment contract, as well as the control procedures and possible sanctions related to nannies' childcare activities as a formal occupation.

Overall, if we limit our analysis to the content of the two legal regulations mentioned above, we can easily notice the emphasis placed on the child's best interests, overlapping with the absence of any kind of concern for stimulating the consolidation of this occupation as a real professional option. The legislation in force does not insist too much on the nannies' social and professional rights, whereas the self-employment option remains complicated and often inaccessible to the social categories having a low educational and economic background.

Nannies that care, between formal working arrangements and informal responsibilities

Our qualitative field research reveals that nannies' working arrangements are far more diverse and far more complex than we expected them to be, in terms of strategies for finding employment, payment, working programme, or motivations related to the option for formal/informal working arrangements. First, there is not only one, but two distinct situations of nannies working under an employment contract: 1) nannies employed as such[1], their real childcare activities, income and taxes being stipulated in their working papers , and 2) nannies who have an employment contract as cleaners or other jobs, but work out of it, as nannies[2]. Second, the large majority of our interviewees are nannies working without a contract – i.e. either 3) retired women who perceive their child-minding activities as an 'extra' occupation, or 4) nannies working with no contract at all. Our analysis follows this classification, which is relevant for our preliminary questions, although paid domestic work arrangements constitute a very complex research object that needs to be tackled from an intersectional perspective – for instance, noteworthy differences in building professional trajectories may be encountered due to the different age groups involved[3].

a) Nannies' childcare work experience

A few subthemes are significant for the ways in which nannies shape their professional trajectories: their strategies for finding employment and motivations to work on a legal contract or to avoid it,

[1] Only 5 out of 31 interviewees worked as nannies providing formal paid childcare services. These were nannies employed by Little Red Riding Hood, an NGO created in 2011 by the Romanian Red Cross: http://scufitarosie.org. To our knowledge, this social economy micro-enterprise is the only one of its kind, at least in Bucharest, that employs nannies and babysitters after offering them free professional training courses. Unlike recruitment agencies, Little Red Riding Hood not only intermediates the relationship between parents (i.e. the 'clients' who pay for childminding services in their own homes, on a horary based program) and nannies or babysitters (who provide childminding services), but it trains and then employs care workers under real employment contracts. Hence, both parents' and care workers' rights and obligations are being negotiated as well as granted through Little Red Riding Hood.

[2] To simplify the reading of our analysis, we refer to these two situations through the distinction between: 1) nannies who work with a real employment contract, with their rights and obligations stipulated as such, and 2) nannies working on a bogus employment contract, which does not make reference to any childcare activities; although these contracts are real and valid from a legal and fiscal point of view, they correspond to different working situations.

[3] Sekeráková Búriková, Zuzana (2018) "Choosing the Right Age Group?: Intersectional Analysis of Demand for Paid Domestic Workers in Slovakia", *Slovenský Národopis,* 66(2): 239-252; see also Sekeráková Búriková, Zuzana (2016) "Exploring the Demand for Paid Domestic Workers in Slovakia through the Intersection of Welfare and Gender Regimes", *Laboratorium,* 8(3): 28-51.

salaries and the working hours as carers, as well as the ways in which nannies perceive their work (as a long-term profession or as a temporary occupation).

All nannies employed by Little Red Riding Hood have relatively similar stories regarding their decision to work as a nanny: after a period of unemployment they attended a free childminding training course which, in fact, opened a path for them to obtaining a real employment contract. In other words, working as a nanny was not an objective in itself, but more of an opportunity that occurred following a period of joblessness. At the same time, they invoke similar motivations for choosing a legal employment contract. Despite the fact that the salary is not too attractive (approx. €200 per month after tax), their employment contracts provide them with work continuity and stability, as well as all related social and health insurances. Whenever they feel their working environment is not acceptable, they have the possibility to be replaced and to move forward to another family paying for childcare service Furthermore, although their own families do not truly value their care work activities, belonging to a professional group under the auspices of the Red Cross is an important symbolic incentive legitimising their childcare activities. As for their working programme, it is also a matter of choice: it varies between 8 and 10 hours a day, but they also have the possibility to share this amount of time between working in the homes of different families, as well as to opt for, or to add to their daily working schedule a 4 hours 'voucher' – i.e. 'bon respiro' (usually taken during evenings or weekends).

Nannies having an employment contract but working out of it seem, in turn, to have a larger variety of strategies for finding employment: through newspaper advertisements or through informal networks (neighbours, church, etc.). Furthermore, they mention two different situations: they either have a legally registered employment contract on their own (e.g. being fictitiously listed as being employed by the private company of a relative), or the family they are working for offers them the possibility to sign an employment contract which, in fact, does not correspond to their real working conditions. This situation is suitable for both nannies and parents who pay for childcare services, as it allows them to avoid both the difficult tax system and the very complicated formalities required for self-employment. In these cases, salaries are more generous (e.g. €250 for 4 hours per day, or even €600 per month, compared to the net average monthly salaries registered in 2013[1]), but neither nannies nor parents have any interest in declaring them. Furthermore, the nannies' working hours correspond to the generosity of the pay they receive: they have to be more flexible and available whenever their services are required. For instance, one nanny working for "Mr. and Mrs. Doctor" has to spend the night over at their house once a week, in their absence, taking care of their three children. Another nanny is a sort of an 'internal' domestic worker, essentially living in her employers' house and getting some days off only every two or three weekends. She accompanies the child she is taking care of and the family everywhere, including on holidays, but her duties are not limited to childcare activities – she is also the main person responsible for all the housework.

[1] In 2013 the net average monthly salaries ranged from approx. €350 to €390 per month, for full-time working contracts: see http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/câştiguri-salariale-din-1991-serie-lunară, last consulted in January 2020.

The two categories of nannies working out of any sort of employment contract mention two main scenarios regarding their recruitment. Some of them prefer to find work only through informal networks (they work with "people they know from people they know") and would never resort to advertising their childcare services (e.g. in a newspaper). Others, in contrast, assume the 'official' position of working as nannies and very often prefer to make use of recruitment agencies that intermediate their relationship with their potential future employers. Nevertheless, apart from getting the two parties in contact, recruitment agencies do not take any kind of responsibilities related to the declared (or not) subsequent working conditions that nannies engage in. Furthermore, older women who are already retired and yet decide to continue working as nannies usually have no interest in declaring their salaries, which, in fact, they do not perceive as an undeclared salary but rather as an 'extra' income. They benefit from social and health insurances related to their retirement, but the very small amount of their monthly pension allowance is usually referred to as a legitimation of their negative reactions toward the state: *If I mock the state, that's it! The state also mocks me! … so what should I do? That's it! If I had a decent pension allowance, I wouldn't do this, but with 759 lei I have no other choice …* (F., aged 58).

As for younger interviewees (i.e. under 29 years old), they often talk about themselves as 'babysitters' having this occupation only on a temporary basis: *For me it's just like a summer job!* (A., aged 23). Consequently, they are very interested in a relatively generous but undeclared payment, in exchange for a "free, flexible, and not at all stressful job" (C., aged 27). In contrast, women between 30 and 50-years old working with no contract at all represent the most vulnerable category of nannies. Some of them began working as childcare workers for the families that had first hired them as cleaners for a period of time. These women's earnings for childcare activities would become too low after taxes, so declaring them does not really constitute a viable option. Furthermore, they do not have the necessary skills to become self-employed and, whenever they exceed the state-provided period of unemployment, they do not benefit from any kind of social or health insurances. Consequently, undeclared income for childcare services is, in their case, a financial short-term rescue option, but it makes these women even more vulnerable in the long run for several reasons. First, the informal full-time working programme entails limited options for further training and potential employment reconfiguration; second, these nannies do not eventually benefit from any retirement scheme, which is granted only in the case of formal work.

Last but not least, nannies' working programme differs significantly: while some of them work part-time (a few hours a day, especially when the children they take care of also attend kindergarten), others work around ten hours per day. Some of these nannies also refer to the possibility to leave their workplace (i.e. their employers' household) and continue their care work activities at home, with the families either informed about it or not. Therefore, informal childcare services can be a source of vulnerability not only for nannies, but also for families making use of this type of services, as from a legal point of view parents are the only responsible for exposing their children to potentially dangerous situations, although they might not even be aware of it.

b) The relationship with parents paying for child-minding services

The contractualisation of the relationship between nannies and their employers (either the parents paying for childcare services or Little Red Riding Hood) is also hard to assess, considering at least two aspects: first, nannies work in the homes of the parents who pay for their services, and second, childcare can hardly be limited to a formal activity. In other words, the borders between the formal and the informal aspects of childcare work are often very fluid and hard to clearly demarcate, which is rather an impediment to the contractualisation process of this occupation.

The main aspect that comes up in all narratives of the nannies employed on a real employment contract (i.e. by Little Red Riding Hood) is that these childcare workers are trained to focus on the formal and contractual nature of their job. For instance, they may have meal breaks, but they have to bring their own food every day, although the family's refrigerator is at their disposal. At the same time, their professional duties remain strictly related to childcare activities – unlike the other categories of nannies, those from Little Red Riding Hood do not have any obligation related to housework (cleaning, cooking, ironing, grocery shopping, etc.). Moreover, the contractualisation of the relationship between nannies and parents does not always mitigate their asymmetric positions. For instance, one of the interviewees perceives it to be very difficult: *It has always been very easy for me to work with children, but with their parents, it's really hard. […] The worse thing is that, if something happens, of course you are the one to blame!! Because, after all, you are a sort of an intruder in their home. […] For example, when the child has a fever, parents get very anxious, especially if it's their only infant… And I do understand their fears, but I am not the one to blame, after all, I do my best to take care of their child … So, of course, all these things bother me…* [S., aged 36]. Another interviewee from Little Red Riding Hood suggests that a formal relationship does not necessarily obliterate class differences: *I think that the other family [where I used to work] had a higher rank … they looked down on you. They used to say, 'you'll do this and this and this for the child'. But now the parents see me more as a grandmother, and they also trust my advices.* [N. aged 45].

The formal and distant nature of the relationship between nannies and parents may also occur in the case of the childcare workers having an employment contract but working out of it. Although from a legal point of view they do not have any rights and obligations to each other, nannies evoke the respectful but also distant relationship they have with their de facto employers. Moreover, their narratives are very relevant for the familialist discourse that nannies incorporate and reproduce, blaming especially mothers for being too involved in their professional lives and spending too little time with their own children. For example, one of the interviewees declares: *The child feels. She feels that mommy spends little time with her […] (Personally,) I wouldn't have left my children so much time. […] I appreciate her for what she does […] but because of her daily programme … she doesn't want another child that much … she spends very little time with the child. But it's her choice.* [G., aged 48]. Another nanny emphasises the same idea: *The mother is quite busy, she started a new PhD now [she is a surgery doctor and she also teaches at the university]; it's not easy to deal with all that and, in addition, to be a mother and a wife, I think it's too much … I don't know. She doesn't have enough time for her children and you can feel that*

in the children's behaviour. […] They are a kind of 'weekend-parents', and that affects the children, in my opinion. [L., aged 36]. In turn, the 'internal' nanny who lives in her employers' home underlines the fact that she "respects" the parents and she considers them as if they were her own children, but, at the same time, they use a distant official form of address (the second person, plural) whenever they communicate.

