

WHY DOES PRECARIOUS WORK MATTER? THE IMPLICATIONS OF
PRECARIOUS WORK ON JOB AND LIFE SATISFACTION IN CANADA

by

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to understand how precarious work relates to job and life satisfaction. Additionally, this research aims to describe who is most likely to experience aspects of precarious work based on their socio-demographic characteristics and what attributes of precarious work can be found in five main industries. To answer these questions, I used the 2016 Canadian General Social Survey (cycle 30). I analyzed the dataset in SPSS and STATA. I analyse descriptive data using crosstabulations and comparing means. For the multivariate analysis I use both logistic regression analysis and ordinary least squares regression analysis. The findings from the research show that as the number of indicators for precarious work increases for men and women, those who work in precarious jobs are significantly more likely to report lower job satisfaction than those who do not work in precarious jobs. Finally, for each additional precarious work indicator, men report a decrease in their life satisfaction, but the relationship between precarious work and life satisfaction is not significant for women. Furthermore, women, younger people, those who identify as a visible minority, those who are Indigenous, those who are recent immigrants, and those with lower levels of education are significantly more likely to experience aspects of precarious work. Also, aspects of precarious work are most likely to be found in the accommodation and food services and retail trade industries. Overall, this research explores precarious work in Canada and how it relates to job and life satisfaction.

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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Work is a key component of one's adult life and typically takes up a large portion of an individual's time. However, finding secure employment is not always easy. Precarious work is defined as work that provides low wages and insecurity (Vosko and Clark 2009; May 2019). Precarious work, according to some researchers, is on the rise in Canada (Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk and Laflèche 2014; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). As work is a key component in most people's lives, it is likely that work will have an impact on their job and life satisfaction levels. Scholars have been interested in how people perceive their job satisfaction and life satisfaction, although very few have applied these two concepts precarious employment (see Cornelissen 2009; Drobnic, Beham, and Prag 2010; Bonikowska et al. 2013; Blustein et al. 2020). Among those who included elements of precarious work in their studies, findings suggest that those in precarious work have a lower job and/or life satisfaction (Blustein et al. 2020). Cornelissen (2009), Drobnic et al. (2010), and Bonikowska et al. (2013) focus primarily on low wage work and lack of job security. However, precarious work can include many other aspects beyond these two components. Blustein et al. (2020) focus on precarious work in the United States. This thesis fills the gap in understanding how precarious work, in addition to other socio-demographic characteristics, relates to the job and life satisfaction of Canadians. This thesis will examine the relationship between

precarious work and job and life satisfaction using the 2016 Canadian General Social Survey (cycle 30).

Focusing only on participants between the ages of 15 and 64 and who were classified as employees, I created a sample of 9,869 participants. Using the research from others who have studied precarious work, I select seven variables that I use as indicators for precarious work. Precarious work is multidimensional and cannot be studied using only one or two indicators. Using the identified elements of precarious work, I highlight who experiences aspects of precarious work based on their socio-demographic characteristics. I also examine the relationship between industry and precarious work to determine which industries include aspects of precarious work. Using a continuous variable representing a cumulation of all precarious work indicators, I undertook analyses to understand the relationship between precarious work and job and life satisfaction. Using the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) dataset allowed me to understand how a representative sample of the population reports levels of their job and life satisfaction in relation to precarious work. Furthermore, using the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) dataset provides the opportunity to generalize my findings to the population since I weighted the data and used bootstraps for the models.

The findings show that women, younger people, people of the BIPOC population, recent immigrants, and those who have lower education levels are more likely to face aspects of precarious work. Those in the retail trade and accommodation and food services are more likely to face aspects of precarious work than other industries. The regression models show that as the number of indicators for precarious

work increases for men and women, those who work in precarious jobs are significantly more likely to report lower job satisfaction than those who do not work in precarious jobs. Finally, for each additional precarious work indicator, men report a decrease in their life satisfaction, but the relationship between precarious work and life satisfaction is not significant for women.