Nannies who are already retired and who are not interested in the legal aspects regarding their working arrangements seem to be more relaxed in relation to the parents they are working for: *We call each other using our nicknames. Right from the very beginning I suggested to leave the formalities aside, as if we were part of the same family. […] Every day it gives me real pleasure to come to their place. And if something bothers me, whenever it might happen, I'll just stop coming. […] Right from the very beginning I wanted to know what my duties were, what they expected from me. We have to be honest with each other. If something doesn't suit you, very well, that's it, we have to talk about it, but if there isn't any way out of it, that's it as well, it's better to say 'Goodbye'.* [F., aged 58] At the same time, retired nannies working without a contract mention that they prefer a more "stable" working environment, which can be interpreted as being related to their older age (e.g. one nanny declares that she would not leave for more money, and that she feels "at home" whenever she is at her working place – M., aged 63). Moreover, these nannies' professional life usually started before the fall of the communist regime, at a time when they graduated from a vocational school allowing them to get a "safe and stable" job (e.g. footwear-makers, stocking-makers, management distributor, labourer and head of department in a packing factory, accountant in a state enterprise, etc.). After the fall of the former regime interviewees experienced different strategies of re-professionalisation, alternating with periods of unemployment, which often makes them nostalgic for the hassle-free life experienced during the communist period, and which also influences them toward appreciating a more "stable", long-term job.

Nannies who work out of any employment contract also emphasise that parents spend much too little time with their own children. Nevertheless, whenever they are completely dependent on their undeclared salaries, they are aware of their vulnerability and they usually have colder relationships with the parents they work for. Furthermore, colder relationships transform sometimes into really distant or patronising ones, and class differences reinforce the visibility of the power relationship between nannies and parents: *I always do what I'm told to do … if anything happens to the child, I don't want them to put the blame on me!! I come from the countryside, and, of course, I have a more rural conception about how to take care of a child. She never agrees with me, she raises her daughter strictly according to what she is reading in different books … […] She [the mother] told me that, if I'm interested in a working contract, I have to handle it myself … and that I'm free to do whatever I want, because anyway, they do not agree to pay more for my services… But I really cannot afford to pay the tax.* [E., aged 43]. Such situations are less likely to appear in the case of young babysitters, who usually feel like being "adopted" by the parents they are working for: *She taught me everything, just like a mother, she showed me every single detail regarding childcare. I had absolutely no clue about it, as I hadn't worked as a nanny before. But*

one of the twins was more sensitive, and also very selective, and didn't allow anybody to be around her … but she easily accepted me. And I think that's why she [the mother] chose me to take care of her twins. [I., aged 24].

c) Nannies' childcare activities: between taking care of children and caring about them

Last but not least, our field research is relevant for nannies' social practices, values, and cultural meanings regarding childcare, the contractualisation process of this occupation depending either on the duration of the relationship with the child they take care of, or on the different ways in which nannies think of and put into practice their ideas regarding raising and educating children. More specifically, longer childcare activities with the same child (or children) tend to become less formal and less contractual. At the same time, child-minding also depends on children's ages: regardless of the legal aspects of their working arrangements, interviewees are usually employed full-time for children under 3 years old (with a daily programme of at least 8 hours), and their working time decreases once toddlers grow up and become pre-school children. As such, nannies taking care of children enrolled in kindergartens or even in primary schools are generally asked for more flexible working arrangements.

Interviewees employed by Little Red Riding Hood are the only ones who invoke the possibility to choose between taking care of the same child for 8 or 10 hours daily and working for different families at the same time. Nevertheless, either of these options is perceived as having both advantages and disadvantages from the point of view of the childcare activities: *It's a special job, because […] it's extremely difficult to have a high-quality routine with the same child, every day. So, it is very hard. It is very difficult because you are put to the test all the time, you must have a lot of imagination, you can't do the same things every day, the child has to always learn something, and this is very hard. If I would go every day to another family, for me it would be perfect, it would be easier. (…) It's more difficult, although there are also advantages … you know the child, you know his/her habits, you know what to expect when the relationship lasts longer. But, as time passes, it's becoming increasingly difficult, you have to put an increasingly higher effort. This is … my opinion.* [S., aged 36].

Regardless of the legal aspects of their working arrangements, all nannies have to provide both care and educational services. For instance, one nanny employed by Little Red Riding Hood sustains that: *One is always aware of his/her success or failure in life, so I don't disregard myself in any way because I work as a nanny. I consider I'm doing something very important for them, taking care of their child. And in the end, I do more than just staying with the child, I also educate him, and I give his parents the opportunity to leave in peace to work.* [A., aged 52]. Another interviewee working out of her employment contract underlines her efforts in combining informal and formal education activities with caring duties: *You have to have a lot of patience, and always to give her [to the little girl] explanations for everything … For example, we were on the street, and she wouldn't listen to me, she just wanted to roll on the ground. So I let go of her hand, and she replied 'Why are you yelling at me!?". "Well, I'm not yelling. I'm just telling you to listen to me and to behave properly!" So the key is to have a lot of patience and to make her understand,*

you see? […] Yesterday evening I tried to teach her letters and numbers and … she told me I was malicious. So I said "But why?", and she replied "I'm mad at you!" "That's OK, I'm also upset at you!", and I turned my back on her. Immediately she said "It was just a joke, please don't be upset at me!". And so we continued with the letters … […] Let me tell you something: she speaks extremely well for her age! Ever since she was 4 or 5 months old, I used to stay near her little bed, and I was reading her fairy tales for hours … she was gazing all over, while I was reading to her … Maybe for my own children I hadn't had the time to look after them while doing all the housework and everything … But with her, I was always keeping an eye on her … and never let her unattended!" [G., aged 48]. Furthermore, one retired nanny working out of an employment contract declares that she would love to work abroad, for a Romanian family, as that would give her the opportunity to provide more educational activities for the children she would take care of [M., aged 60]. Another retired nanny underlines that all activities related to children (either care and medical care – managing them when they have a fever, for example, or education) have to be done through playing, which is, in her opinion, the best way to make children acquire different skills [F., aged 58]. Overall, the higher their level of education, the more nannies value and also place emphasis on educational activities. Otherwise, these activities can also depend on parents' requests – some of them simply prefer nannies to look after their children, while paying further for specialised educational services or activities (e.g. foreign language lessons, piano or music lessons, sports, etc.).

One of the main issues that emerges from our interviewees' narratives, regardless of the characteristics of their employment status, is related to the emotional attachment to the children, which also plays a very important role in the way nannies relate to their occupation: *We [nannies] are a 'mother to loan'. While under our observation, the concerns are the same ones … I behave with the child just like a mother does …* [I., aged 51]. The many hours spent with the child, as well as the repetitive nature of this occupation, contribute to building an emotional attachment between the nanny and the child, irrespective of the contractual nature of the job. This emotional attachment is being reinforced by both the dominant discourse of "the best interest of the child" (according to which children are best cared for by their mothers or close relatives), and by the familialist cultural meanings that are hegemonic within contemporary Romanian society. Consequently, depending on their age, all nannies state that their work is "just like" mothering or grand-mothering, the reference to family relationships being, at the same time, a way to valorise as well as to legitimise their care work activities: *I raised her and took care of her since she was three and a half months old …so I don't feel the difference between her and my own children! […] I love her very much! I told you and I'm telling you again: I love her as if she were my own child!"* [G., aged 48]. A similar example is the one of a nanny working out of her employment contract, who states that she clearly does not consider herself as part of the family she works for, but who declares the opposite when talking about the three children she looks after: *I don't know, I often wish they were my children. I am very attached to them. […] Whenever I thought I would give up on them, I realised I would really miss them. When I come back from vacations, I miss them so much, sometimes also on the weekends … Sometimes I look through the door eye, I see them coming down, I hear them*

… they are very sweet! [L., aged 36]. The different age categories do not account for any difference related to nannies' attitudes toward the children they take care of. For example, a 24 years old girl, in her first job as a nanny (out of any employment contract), calls herself an "adoptive mother". Similarly, older nannies declare that they behave as if they were children's grandmothers, and they even ask to be called "granny". Moreover, the nannies' emotional attachment also prevails whenever they have to take care of "difficult" children: *Previously I had to take care of two brothers, a boy and his younger sister, and the boy literally sucked my soul out of me! Unlike his sister, whom I truly loved, he used to make me extremely mad at him … he was very beautiful, and very smart, but also very naughty and insolent! […] He used to call me 'you stupid nanny', or 'bring me that, you're just a servant'… But I knew that it was not his fault. His parents didn't know how to raise him, his mother used to slap him, he told me he hated his father because he was not as highly educated as his mother was … So I was feeling so sorry for him …* [F. aged 58].

At last, in contrast to the rest of our qualitative sample, there is only one exception of a nanny talking about feeling "affection from a distance" for the child she takes care of. Nevertheless, this attitude is not one of her own, as the children's parents were very keen from the very beginning to maintain a certain distance, although their requests were not legally stated in any employment contract: *I like the child, he became close to me but … as I was banned from the beginning, 'don't do this, don't do that …' I normally … kept my distance. So, I truly like the child, yet from a distance. He's not like my grandson, to hug him, to kiss and to play with him … no. There is a limit between the two of us: we do this and that and that's all.* [E., aged 43].

Concluding remarks

The different aspects of nannies' care work – their working arrangements, the ways in which they perceive themselves in relation to their activities, the relationships with the parents they work for and the children they take care of – are influenced by several factors. These factors include: the age category they belong to and their overall work experience, their professional interests and their previous insertion in the labour market, but also cultural values and practices. The latter are reflected both in the ways in which parents are influenced by the dominant values and norms regarding parenting and childcare, as well as the ways in which nannies, in their turn, are being influenced by the hegemonic cultural meanings regarding childcare and mothering.

Nannies' relationships with the parents they work for seem to depend mostly on their professional trajectories: those working under an employment contract, who have also been trained to work as nannies, value more the formal dimension of their activities, which also contributes not only to a more contractual relationship with the children's parents, but also to a more 'legitimate' professional status. Nevertheless, this trend can hardly be generalised. Notwithstanding their occupational status, nannies often feel that their work is not properly valued, and that they are not being treated in accordance with their professional expertise related to childcare. As for the rest of the nannies working without a real employment contract, their relationships with children's parents are also described as being "difficult", as their practical childcare experience is often considered as being problematic and inconsistent with "what has been written in the books". In all situations

identified within our field research, nannies seem to appreciate the relationships with the parents they work for, as well as to feel valued for their childcare activities only when they attempt to distance themselves from the formal and contractual dimension of their work, thus entering the more informal and familialist logic of their occupation (e.g. whenever compared to children's grandmothers). Nannies who have received at least basic training and who are closer to the idea of being professionals in the field of childcare (i.e. nannies employed by Little Red Riding Hood) place a greater emphasis on their knowledge and skills acquired through their formation. However, although these nannies consider that their training gives them more professional authority, parents do not always recognise and/or appreciate it. In this regard, existing research on the professionalisation of childcare activities underlines the difficulties and the ambiguities produced by the fact that this occupation unfolds in the family environment, both spatially and relationally, being thus intrinsically linked to the hegemonic cultural meanings related to mothering, parenting and the ideal of child's best interests. In other words, both nannies and parents are under the influence of these cultural meanings that play a very important role within the professionalisation process of home-based childcare activities.

As for nannies' relationships with the children they take care of, they also depend on their age and level of education, as well as on the ways in which both nannies and parents perceive and reproduce the current practices and values regarding parenting and childcare (in both its caring and educational dimensions). Nannies with a higher level of education usually emphasise the educational dimension of their childcare activities (through games, or fairy tales, etc.). Nevertheless, in all situations, nannies develop a strong emotional attachment to the children they take care of (i.e. one close to mothering), although it seems to be stronger and easier to identify this type of relationship in the cases of older nannies and of those having a less formal and contractual relationship with children's parents.

The professional trajectories of our interviewees and the extent to which they are (or are not) keen to develop the formal dimension of their occupation seem to be influenced mostly by their age, as well as by their social, educational, and financial status. Younger interviewees (under 30) do not perceive themselves as being professionals in the field of childminding: they work as nannies only temporarily, as if this occupation were not part of their professional trajectories. Furthermore, nannies who are between 30 and 50 years old usually consider that there is not enough social recognition attributed to their occupation, mostly because it is either underpaid (i.e. whenever under a real employment contract), or because, when it is undeclared in the long run, it becomes a source of social, financial, and professional vulnerability. Finally, the older ones (i.e. nannies over the age of 50 who, within our sample, are already pensioners) have no interest in professionalising their occupation, which is motivated only by their need for an extra income apart from pension benefits.

More precisely, all the financial implications presented above clearly indicate a low interest, at least from nannies' perspective, for a strict contractualisation of their work, which would imply tax payments and the implicit decrease of their net income. Younger nannies provide childcare services only temporarily, mostly for quick-earning reasons, and without being interested

in the rights related to the contractualisation of their work. Those who are pensioners do not need a proper contract as they already benefit from social and health insurances related to their retirement, so they have no interest in submitting their "extra" earnings, for home based childcare activities, to the tax system. Finally, the only ones who are interested in the contractualisation and the professionalisation of their occupation are middle-aged women, who are also very concerned about the social rights deriving from a formal occupation.

In a nutshell, one cannot stipulate the existing of a general need for professionalisation in the case of all women working formally or informally as nannies, as the need for building professional trajectories and the related perceptions differ widely from one group of age to another. Overall, our field research reveals that nannies are not directly concerned with professionalization issues that entail vocational training for childcare and education services, as well as the whole process related to grounding home-based childcare activities into the formal economy. Our interviewees do not claim for higher regulatory mechanisms for their activities, which suggests that the need for professionalization is a possible solution to avoid multiple overlapping vulnerabilities at the macro level, rather than an individual choice. Although they generally perceive their work as being of a high emotional, educational and social importance, our interviewees do not claim for more social recognition of their occupation. Moreover, they do not spontaneously speak of the idea of building a long-term professional career as a nanny, but they work as such in the absence of better alternatives. Furthermore, our interviewees are closer to the ideal of "nannies that care", rather than the one of "professional nannies", which can be explained by the local maternalism that nannies reproduce as social actors.

Our inquiry could be further developed according to at least three research directions. First, a detailed overview regarding nannies' working arrangements at the macro level would be very useful for understanding to what extent this type of paid childcare activity has become a widespread social fact, or, in contrast, it represents only a limited social practice which emerges in specific socio-economic environments. Second, parents' perspective should be taken into consideration in order to properly tackle the need for contractualisation and professionalisation of home-based childcare activities. For instance, an in-depth analysis of parents' recruitment strategies and expectations related to nannies' skills would certainly allow us to acquire a better understanding of the factors underpinning the formal and the informal dimensions of this occupation. Third, expanding our field research (e.g. by conducting in-depth interviews with the personnel working in specialised recruitment agencies that intermediate the first encounter between parents and nannies) could also make an important contribution to our analysis related to the contractualisation of childcare practices in contemporary Romania.

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Gender Regimes and Precariousness in the Neoliberal Academy: The Specific Case of Romania

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Abstract

The casualisation of academic employment and the rise of 'flexible' financed researchers seem to be a normalised characteristic across both Western and Eastern European countries and for a long time now, it is not a novelty. Higher education and public research institutions in Romania have witnessed radical neoliberal measures and increasing growth of the number of flexible work arrangements. The article seeks to demonstrate how these new requirements and managerial changes are affecting the employment insecurity and uncertainty of researchers. In addition, the article is wondering how these transformations of higher education system became normalised in practice and whether the consequences are affecting differently men and women from both sides of working conditions and affective life strategies. For arguing about the neoliberal transformations of labour in higher education, the concept of precariousness is in the core of this study because it challenges the understanding of the labour insecurity in terms of gender regimes and care issues.

***Keywords**: higher education, academic labour, gender regime, neoliberalism, precariousness*

Introduction

Addressing precariousness and pursuing gender inequalities in higher education is a very broad and complex topic. The field of gendered precariousness in higher education can be conceptualised from many interdisciplinary fields: employment policy and political reforms; equal opportunities on labour market (Stoiciu, 2013; Trif, 2013; Ban, 2016; Eurofound, 2010; 2013; EC, 2016; SHE Figures, 2018); educational performance & recruitment in higher education (Ylijoki, 2010; Busso & Rivetti, 2014; Bozzon et al. 2017, Murgia, et al, 2018) or science policy (Davies, 2005; Cannizzo, 2017). The research known so far on the intersection between precariousness and gender in the academic labour has been focused strongly on programs for mentoring and promoting opportunities for women in science and strategies for gender equality (Fogelberg, et. al, 1999; O'Connor, 2014; Nobauer, H. et. Al, 2005; Heijstra et al 2017) and less on the understanding of the feminization of academy under precarious working conditions (Leathwoord & Read, 2009; Ylijoki, 2010). Moreover, the new empirical evidence on academic employment and recruitment demands in higher education is showing that there has been relatively poor debate on the issue of gendered precariousness (Ivancheva et al, 2019; Bozzon et al., 2017; 2018; Murgia et al., 2018).

Higher education is not different in terms of the cultural construction of organizations more generally. Gender polarisation is still a common aspect across institutions with a research and education profile. Men continue to dominate top management positions and they are more likely to be better paid than women. They manage to promote more easily in higher research grades and to have a permanent position rather than part-time or fixed-term work agreements. Hence, higher education and research institutions are not immune to the 'production and reproduction of dominant ideologies' (Fogelberg, 1999).

First, in this article the concept of 'higher education' is important for emphasizing the process of 'gendered knowledge formations' of a precarious culture in the academic labour (Murgia et al, 2018). Thus, the 'masculinised' culture in higher education is building up the ideal image of an 'academic worker', with no interests and responsibilities outside work, willing to marginalise the affective and relations lives (Ivancheva et al., 2019; Stalford, 2005). In a Weberian understanding of the concept (Weber, 1922), when performing the 'ideal type' of the worker, the women were named "winners among losers" (Zimmer & Siemieńska, 2007). Comparing with their men peers, women academics appear to react to the increasing 'managerialism pressures' in ways that are more unfavourable to their careers and personal lives (Nobauer, H. et. Al, 2005; Ylijoki 2010; Heijstra et al 2017; Murgia et al, 2018).

The higher education system has become subject to neoliberal managerial demands on efficiency, transparency and accountability of labour. Many countries around Europe implemented educational policies designed to increase student participation and develop mass higher education (Leathwood & Read, 2009). Universities and public research institutions in Romania weren't out of these reforms. The Romanian academic system has witnessed neoliberal measures for competition and commercialisation of education, with an increased number of researchers working with flexible arrangements, as part-time, fixed-term and short-term post-doc contracts (SHE report, 2018).

Second, I believe that gender experiences in academia can be well described by the term 'precariousness' for indicating a major cause of insecurity among researchers. The employment insecurity is related to the possibility that the job will end in the near future with important consequences on the work continuity, skill reproduction and social protection (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989; Olsthoorn, 2013, 3-4).

In the academic discourse, Bourdieu (1964; 1998) by 'precarité' considers precariousness as a reference for threatening insecurity caused by both employment status and the risk of poverty. Precariousness as increasing phenomenon in Europe has important consequences that cross many policy research areas: quality of life, living conditions, psychological and long-term affective effects, social and gender inequalities in the context of neoliberal working conditions etc. As Castel (1996) is remarking, the precarization of labour is representing a central process and a direct consequence of the new technological demands of the modern capitalism seen also as "new social issues". More frequently, the concept of precariousness is often describing the changes from stable full-time jobs to some more flexible work arrangements in the 'favourable' context of post-Fordist labour markets (Castel, 1996; Standing, 2011; Vallas, 2015; Kalleberg. 2009; 2011).

In the policy discourse, precariousness is analysed more recently as a result of the increased demand of labour flexibility in Europe, mostly after the economic crisis (Kalleberg, 2009; 2011; Broughton et al., 2010; Vallas, 2012; 2015, Eurofound, 2013). These changes are revealed by opening the local labour markets to transnational capital and neoliberal measures for labour internationalisation and flexibilization (Stoiciu, 2013; Trif, 2013; Ban, 2016).

The present paper is asking how these neoliberal requirements and new managerial changes are affecting the employment situation in higher education for the specific context of Romania. I am wondering how these changes became 'normalised' in the recruitment system and whether consequences are affecting the gender representation in higher education.

The objective is to present a background situation of the neoliberal context of the academy in terms of the structure of gendered career opportunities interconnected with the care issues and precariousness. The analysis will draw a theoretical analysis of the local context of employment regimes in higher education using the gender dimension. The methodology is desk-based on secondary data from the EUROSTAT, Labour Force Survey, National Statistics Institute of Romania, MORE 3 Survey and labour policy analysis on the Romanian Labour Code and on the policy reports on gender representation in higher education employment in the EU (SHE Figures, 2018; GEAR, 2016).

Neoliberal policies in higher education employment. Overview from the national context

The circumstances of researchers' precarious experiences can be analysed in a larger European transformation of capitalist economies. Over the past few decades, higher education systems have become a 'corporate ideology'. The new modes of surveillance and autonomy of the academic labour in terms of 'productivity', 'competition' and 'flexibility' were implemented in the majority of the institutions with a research and education profile in Europe. After the reconstruction of the neoliberal recruitment system, many researchers had to deal with the emphasis on 'individual responsibility' and 'freedom of choice' sometimes by way of despising any institutional support in the name of a more individualist orientation (Davies, 2005; Bosso & Rivetti, 2014; Bozzon et al, 2015; Cannizzo, 2017).

Thus, for the majority of Romanian academics, tenure employment is still a privileged practice of the current recruitment system. In the same time, other tiers of academics proceed from one contract to the next in a more 'flexible conception' of the academic labour. The employment casualisation is no longer marginal or exceptional within academia but rather become a common practice, especially for the research contracts. In conformity with the Romanian Labour Code, the fixed-term contracts are not typical for a specific category (e.g. junior academics) but it's become a frequent feature also for researchers in senior positions for which the labour law is allowing to have two maybe three fixed-term or part-time contracts in different institutions.

Academics in Romania have their research rankings annually judged by their line manager. superior. This fact is leading regularly to stress and pressure for producing the expected outputs in conformity to the national rankings requirements established by both intern audit and the external audit of the Minister of Education. In Romania, the quality audit is focused mostly on research

outputs to produce worthy and excellent research results and less on the quality of the teaching activities. "Such principles are oriented towards productivity, performance and excellence – principally defined in terms of the number and quality of publications produced, levels of funding obtained by both public and private bodies and by the number of graduates 'produced' by universities" (Teelken, 2012; Murgia et al. 2018).

To bring in the current analysis the interconnection between precariousness and gendered employment, I will examine first the political transformations of higher education and public scientific research.

Perhaps, the most visible and radical turn among the academic recruitment system has started immediately after the period of the economic crisis in Romania (2009). The crisis started with a significant reduction of the available research resources and public funding for conducting research together with a gradual precarization of the young researchers by limiting the access to tenure - track positions. After 2009, the tenure - track opportunities in research and higher education system suffered various transformations through more flexible arrangements, as fixed-term contracts or project-based contracts favoured by the new projects funded by the European Social Fund and POSDRU Program, lately by SIPOCA and POCU programs.