Thesis Overview

Chapter Two provides a literature review about previous research that has been done in the fields of work, precarious work, and job and life satisfaction. Theoretical perspectives of Marxism, feminist social reproduction theory, and an analysis of race and capitalism are included in Chapter Three. These perspectives are used to explain precarious work under capitalism and how precarious work can affect all people, but especially women, and people of the BIPOC population. Chapter Four explains the methodology used for this research. The chapter outlines the reasoning for using the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) and how it was used. Chapter Five presents the results. Chapter Six is a discussion of the findings and includes the limitations of this study. The final chapter, Chapter Seven, provides a conclusion for this thesis.

CHAPTER 2:

Literature Review

This chapter analyzes the literature on the topic of work, precarious work, and life/job satisfaction. The following themes will be discussed in this chapter: precarious work and the implications of precarious work. This chapter will provide insight into the research that has been done on comparing job and life satisfaction to working conditions.

Precarious Work

History of Precarious Work

Work is a common term that is defined as a way to earn wages by fulfilling one's "duties regularly" (Merriam-Webster 2019). Historically work was precarious. Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) explain that prior to Keynesian economic policies, unionization, and the welfare state, precarious work was the norm. Betti (2018) builds on this point by discussing how many academics view precarious work as the norm under capitalism, not only as a new phenomenon after the "breakdown" of the Fordist model of work in the 1980s (p.274). That is to say, secure employment was the exception in Western countries from approximately 1945 to the early 1970s. However, after that period, there has been an increase in the number of people working in certain components of precarious work today. As Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) state, the rise in precarious work is a "resurgence rather than a completely novel development" (p.6).

The term “precarious” has been used in relation to work since the 1800s by Eugène Buret, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels (Betti 2018:277). However, the word “precarious”, in relation to work during the 1800s, described the overall life of people experiencing poverty, due to their position as workers (Betti 2018:278). In the 1960s, Paolo Sylos Labini analyzed precarious employment in Sicily to study work in developing regions where secure employment was not the norm. He defined precarious employment as low wage work and unstable employment in the retail and agriculture industries (Betti 2018). Pierre Bourdieu also used the term “precarity” in the 1960s when studying workers in Algeria and critiquing neoliberalism and globalization (Betti 2018:279). The economic crisis of the 1970’s led to more academic discussions about precarious work. The focus was primarily in the western hemisphere while there was little attention to precarious work in the Global South (Betti 2018). However, in the early 2000s, there was an academic shift to focus more on precarious work being a global and gendered phenomenon (Betti 2018). Academic research published in the 2000s focused on how precarious work has been, and continues to be, the norm in the Global South and among women (Betti 2018). The concentration of people from the Global South in precarious work results from the lack of labour regulations that allows owners of businesses to pay certain groups of people less for their labour and to undervalue the work done by certain groups of people (Dupré and Gagnier 1996). Although precarious work from a global perspective is an important social issue, this thesis focuses only on precarious work in Canada.

Precarious Work Today

There is some discussion in the literature about what characteristics determine whether a job is precarious. Most researchers view precarious work as multidimensional; however, there is much variation in what is included in this multidimensional approach. Rodgers (1989) was one of the first to emphasize the need for a multidimensional approach to studying precarious work in Western Europe. In particular, Rodgers (1989) focused on how precarious work deviates from what is considered the standard employment relationship. The standard employment relationship (SER) is when the worker has one employer, works full-time, works year-round for this employer, receives benefits, and expects to be continuously employed by this employer (Cranford, Vosko, and Zukewich 2003).

Precarious work includes work that is often viewed as atypical by being temporary, casual, and part-time. Rodgers (1989) further includes “illegal wage employment, homeworking and moonlighting, self-employment and outworking” (p.1). However, Rodgers (1989) recognizes that the components of precarious work are sensitive to changing social and economic climates. Non-continuing work, irregular work, lack of control over work, union protection, and low income are the key components of precarious work highlighted by Rodgers (1989). Low wage is an interesting component and is addressed by Rodgers (1989) as being ambiguous. It is important to note that low wages are not mentioned in the SER. However, Rodgers (1989) recognizes that low-income jobs may contribute to poverty. More recently, Noack and Vosko (2011) recognize that low wage workers are often employed in

part-time and temporary jobs. Permanent and full-time jobs are less commonly associated with lower wages (Noack and Vosko 2011). Overall, Rodgers (1989) describes the elements of precarious work as being multiple and that “the concept of precariousness involves instability, lack of protection, insecurity and social or economic vulnerability” (p.3). Rodgers (1989) recognizes that this definition can still lead to ambiguity as not all unstable jobs are precarious. Therefore, it is important to think about these concepts as a continuum rather than isolated components of precarious jobs.