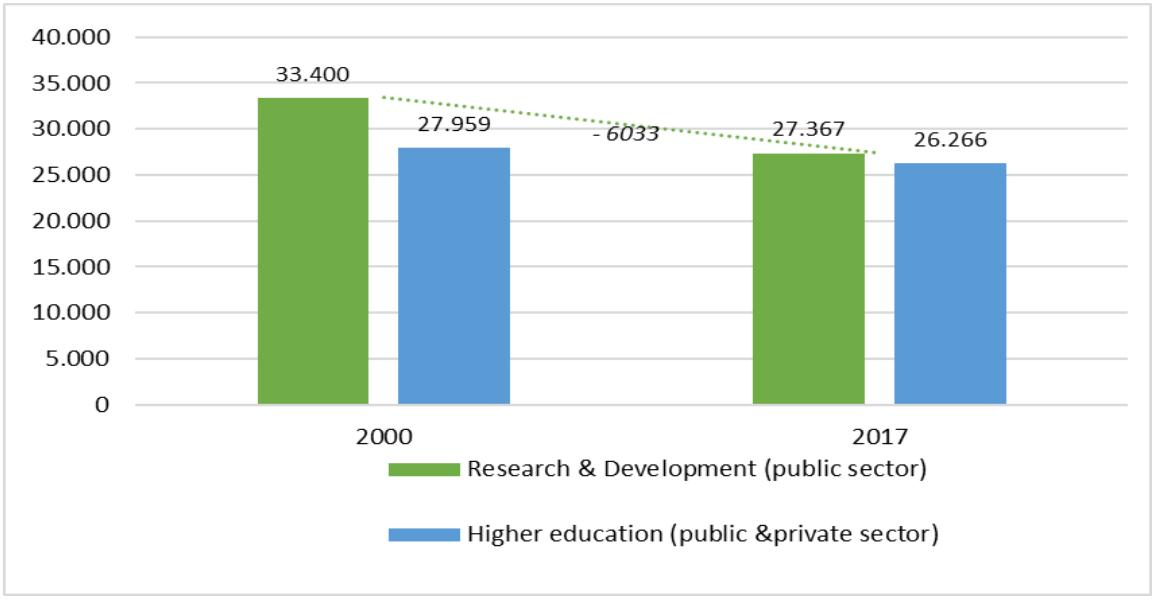
One of the most prominent impacts of the institutional context after the crisis was the Educational Law adopted in 2011. The educational legislation caused major changes in the employment conditions for higher education and research. The conditions for entering in academia were based on high competition and hyper-productivity concerning the scientific publications, high mobility demands to participate in international conferences and academic exchanges, high skills requirements for both early and senior research stages. The government proceeded in 2011 with the implementation of these reforms and changed the National Educational Law. The new law implemented produced a new model of governance of the national higher education system. The changes approved a rigid classification and a new ranking system for higher education institutions in Romania. Moreover, the classification has the scope to radically differentiate the 'productive' universities from the 'unproductive' ones, with an unequal allocation of funds based on their research performance. The Educational Law of 2011 came with a complex and diversified methodology for evaluating the universities for their academic and institutional performance (Gog, 2015). The methodology worked with four categories of indicators: scientific research, teaching-learning skills, the relationship with the external environment and institutional capability (Gog, 2015).

These neoliberal demands were translated in action by a higher level of competition for entering in academia that came with increased insecurity especially for those researchers with fixed-term contracts and hourly-paid teaching contracts looking for permanent positions in higher education. As long as the universities tended to open a minor number of new positions for young researchers and teaching assistants, immediately after 2009 the institutions were preferring to open instead tenure-track, more fixed-term contracts. Furthermore, the competition at the national level became higher for the very few available tenure positions, by imposing both high mobility demands and hyper-productivity for publication in high-rated journals.

To some extent, the growing constraints for higher education employment inevitably created a polarised stratification of the academic staff into two tiers: professors and other senior academics with tenure-track positions which belonged to the 'privileged' and secure part of academy, while mainly young researchers with short-term contracts were experimenting insecure job prospects in an 'a growing academic underclass' unstable and less remunerated (Ylijoki, 2010).

As a historical sign of the ongoing neoliberal market transformations over the past few decades, the rising of precarious jobs is associated also with major institutional changes of social dialogue law and neoliberal labour market demands for flexibility and mobility (Harvey, 2005; Kalleberg, 2009; Trif, 2013; Ban, 2016). These precarious jobs increased the work-insecurity and have significant repercussions for the working conditions and additional effects on work-life balance and forthcoming poor life strategies to ensure a decent life (Rand Report, Guthrie et. al, 2017; UCU report, 2019).

Fig. 1. Full-time employment in research and higher education, in 2000 and 2017, age 16-65, (fixed-term & tenure-track positions)



Source: INSEE, FOM1054, SCL104A, CDP102H

Due to the economic crisis when in Romania a lot of public positions in higher education were temporarily 'banned', the low ratio of permanent academic contracts was into a continuing fall until the present. A continuing decrease of the available positions was presented from 2000 to 2017, with approximately 6000 positions that disappeared in the public research institutions, and around 3000 in higher education.

Considering the total number of researchers and higher education employees from 2000 to 2017, the employment situation can be seen as a relatively positive trend for women representation in both research and higher education positions. Following the growth of the full-time positions in higher education from 2000 to 2017, the women are the 'winners' of the Romanian transition

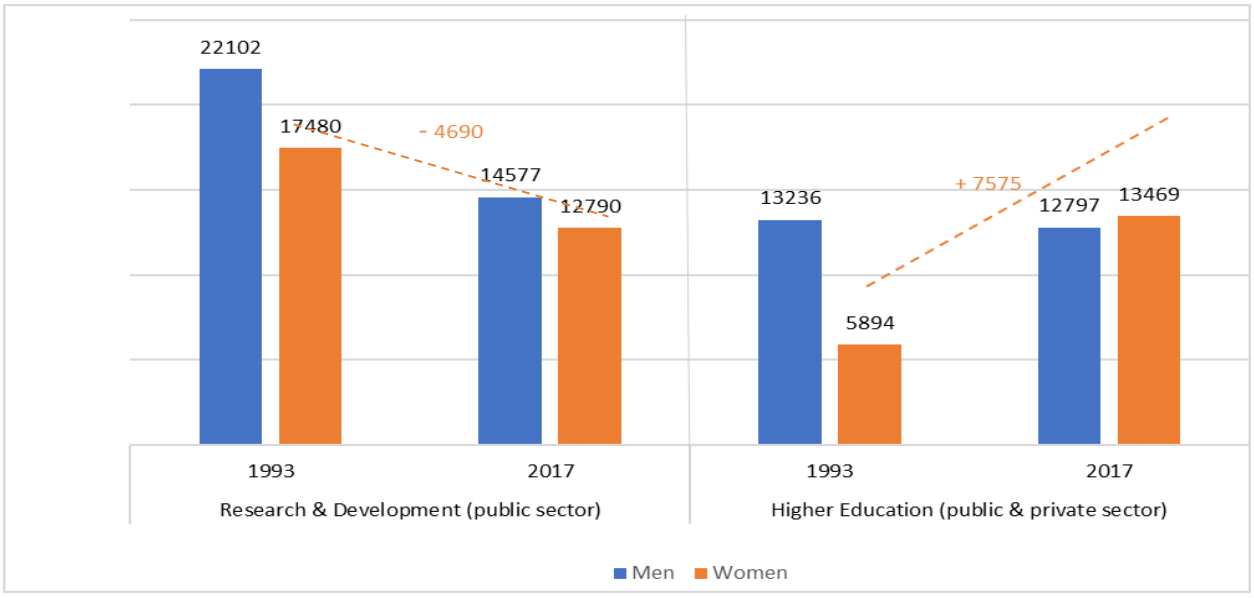
period, with more than 7500 new positions that were created immediately after 1990. The tendency for the research positions is negative when comparing women to men. One possible explanation is concerning the direct consequences of the reformation of higher education recruitment system after the economic crisis, that came together with a lack of funding opportunities in conducting scientific research, but also with a significant and continuous decrease of the total number of students due to the demographic issues in post-communist Romania.

The intersection between gender, care and precariousness in higher education

a. Gender regimes and care

The existence of gender inequalities in higher education is nothing new. Thus, the norms based on competition and self-responsibility goes more into 'gender mainstream' policy and less on promoting equal opportunities in academic recruitment. The understanding of the gender regimes in higher education is related to the set of norms and principles that determine the gender representation in the organisation. The higher education reforms in Romania have a historical turn in the 'favour' of women representation. The inclusion of women on the labour market was an economic demand during the communist policies of labour which encouraged an equal gender representation in industries that traditionally were represented by men. Despite the women inclusion in Eastern and Central Europe labour markets (see fig. 3), the masculinity 'as system' is very deeply inscribed both historically as well as habitually in the institutions, "that the exemption of women is always reproduced annexe even though there have been numerous university reforms" (Nobauer, et. al, 2005: 30). Therefore, "the academic and research careers generally continue to be shaped by traditional gender models, which are binding for female researchers and this happens more frequently to them than to their male colleagues (O'Connor et al. 2017; Murgia et. al, 2018: 23)". Below, figure 2 is showing the positive trend for women representation in higher education from 1993 to 2017, with more than 7500 women that are working in teaching tenure -track positions while the number of men remains relatively constant from 1993 to 2017, with less than 500 positions that decrease in this period of time. The employment situation is very different in the research sector, where more than 4500 women positions declined from 1993 to 2017. Even though the number of men working in research decreased as well with more than 7500 positions, in 2017 they are dominating research with a significant difference from women, around 2000 positions.

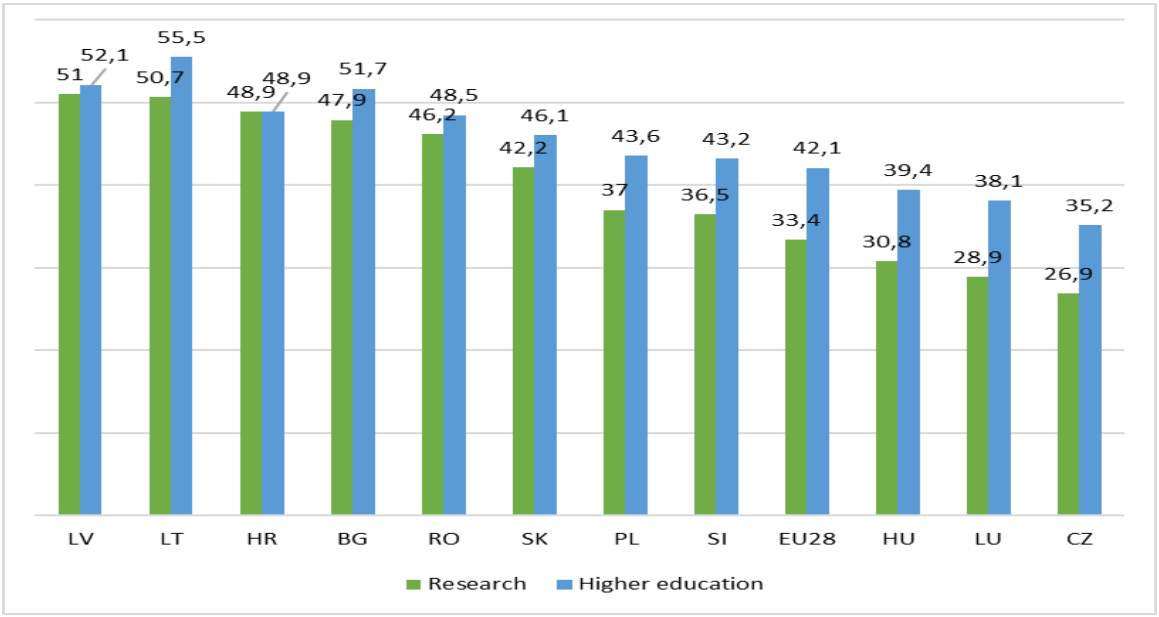
Fig. 2 The total number of researchers by gender in Romania (1993- 2017)



Source: INSEE RO FOM105E

The distribution of women in higher education and research in the EU remains at a low level, only 33,4% of women were working in research and 42,1% in higher education. The men are dominating the academic positions in the majority of Eastern and Central Europe countries. The exception is made in Latvia and Lithuania. In 2015, the proportion of the total number of women in Romania was 46,2% in research and for higher education 48,5%. In the majority of the European countries, SHE Figures report (2018) is showing that the women researchers are concentrated in the higher education sector, as it is mainly visible for the Romanian case.

Fig. 3. The proportion of women among researchers in higher education and research sector, Eastern and Central Europe (2015)



Source: SHE Figures report (2018), EUROSTAT (2015)

In the majority of countries, as is also the case of Romania, the women are concentrated in the higher education sector while men have a 'disproportionately high share' in the research sector. SHE Figures report (2018) is showing that across the European Union countries, 42,1 % of women researchers are employed in the higher education sector, while 33,4% of women worked in research, in 2015.

In the Eastern and Central European countries, the proportion of women researchers oscillate between 27% in the Czech Republic and 51% the highest proportion on Lithuania. Looking at the overall score of women representation in both higher education and research, they can be considered as 'gender-balanced'. Latvia and Lithuania are the countries with the highest proportion of women researchers (51,0 % and 50,7 %).

The women representation issue in higher education and research cannot be explained only by looking to the structural changes of post-communist societies from both sides of the institutional frameworks and employment policies. The gender inequalities in the overall academy must be analysed also by including the cultural understanding of traditional gender roles in the institutional context (Murgia et. al, 2018: 23). First, the academic research positions are not equally accessible to male and female PhD holders (Murgia et al, 2018, Ivancheva et. 2019). Second, the gender differences in academia are showing that male occupy sometimes a better position in the global research market and are better paid than their female colleagues that are struggling to find a permanent research position (Canal-Dominguez & Wall, 2014 In Murgia et al, 2018: 23-24). Ultimately, the gendered regimes in a typical neoliberal higher education system require a complex interpretation of the working conditions issues related to precarious experiences, employment insecurity and care precarity (Ivancheva et al, 2019).

In the core of gendered precariousness understanding in academia, the care issue is representing an important feature. By only focusing the analysis on women representation in higher education and research, we can have an estimation about how women are dealing with employment insecurity. Even so, the care dimension in higher education is reflecting different structural changes that occur in both personal and institutional relations which are perceived differently in the personal lives of men and women (Heijstra et al., 2017). Moreover, the care issue is reproduced in complex forms within the organisational cultures of the neoliberal academy (Murgia et al, 2018).

The link to labour insecurity is not a novelty in the case of women. As this article noted already, the assumption of the 'ideal academic worker' is ignoring the 'care precarity' of the personal lives of women with children. The data from MORE 3 survey (2018) (Mobility patterns and career paths of EU researchers) is presenting evidence at country level that men are more mobile them their female colleagues when travelling for work (for example, in Slovakia the sex differences for international academic mobility goes with 10,9% in the favour of men, in Poland 10,4% and in Belgium 8,4%, both in the favour of men). The international mobility among researchers is seen as a necessary step for finding a tenure-track position and it's representing an important line for academic quality. When it comes to career advancement, "having children is

still representing an obstacle to obtaining a stable position in academia for women, regardless of their scientific profile" (Murgia et. al, 2018: 23-24).

Several data evidence on gender precariousness in higher education is pointing out to the conclusion that women who have a permanent position "are more frequently single and without children compared with their male peers" (Palomba 2008; Ivancheva et. Al 2019).

b. The precariousness issue

One of the standing points of the gender regimes in academia is the concept of 'precariousness' understood as a transversal dimension for studying gender regime. The academic work was described as being 'uncertain and precarious' by many sociologists studying before this phenomenon (della Porta 2015; Lempiäinen, 2015; Bozzon et al, 2017; Murgia et al, 2018). The main argument for describing the concept of precariousness is that many researchers are employed with fixed-term contracts and the majority of them are represented by women. The rapid changing time and schedule, especially the rise of fixed-term employment combined with heavy time pressure, evoke important questions as to how academics live with insecurity and uncertainty (Yliijoki, 2010).

For describing the employment insecurity in academia, I use the concept of 'precariousness' because I think that involved a complex understanding of the working conditions concerning the gender dimension. First of all, the link between gender and precariousness was previously analysed as an economic issue in the context of the casualisation of academic employment (Bozzon et al, 2017; Ivancheva et. al 2019). The rise of externally financed project-based positions and other fixed-term and part-time staff seem to be a common characteristic across many European countries (Ylijoki, 2010). In conformity with the European Framework for Research Careers (EFRC), these 'flexible' contracts in higher education and research correspond to first Stage Researcher (up to the point of PhD) and the Recognised Researcher (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent). The early stages of an academic career, such as the first stage researcher to a second stage after PhD were considered particularly insecure and precarious, even the work-related experiences are perceived differently for men and women. As is shown mainly in the ethnographic literature (Bozzon et al, 2017, Ivancheva, et. al, 2019); qualitative research (Davies, 2005; Lempiäinen, 2015) and critical approach to neoliberal policies (Pulignano, 2018; Murgia, 2012), the concept of 'precariousness' appears to go along with the age, gender and contract dimension in a matter of auto-identification with working 'under' precarious working conditions (SHE Figures, 2018; Jones & Oakley, 2018; UCU report, 2019).

The theory of academic feminization (Leathwoord & Read, 2009) is explaining how the increasing number of women is taking over the academic employment in part-time and fixed-term contracts. Due to the lack of institutional support from the public research institutions and universities, these contracts are particularly associated with insecurity and insufficient remuneration. The new managerial demands are legitimizing precariousness as a necessary step related to the transition to the labour market in order to obtain a tenure -track position (Busso & Rivetti; Bozzon et al. 2017). "To avoid interruptions of their careers, the researchers need to deal

with frequent mobility between jobs or work-related mobilities" (Murgia, et al, 2018). Therefore, precariousness in higher education is not to be restricted to temporary, discontinuous and uncertain employment. Uncertainty and insecurity are representing frequent experience in higher education (Knights & Clarke 2014; 2015).

In Romania, the link between precariousness and gender in academia is a relatively new issue studied so far by social scientists (Eurofound, 2010; 2013; Eurostat, 2018; della Porta et. al, 2015). During and after the economic crisis in Romania, in late 2009, many labour market reforms marked the recruitment system in all the industries with a high share of high-skills workers. The case of higher education wasn't out of these reforms. The so-called decline of 'typical -standard' work contracts in favour of an increasing number of 'atypical – flexible' contracts are interpreted as rising with a precarization effect on high-skill workers (Quinlan et al. 2001; Barbier 2004; Vosko 2006; Kalleberg, 2011; Standing, 2011; Olsthroom, 2013; della Porta et. al, 2015, Murgia, 2017). The precarious employment in Romania was the subject to different research and policy reports at the EU Level (Eurofound, 2010; 2013; EC, 2016; SHE Figures, 2018). The data from MORE 3 Survey is presenting a descriptive overview of the employment situation of researchers working in higher education and scientific research institutions (public institutions & business). Comparing to the data available at EUROSTAT (2018) which have a specific conceptual scheme for measuring precarious work[1], in MORE 3 Survey one of the questions is related to the self-perception about insecurity where researchers may point if they are working under precarious conditions or not. The precarious working contracts were considered those without a contract, with fixed-term agreements, non-permanent contracts and part-time. Particularly, MORE 3 Survey results are pointing out the career insecurities among both young scientists and women. In this case, SHE Figures report (2018) are proving empirical evidence at the EU Level that the lack of job security can also have a "negative impact on the scientific output of researchers already in the system, especially women in the early stages of their careers. (…) It can reduce many sorts of opportunities, including obtaining research funding, working with leading scientists, achieving tenure or long-term contracts, or having sufficient time for research" (SHE Figures, 2018).

[1] Measuring employment quality by EUROSTAT: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/labour-market/quality-of-employment

Fig. 4 Part-time employment of researchers in higher education out of total researcher population (2016)

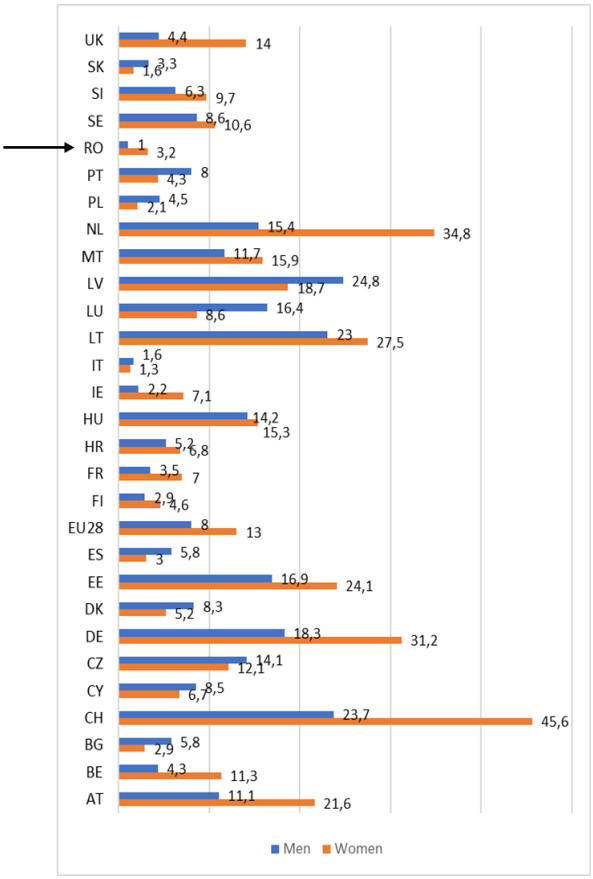
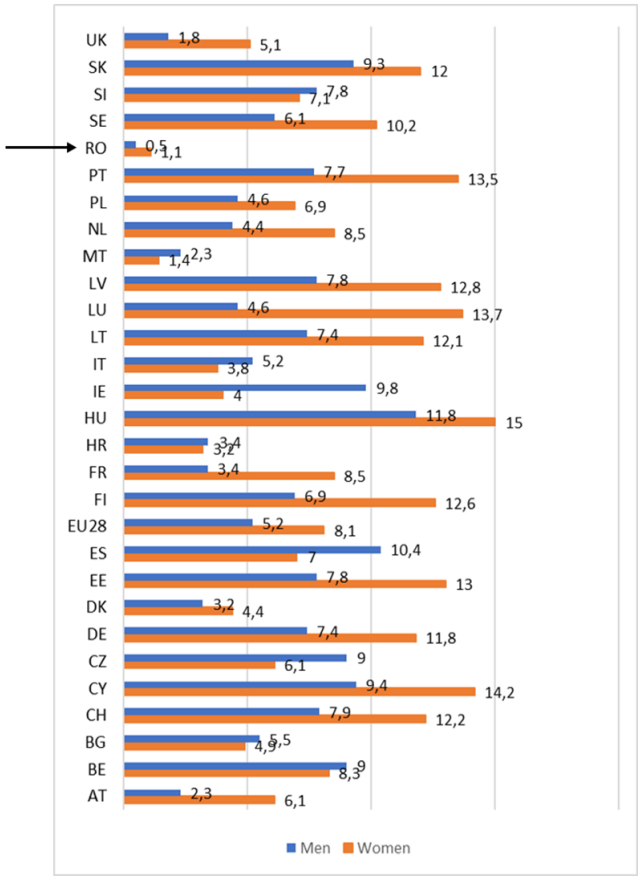


Fig. 5 Proportion of researcher in the higher education under precarious working contracts (2016)



Source: She Figures Report (2018), MORE3 survey (online database, flag GMD3)/ (Q2, Q31, Q32).

The two figures are presenting the gender differences in higher education by taking into account part-time employment and working under precarious conditions. The available data from the MORE Survey includes spontaneous answers regarding self-perception about the working status and the insecurity regarding the work contract. For the majority of the European countries, part-time employment in higher education is feminised. The situation for part-time employment in higher education is the same in Romania (3,2% of women compared to 1% of men) and at the EU28 level, 13% of women were working part-time in 2016, compared to only 8% of men. The data available for Romania is based on a small sample of researchers and the proportion for part-time contracts is under-represented. Comparing to the national statistics on employment and labour market at EU level, as is the case of EUROSTAT or Labour Force Survey, the MORE 3 Survey is gathering data based on the self-declaration of researchers and not by counting the actual number of part-time contracts provided by the national institutes or by the statistics provided by the universities. Moreover, the National Statistics Institute of Romania is not collecting national data on part-time employment in higher education and research. In the case of MORE Survey, the full-

time/part-time distinction was made based on the spontaneous answer of respondents.On one side, part-time employment is reflecting the dominant cultural patterns and the organisational factors that go more in the benefit of men obtaining tenure- track positions compared to women researchers which are more 'trapped' in the life-work balance paradigm (Ivancheva et. al, 2019). Second, the part-time positions are indicating the gender regimes: "female academics are disproportionately affected by the masculinist care-free norms of geographic mobility" which is an important characteristic of the academic career (Ivancheva et. al, 2019). The gender differences in part-time work can be explained also by the gender labels of the family primary carer and housework duties which are pointed though the responsibility of women.

Part-time employment in academia is interrelated with other 'temporal changes' taking place in the institutions: accelerating time, loss of autonomy, over-time management and growing time pressure of the academic work. These contracts in higher education are usually characterised by the basis of free choice regarding working hours and schedule. But, a large proportion of the precarious contracts are assumed to be intensive or very flexible because of the variable working hours that reflect an imbalanced work-life in the case of women, but also by referring to the "over-commitments" and "over-work" to compensate for career advancement (Eurofound, 2013) or sometimes for compensate for an insufficient income. In addition to the main research and teaching duties, "the academics are expected to attract external revenue, to establish large networks within and outside academia, to engage in international collaboration, publishing, it is expected to produce not only more but also better scientific results in a short period" which create a lot of pressure (Ylijoki, 2010:2).

Higher education institutions in Romania are preferring to open temporary or fixed-term positions for PhDs instead of permanent contracts, because the first category is considered to be 'more advantageous' in terms of budget savings. Due to a 'flexible policy' within Romanian universities, the Ph.D. students are employed sometimes as teaching assistants without having a teaching contract. In the legal terms of the doctoral contracts, the students with a doctoral scholarship are working without being extra-paid for the number of teaching seminars that they currently conduct. In the doctoral contract terms is stipulated that a Ph.D. student must have a minimum teaching activity in the limit of 6 hours/ week (around three seminars). Due to insufficient remuneration and for attracting extra revenues, many academics have more than one contract, usually two or three flexible contracts, working fixed-term in different research projects or having small-jobs for teaching activities.

Table 1. The gross salaries for teaching positions[1] and research positions[2] at the University of Bucharest and Romanian Academy of Science (2018)

Salary degree (no bonus included)	Assistant professor (R1)	Lecturer (R2)	Associate Professor (R3)	Full Professor (R4)
The gross amount (in RON and euro/ 2018 for University of Bucharest)	3568 (750 €)	4307 (920 €)	5381 (1120 €)	11103 (2500 €)
The gross amount (in RON and euro/ 2018 for Romanian Academy of Science)	2632 (550 €)	3803 (800 €)	4540 (980 €)	10132 (2150 €)

Source: www.unibuc.ro/ www.acad.ro/ INSEE

For instance, the University of Bucharest, one of the biggest universities in Romania and Eastern Europe, has a huge number of Teaching Associated Stuff with hourly-paid contracts in the majority of the faculties, especially in the biggest ones, as is the case of the social science. The rate of one teaching hour is related to the teaching rank and it is depending of the vacancy of the leading course.

Last, but not least, the direct consequences of precarious working conditions are reflected by the low and insufficient wages for researchers in the early -stage positions. In the same time, due to the work intensity, the personal lives of researchers are affected "in terms of mental and physical wellbeing, and terms of the balance or integration of work and other spheres of personal life" (Lynch & Ivancheva, 2015 In. Bozzon et al, 2017: 7). The biographical studies done so far on the precarious working conditions in academia pointed to the (in)capacity to plan the professional career and the life spheres (Bozzon et al, 2017: 8).

Conclusions

This article intended to theoretically ground a discussion about the intersection between precariousness and gender in the context of the structural uncertainties of flexible capitalism. Based on a theoretical framework of precariousness (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989; Quinlan, 2001; Vosko, 2006; Kalleberg, 2009; 2011; Standing, 2011) linked to the gender regimes in academia (Davies, 2005; Cannizzo, 2017; Ivancheva et. al, 2019), the article aims to combine the institutional level of gender representation in Romanian higher education with dimensions related to care and work insecurity. The analysis intended to critically expose an example of the 'privileged' precariousness of academic work. Firstly, the focus on researchers with temporary and part-time contracts is motivated by the particular interest of this category to obtain a 'permanent' position. In the specific case of Romania, they are more vulnerable to a future

[1] The teaching grades in the higher education system in Romania are the fallowing: 1. Assistant Professor/2. Lecturer/3. Associate Professor/4. Professor

[2] The research grades for working in research & development are the fallowing: 1. Researcher 0 degree/2. Researcher 3th degree/3. Researcher 2 degree/4. Researcher 1 degree.

precarious career and working poor with low wages. Secondly, the interrelations between gender, care and precariousness (Canizzo, 2017; Busso & Rivetti, 2014) is presenting the impact on career and life prospects that affects women differently than men – emotionally, intellectually and socially (Murgia et al, 2018; Ivancheva et. 2019; Cardozo, 2016).

The case of higher education employment is rarely in the attention of social research or policy-related reports. Moreover, it is urgent and necessary to discuss all the implications on the gender dimension and working under precarious working conditions in higher education. So far, MORE 3 is the only survey which allowed close estimations on these issues at the European level. The National Institute of Statistics from Romania is not providing any specific data on temporary and part-time employment in higher education and scientific research.

The critical view of the paper pointed out the context of Romania, in terms of neoliberal policies and labour legislation after the economic crisis, which completely changed the employment conditions and the access to tenure positions. Facing the neoliberal institutionalism, the higher education has experimented so far: extensive cuts in public funding; public positions 'banned' in the universities and public research; long-term effects of reducing the number of academic staff; extreme pressure for regular migration mobilities and 'no boundaries jobs' to secure visibility and the access to a permanent contract; deep polarization of jobs between tenure track and fixed-term, gender inequality in top management positions etc. (Gog, 2016; Busso & Rivetti, 2014; Ivancheva et. al, 2019). By taking into account the article demonstration, these neoliberal changes in the academic labour are more visible among the early-career academics and women for the majority of the European countries (Busso & Rivetti, 2014 Bozzon et al. 2017; Ivancheva et. al, 2019).

The neoliberal model in the Romanian academy is devoted to the need for a professional competition, mobility related to the specific academic work, intensive writing practices and fluid working hours for the 'passion for doing science'. The working conditions in higher education usually come with an increasing pressure to respect the academic rankings, to move to an upper position in the institution or to obtain a tenured position. The competition for completing the academic rankings is concerning the publications in international scientific journals, the geographical mobility for networking and the applications for European grants. Working under precarious conditions is considered a barrier to gender balance and also a source of power relations. In Romania, the researchers working part-time have limited possibilities to negotiate the tasks and to control the work schedule. Along with part-time, the fixed-term contracts are not taken into consideration for the decision-making process in the institution and for the majority of the cases, the workers are not collectively represented. So, usually, any issue related to the work continuity and working conditions is representing the subject of direct negotiation between worker and director.

In the past decade, the political context coincides with many labour market reforms on social dialogue representations and flexible employment relations in the name of work competition, social mobility and skills reproduction. Looking back in time, the neoliberal transformations of the higher education have significative consequences on the research funding

with an extensive bureaucratization based on the measurement of one's academic rankings, high competition and particularly a neoliberal discourse that goes to the imperative passion for labour (Cannizzo, 2017; Ivancheva, 2019; Busso & Rivetti, 2014). Today' higher education institutions "are shaped by following the logic of big markets in which academic workers are re-imagined as competitors whom the state rewards and penalises by following offer-demand tools of assessment and cost-benefit schemes of evaluation (…) as a commodification model similar to corporations" (Busso&Rivetti, 2014). The neoliberal policies are conducting more precarious jobs that creates insecurity. The individuals have to adapt and internalise the norms of the institutions, even the work circumstances are insecure for one's work continuity and life satisfaction (Kalleberg, 2012). Fixed-term and part-time researchers are not protected by the legislation of social dialogue and they don't have the same rights as those employed in tenure- track positions. Their position in the institution is demanding the direct negotiation of working conditions and work continuity, with a financial- dependency of the informal and power relations.

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On Representation of the Concept of Feminism in Iranian Media: A Conservative Strandpoint from Iran

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Abstract

Although Iranian women have been involved with women rights issues for the past century, there seems to be a general resistance against using the label "feminist" among women activists in the country. While some women activists may associate themselves with "Islamic Feminism", a lot of them prefer to drop the label "feminism" all together. Although there may be many reasons behind disavowal of feminism in a conservative Islamic society like that of Iran, one cannot deny the power of media in creating and shaping a particular stance toward feminism. The present paper elaborates on the discursive representation of the concept of *feminism* in Fars News agency which is one of the main conservative news agencies in Iran. The results are drawn from a 450,000 word corpus of Persian news texts on feminism published by Fars News Agency from 2006 to 2012. Wordsmith concord feature was used to look for collocates of the search term *feminism* in the corpus. The collocates were then hypothetically categorized into various semantic groups and further analyzed using their contexts from the corpus. The data reiterated the results found in similar studies on feminism in Anglophone media in that feminism has indeed been portrayed in negative terms.

Keywords: feminism, discursive representation, corpus, media

A brief Background: Women's Right Movement in Iran

The history of Iranian women's movement dates back to the early twentieth century when Iranian women gradually used their collective force in favor of Tobacco Protest (1890-1892), Constitutional Revolution (1905–1907) and further schooling for girls. Women's presence in social arenas gradually increased during the following years and they succeeded in establishing various women societies including Women's freedom society. A number of women magazines were also established aiming at sensitizing the Iranian society to women issues.

Iranian women played an unprecedented role in Tobacco Protest which was a protest against a tobacco concession granted to the Great Britain by Nasir-al-Din Shah Qajar[1]. As

[1] The King of Persia from 17 September 1848 to 1 May 1896

highlighted by Paidar (1995: 50-51), Iranian women engaged in public protests and violent attacks during the Tobacco Protest. Even women in Nasir-al-Din Shah Shah's harem joined the protest and quit smoking to support boycotting tobacco. A few years later, Iranian women demonstrated a strong presence in the Constitutional Revolution (Mahdi 2004). They established secret organizations to support the constitutional movement and some even took part in pro-constitutional fights.

The increasing presence of women in social arenas along with the growing number of writings by both men and women on women's issues gradually set the ground for the emergence of what can be called the feminist movement in Iran. In fact, although women activities during the Tobacco Protest and the Constitutional Revolution were largely inspired by anti-imperialist and anti-dictatorship sentiments (Cheraghi Kotiani 2014), they were monumental in that they brought women together and directed women's attention to gender inequality in Iran.

If we define feminism broadly as the recognition of women's oppression, and the avocation of equality for women, we may refer to the early twentieth century as the time feminist movements started in Iran. During this period, women who had already used their collective forces in Tobacco Protest and Constitutional Revolution came to realize their power and being influenced by feminist ideas in the West, they started using their power to ask for gender equality and improvement of women's condition. Among the issues raised by the very first so-called Iranian feminists were women's right to vote, schooling for girls and polygamy (Mahdi 2004). Though women succeeded in winning schooling for girls, they had little progress in their fights for voting right for women and against polygamy during Qajar[1] ruling which ended in 1925.

Following the fall of Qajar dynasty and the coming to power of Reza Khan Pahlavi, feminism took a state shape (Sedghi 2007). However, women's associations suffered the dictatorship brought by Pahlavi regime. Reza Shah's stance towards women was modern, yet still biased and unfair. While he favored schooling and education for girls and women, he did not approve voting right for women. During Reza Shah's time in power, there were positive changes in divorce law and the minimum marriage age for girls was raised to fifteen. Following Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's rise to power in 1941, the situation for women gradually improved and women finally won the voting right in 1963. Yet, Mohammad Reza shah just like his father could not tolerate independent political activities by women, so only the women who were supportive of Pahlavi's policies were welcomed in social and political arenas.

After the massive participation of Iranian women in anti-shah demonstration and the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979, the situation improved for conservative religious women who found the new Islamic society a better and safer place for women. Over the years following Islamic revolution, the presence of women in social arenas increased gradually, yet steadily, and Iranian women, traditional or modernized, focused on education as a means to empower women and fight gender inequality. Polygamy, divorce law, child custody, women's working condition and women's participation in governmental jobs are among the main concerns of women activists in today's Iran. Other controversial issues some women activists have been trying to address

[1] Dynasty which ruled Iran from 1785 to 1925.

include women's stoning, abortion, and the issue of Hijab. The following section focuses on feminism after the Islamic revolution in Iran.

Feminism in post Islamic revolution Iran (1979-present).

Generally, feminism in post-revolutionary Iran can be divided into secular feminism and Islamic feminism. Secular feminism is an umbrella term covering a wide range of individuals including monarchists, anti-Islamists and leftists (Cheraghi Kotiani 2014) who adopt a "secularist"- "a consciously chosen political identity in the context of Iran" not a "secular" identity (Paidar 2001: 29). It considers Islam as a divine ideology to have limited capacity for resolving women issues (p. 30) and thus proposes secularism as a prerequisite for achieving women freedom (Shafie Sarvestani 2000). Secular feminists in Iran are characterized by anti-Islamism, disregard for moral values and attempt to weaken family structure in the Iranian society (Shafie Sarvestani 2000: 61-70).

Islamic Feminism is another term used to refer to feminism in the current Iran. Islamic Feminism is in fact a new branch of feminism emerging in Muslim countries during the second half of the 20th century and is defined as "a feminist discourse and practice articulated within an Islamic paradigm" (Badran 2002: 1 as cited in Tønnessen 2014), or "a feminine interpretation of Islamic holy texts" (Hoseinzadeh & Abbasian 2015: 208).

It is however necessary to mention that while many Iranian women activists prefer not to be labeled "feminist", there are some who associate themselves with "Islamic Feminism", a term which is itself subject to a lot of controversy in the country, the most striking of which has to do with summing up the two concepts of "Islam" and "feminism" together which seems essentially paradoxical to many (Hoseinzadeh & Abbasian 2015: 325). Cheraghi Kotiani (2014) believes that Islamic feminism on the one hand suffers from lack of scientific methodology and on the other hand, that it is modelled on women issues as priototized in the west and disregards the national and cultural capacities for resolving them.

Yet, we also have women activists in Iran who, while not associating themselves with any form of feminism, work for women rights. Such women activists refrain from identifying themselves as feminists. Although Iranian women have been involved with women rights issues for the past century, there seems to be a general resistance against using the label "feminist" among many women activists in the country. As highlighted by Cheraghi Kotiani (2014), feminism, in general, seems to have no specific identity and position in Iran.

As reviewed above, one can see a general resistance against using the label "feminist" among women activists in the country. Yet, it seems that Iranian women in general and Iranian women activists in particular are not the only ones when it comes resisting the label "feminist". As highlighted by Jaworska and Krishnamurthy (2012), while women are generally aware of gender inequalities, they rarely identify themselves as feminist and some even reject feminism altogether. According to Percy and Kremer (1995), and Riley (2001), "(women) who seem to be sympathetic to feminist values distance themselves from the movement" (cited in by Jaworska and Krishnamurthy 2012: 402).

While there may be a lot of reasons behind disavowal of feminism in a conservative Islamic society like that of Iran, one cannot deny the power of media in creating and shaping particular stance toward feminism. As highlighted by Fowler (1991: 4, cited in: Babalola 2002: 405), news texts are not "value-free reflection of *facts*", rather news texts are selected according to certain criteria and values, and more often than not they are constructed in a way as to support certain interests.
With this in mind, the researchers embarked on a corpus-based research into the representation of feminism in Fars News Agency which is one of the main news agencies in Iran generally referred to as a conservative news production agency.

The Research

The present research can be defined as a corpus-based study in that the corpus is the main tool used to extract data on representation of feminism. Using the quantitative analysis of corpus linguistics and drawing on in-depth analysis of Critical Discourse Analysis, the present study aims to research into the discursive representation of the word *feminism* in a 450,000 word corpus of Persian news texts on feminism published in Fars News agency. While corpus-based analysis is widely used for describing recurrent patterns of lexical items including collocational patterns, critical discourse analysis approach is particularly useful for detailed analysis of stretches of texts. The combination of two, as highlighted by Baker *et al.* (2008), can help the researchers integrate precise quantitative analysis of corpus methods with in-depth qualitative analysis of critical discourse analysis.

The main research objective is to find out how "feminism" has been discursively presented in the news articles by Fars news agency as one of the main news agencies in Iran. The researchers believe that such data can help us better understand how feminism is portrayed and further perceived in an Islamic society like that of Iran. We further believe that the results from this study and other similar studies can be helpful in understanding the public stance adopted toward feminism in the current Iran.

The corpus

The corpus used in this study is a 450,000 word corpus created from the online news texts on feminism published by Fars News Agency.

The news texts were collected using advanced search setting of Google search engine. At the very first step, the researchers identified the potential Persian equivalents for the keywords *feminism*. To do so, the researchers consulting various English-Persian dictionaries and relevant academic/nonacademic texts came up with a list of all potential Persian equivalents for the term *feminism*.

The following three main terms were identified as Persian equivalents for the term *feminism*: (زن سالاری), (فمنیسم) (جنبش برابری زنان)

As the next step, the identified terms were each googled to see how common they are in various Persian discourse in general and Persian news in particular. As it turned out, the two terms

فمینیسم and زن سالاری were the most common ones used in Persian news media. These two terms were thus set as our search terms for building the Persian corpus.

It is necessary to mention that considering the various spelling alternatives for the above-mentioned two terms, the final search terms were increased to five terms: فمینیسم، فمینیزم، فمنیسم، زنسالاری، زن سالاری.

During the next step, using Google advanced search setting the search terms were each searched in the domain *http://www.farsnews.com/*. Then all the news articles containing the search terms published from 2006 to 2012 were downloaded and saved in plain text format to be analyzed by the corpus tool. The final corpus contained 448, 821 tokens or words.

Pre-editing the corpus

In order to prepare the corpus for analysis, a number of pre-editing procedures were carried out. Firstly, we needed to homogenize different codes for the same character in order for them not to be recognized as different by the corpus tool. Secondly, we needed to joint affixes to their stems in order for them to be treated as one word by the corpus tool. Lastly, we homogenized various Persian equivalents for the word *feminism*. To do so, we replaced all variants of the Persian equivalents for *feminism* with فمینیسم which seemed to be more common than others. In other words, the Persian terms زن سالاری، زنسالاری، فمنیسم، فمینیزم were all replaced with فمینیسم.

Extracting data from the corpus

The corpus tool used in this study was Wordsmith 5 (Scott, 2010). Wordsmith concord feature was used to look for collocates of the search term "فمینیسم" in the corpus. The concord feature determines the probability of two words being collocates by comparing the probability of these two words being a unit against the probability that they are together by chance.

There is no doubt that the recurrent use of certain words/terms in referring to a concept or phenomenon may propagate a specific view of the concept/phenomenon in question and it can eventually lead to shaping a specific version of reality about it. As highlighted by Van Dijk (1995), lexical choices or lexicalization, as Van Dijk calls it, can reflect the ideological stance of a speaker, or the writer among other things. Van Dijk further asserts that opinions and ideologies may be conventionalized and codified in lexicon. A useful concept here is "semantic prosody" which had been defined by Louw as "the consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates" (1993 :157). Semantic prosody has to do with positive, negative or neutral attitudinal meaning associated with collocates meaning that certain words when co-occur may evoke certain positive, negative or neutral aura of meaning.

This study above all intends to explore into the collocations of the term "فمینیسم" in order to shed light on how this concept has been portrayed in our 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles on feminism.

Analysis

As mentioned earlier, Wordsmith 5 was the corpus used in this study. Using Wordsmith Concord feature, the list of collocates of the search word فمینیسم was generated. Wordsmith has six

statistical methods for generating collocates list. In this study, T-Score was used to generate the collocates list for the search term "فمینیسم".

Concord list yielded 195 collocates for the search term "فمینیسم" a number of which were function or grammatical words including articles and conjunctions which had to be removed from the list. In fact, while such function words ranked high in the collocates list, they were removed as they were not part of the meaningful recurring pattern for the search term "فمینیسم". What we were interested in were content or lexical items which carry the primary meaning or content and thus can help us know the concepts/meanings generally associated with "فمینیسم".

After removing all the function words from the collocates list, the remaining words were hypothetically categorized into various semantic groups to make the analysis easier to follow. Whenever the researchers were not sure about the exact semantic category for a word, the wider context of the respective word was consulted to make sure about the exact meaning of the word in question.

Table 1 displays the collocates of the search term "فمینیسم" categorized into different semantic groups.

Table 1: The collocates of the search term "فمینیسم" categorized into different semantic groups

Semantic group	Collocates Associated
Islam-related	اسلام، اسلامی، مسلمان (Islam, Islamic, Muslim)
Gender reference	زنان، زن، خانم‌ها، بانوان، مرد، مردها (women, woman, ladies, men, man)
Political and philosophical movements	جنبش، سکورال ، حقوق، مدرنیسم، سوسیالیم، رادیکال، لیبرال، انقلاب، اقتصادی، افراطی (movement, socialism, secular, modernism, radical, liberal, revolution, extremist, economic, rights)
Social taboos	همجنسگرایی، سقط، طلاق (homosexuality, abortion, divorce)
Place	غرب، ایرانی، غربی، آمریکا، تهران (west, western, Iranian, USA, Tehran)
Family-related	خانواده، مادری، همسری، ازدواج (marriage, motherhood, wifehood, family)
Academic-related	تئوری، نظریه، مکتب، دیدگاه، نگرش (theory, school of thought, viewpoint, notion)

During the course of the following paragraphs, the most important semantic groups identified will be discussed using the data from the corpus. The analysis focuses on collocates associated with 1) Islam, 2) Political and philosophical movements, 3) Social taboos, 4) Place and finally 5) family-related concepts.

1. COLLOCATES ASSOCIATED WITH ISLAM

As displayed in table 1, Islam, Islamic, Muslim (اسلام، اسلامی، مسلمان) were among the common collocates for the word "feminism" in our 450,000-word corpus of Persian news articles. A detailed analysis of concordance lines around these three words indicated that when Islam is discussed in vicinity of the term "فمینیسم", it was generally discussed under the following two major themes:

Similarities between Islamic concepts and Feminism

A close analysis of concordance lines revealed a focus on shared characteristics of Islam and feminism in the news articles analyzed. Major themes included:

- Just like feminism which values women's status in society, Islam is a religion which has greatly focused on the value of women in families and in society. Examples included:

  1) There are many verses in Quran which emphasize the value of women and encourage men to respect their wives and mothers love daughters.
  2) In Quranic verses, God talks to both men and women and for God men and women both have equal capacity to serve God.
  3) There are many verses in Quran about influential women.
  4) There is a Sura in Quran named after women with verses all about women, while there is no Sura for men per se.

- After the emergence of Islam, the situation of women improved greatly, especially in Arab nations. Examples included:

  1) Islam was clearly against female infanticide which was a common practice when Islam emerged.
  2) After Islam emerged, a girl's consent to marry was declared as imperative for the marriage to be acceptable.
  3) Islam recognized the women's right to own a property.
  4) After the emergence of Islam, dowry which was previously regarded as the bride-price paid to the father became a gift given by the groom to the bride herself,
  5) Islam improved the inheritance practices for women.

Differences between Islamic concepts and Feminism

A detailed analysis of concordance lines around the three Islam-related words indicated that when Islam is discussed in vicinity of the term "فمینیسم", it was generally discussed under the following two major themes:

- Family ties can be weakened because of feminism; this is while family is a sacred institution in Islam. Examples included:

1) Marriage which is an important institution in Islam has been damaged by feminism.

2) Radical feminism, in contrast to Islam, is anti-marriage.

3) Marriage, a holy institution in Islam, is considered a form of slavery in radical feminism.

4) Divorce, one of the least likable actions in Islam, is evidently promoted by feminism and feminists.

- Feminism promotes homosexuality and abortion; this is while they are both considered major sins in Islam. Examples included:

1) Feminism is a movement initiated by homosexual women.

2) Feminism promotes homosexuality which is a major sin in Islam.

3) Feminism with its stress on women's power over their bodies tries to justify abortion which is considered a sin in Islam.

4) The number of abortions is higher in societies where feminism is taught and promoted, while the number of abortions is Islamic societies is very limited.

- Feminism de-emphasizes motherhood, while motherhood and the role of mothers have been greatly emphasized in Islam. Examples included:

1) *Feminism tries to devalue motherhood, while Islam attaches especial importance to the roles mothers play in families and in society.*
2) *Feminism tries to discourage women from getting married and having children and this is not acceptable in an Islamic society like that of Iran.*

2. COLLOCATES ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENTS

As displayed in table 1, the words *movement*, *socialism*, *secular*, *radical*, *liberal*, *revolution*, *extremist*, *economic* and *rights* were among the common collocates for the term "فمینیسم" in our 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles. A detailed analysis of concordance lines around these words indicated that when words related to political movements are discussed in the vicinity of the word "feminism", they are generally discussed under the following themes:

Feminism has to do with extremism

The use of the two adjectives "extremist" and "radical" with the term "فمینیسم" suggests a sense of extremism in relation to feminism. Examples included:

1) Feminism is radical by its nature.

2) Feminism as a form of radical modernism has targeted Islamic societies.

3) Extremist feminism adopts an extremist perspective to family issues and the role of women in families.

Feminism has to do with secularism

The use of the adjective "secular" with the term "فمینیسم" points to a secular stance on the part of feminism. Examples included:

1) Feminism is a secular movement initiated by the West to secularize Islamic societies.

2) Feminism is in contract to Islamic concepts and the principles of other religions; it is secular and not applicable to religious societies.

3) Western secular feminism had not succeeded in improving the situation of women.

Feminism has to do with modernism

The use of the word "modernism" in the vicinity of the term "فمینیسم" suggests that feminism is associated with modernism.

Examples included:

1) Feminism is an unfortunate consequence of modernism.

2) Feminism and modernism go hand in hand in western societies.

3) Feminism and modernism both have targeted families and thus the society.

3. COLLOCATES ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL TABOOS

As displayed in table 1, the words *homosexuality*, *abortion* and *divorce* were among the common collocates for the term "فمینیسم" in our 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles. A detailed analysis of concordance lines around these words indicated that when words associated with social taboos are discussed in vicinity of the term "فمینیسم", they are generally discussed under the following themes:

Feminism is linked to homosexuality

As data from the Persian corpus revealed, the word *homosexuality* was used in the vicinity of the term "فمینیسم" under the following two major themes.

- Feminism is a movement initiated by homosexual women
- Feminism promotes homosexuality

Examples included:

1) Feminism initiated in France can be defined as a homosexual movement.

2) Radical feminism tries to rationalize how homosexual women live.

3) Western feminism is another form of cultural invasion which target women by pushing them toward sexual independence and homosexual women may draw on feminism's concepts to defend their way of life.

4) Feminism promotes homosexuality which is a major sin in Islam.

Feminism in linked to abortion and divorce

The use of the word "abortion" and "divorce" in the vicinity of the word "feminism" suggests a link between feminism and abortion. Examples included:

1) *Divorce, one of the least likable actions in Islam, is evidently promoted by feminism and feminists.*

2) Feminism with its stress on women's power over their bodies tries to justify abortion which is considered a major sin in Islam.

3) The number of abortions is higher in societies where feminism is taught and promoted…

4. COLLOCATES ASSOCIATED WITH PLACE

As displayed in table 1, the words *west, western, Iranian, USA* and *Tehran* were among the common collocates for the term "فمینیسم" in our 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles. Considering the fact that the news articles were published in an Iranian-based news agency located in Tehran, the use of the two words *Iranian* and *Tehran* was expected. The analysis therefore focused on concordance lines around the three words *west, western, USA.* A close examination of concordance lines indicated that when these words are discussed in vicinity of the word "feminism", they are generally discussed under the following themes:

Feminism is a movement initiated in the West

Feminism is a form of cultural invasion organized by the West in general and USA in particular

Examples included:

1) Feminism is a tool used by western countries to corrupt Islamic societies.

2) West is the true origin of feminism, it started there and developed there and has little to offer to our country.

3) Feminism is truly a silent yet powerful cultural invasion from the west which must be taken seriously.

4) *Western feminism is another form of cultural invasion which target women by pushing them toward sexual independence and homosexual women may draw on feminism's concepts to defend their way of life.*

5. COLLOCATES ASSOCIATED WITH FAMILY-RELATED CONCEPTS

As displayed in table 1, the words *marriage, motherhood, wifehood* and family were among the common collocates for the term "فمینیسم" in our 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles. A close examination of concordance lines indicated that when these words are discussed in vicinity of the word "feminism", they are generally discussed under the following themes:

Feminism undermines family, marriage, motherhood and wifehood

Examples included:

1) Marriage which is an important institution in Islam has been damaged by feminism.

2) Radical feminism, in contrast to Islam, is anti-marriage.

3) Feminism is a covert attack to traditional values including marriage and motherhood.

4) Western societies have started to see the negative effects of radical feminism ideas with women unwilling to commit to motherhood and wifehood roles.

Discussion of the Findings

As highlighted by McRobbie (2009), the status of feminism in public discourse has been gradually undermined since the early 1990s. She further argues that media industry has played a role in marginalizing feminism and misrepresenting what it really is.

There are a number of studies which have supported the argument put forwards by McRobbie (2009). Jaworska & Krishnamurthy (2012), for instance, examining the discourse of

feminism in two corpora of British and German news texts found out that there is indeed a strong tendency in the British and German press to portray feminism in negative terms. Other similar studies have generally reported the same pattern (Danner and Walsh 1991; Rhode 1995; Huddy 1997; Lind & Salo 2002).

As our data from the 450,000 word corpus of Persian news articles on feminism revealed feminism has been compared and contrasted to Islam in a number of ways. Based on the data from of the corpus, although both Islam and feminism advocate gender equality, feminism does it in extreme at the price of weakening the solidarity of families, and undermining motherhood and wifehood. On top of that, based on our corpus, feminism in defending women's free choice promotes homosexuality and abortion which are both considered unacceptable in Islam. Feminism has also been portrayed a movement associated with extremism, secularism and modernism which all have negative charges attached to them in Iranian society.

Divorce was among the common collocates of the term "فمینیسم" in the Persian corpus. Based on the data from the corpus, feminism promotes divorce by undermining the sacredness of family and the roles women play as mothers and wives. Interestingly, the words *west*, *western* and *US* were also among the common collocates of the search term "فمینیسم". A close examination of the concordance lines around these three words revealed that based on the Persian news articles studied, feminism is portrayed as a movement initiated in the West and is now being used by the West in general and USA in particular to force Western culture into Islamic countries like Iran.

Conclusion

The present research aimed at investigating into the discursive representation of the term "فمینیسم" in a 450,000-word corpus of Persian news articles on feminism published in Fars News Agency which is one the main news agencies in Iran. The data from the Persian corpus revealed that feminism has been portrayed as a concept initiated in the West not readily fit for an Islamic society like that of Iran. The use of words like "homosexuality", "divorce" and "abortion" in the vicinity of the word "feminism" which implies an association between these words and feminism can be an underlying reason why feminism is hardly acceptable in the Iranian society where homosexuality", "divorce" and "abortion" are considered major taboos. Furthermore, feminism is discursively portrayed as a movement which although advocates women rights, does it in extreme at the price of weakening the solidarity of families, and undermining motherhood and wifehood. Overall, the data from our corpus reiterate the results found in similar studies on feminism in Anglophone media in that feminism has been portrayed in negative terms. This negative portrayal of feminism in media can undoubtedly be one of the reasons why feminism is usually excluded from the discourse used by women activists in Iran. In fact, the specific version of feminism as manifested in the discourse studied in this research is indeed unfit for a society where Islamic values prevail.

Similar studies on portrayal of feminism in news media, which are mostly focused on Anglophone media, have similarly found out that the portrayal of feminism in media is indeed negative. Danner and Walsh (1991), for instance, analyzing the coverage of a UN conference on

women in two major US newspapers namely *New York Times* and *Washington post* concluded that both newspapers misrepresented the conference and so the feminist values by focusing on stereotypical views of feminism which see it as radical and unfeminine. Other similar studies have generally reported the same pattern (Rhode 1995; Huddy 1997; Lind & Salo 2002; Jaworska & Krishnamurthy 2012).

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