More recent literature builds upon the multidimensional approach described by Rodgers (1989) (see Noack and Vosko 2011; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Campbell and Price 2016; Lewchuk 2017; McCann and Fudge 2017; Campbell and Burgess 2018; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). McCann and Fudge (2017) use the terminology of unacceptable forms of work which is similar to how others view precarious work. Unacceptable forms of work also must be analyzed using a multidimensional model. McCann and Fudge (2017) also recognize that definitions are country specific and there is not one universal definition. A conceptual model for precarious work includes three key areas: social location, social context, and work arrangement. McCann and Fudge (2017), using work by other scholars, define the concepts related to social location as the demographic characteristics of workers, workers’ citizenship status, and information about their family (including household composition) (p.159). Social context refers to “occupation, industry, sector, and geographic location” (p.159). In terms of work arrangement, the following

attributes are included: “work or employment status, form of employment, job security, pay, benefits, coverage by labour law, and union representation” (p.59).

For this thesis, I consider the key areas highlighted by Rodgers (1989) and the more recent literature on precarious work to conceptualize precarious work. I define precarious work as work that offers low-wages, earning a personal income of less than \$25,000 per year, having no benefits, work that is seasonal, temporary, casual, on-call, or part-time, working for small businesses, and work that is non-unionized. It is important to note that the definition or criteria for precarious work is often dependent on the data source available to researchers. Overall, the definition of precarious work is complex and multidimensional, which is why I use the work of other researchers to isolate the key indicators of precarious work. It is important to note that many of the concepts are interrelated.

First, I will explain why low wages are important to include when studying precarious work. Lewchuk et al. (2013) find that low income can be associated with people struggling to support themselves financially. It is also difficult to separate low incomes from insecure work (Lewchuk et al. 2013) – which is another feature of precarious work. Furthermore, Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) note that low-wage workers are more likely to rely on “minimum employment standards” (p.17) which means they are covered by provincial (or possibly federal) employment standards legislation. Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) emphasize throughout their book how these minimum employment standards are often not enough to protect

precarious workers. Therefore, low-wage workers, who could already be struggling to make ends meet, may not have ample workplace protections. Noack and Vosko (2011) find that being a low-wage worker is commonly associated with being non-unionized and having no pension, which leaves the workers with less control over their working conditions and less financial stability.

Part-time work is another form of precarious work. Noack and Vosko (2011) include part-time work in their analysis of precarious work as part-time workers often have fewer benefits and less influence in the workplace. However, it is important to note that part-time work can be voluntary (Marshall 1989; Statistics Canada 2015). People who attend school or are primary caregivers may prefer part-time work so they can focus time on their main activities which are not employment. Unfortunately, the General Social Survey does not include a variable for voluntary part-time work. However, part-time work is commonly associated with low income, short job tenure, fewer social protections, being non-unionized, and working for a small business (Noack and Vosko 2011). Therefore, part-time work, on its own, is not always considered to be precarious work, but when combined with other factors, could create a precarious job.

Having no workplace benefits is also a form of precarious work as it is a way for workers to protect themselves from unexpected expenses and provide a way for workers to save for retirement (Lewchuk et al. 2013). In the analysis for this thesis, I focus on paid sick leave, medical and dental coverage, and workplace pension. Moreover, benefits provide a “cushion” when wages are insufficient to cover

emergencies or provide a suitable retirement (Lewchuk et al. 2013:66). Also, having no pension is associated with being non-unionized and having a lower income (Noack and Vosko 2011).

Being in a non-permanent job can be considered precarious as workers may be excluded from workplace benefits and could have their position terminated with no severance pay (Noack and Vosko 2011). Some of the non-permanent jobs, such as casual work, may not include employment standard protections (Campbell and Price 2016; Campbell and Burgess 2018), which can have negative outcomes for workers. Additionally, many non-permanent jobs have variable schedules which can make it challenging to calculate earnings on a regular basis (Campbell and Burgess 2018). As such, non-permanent work is associated with workers struggling to make ends meet (Lewchuk et al. 2013). Also, not being able to hold onto jobs as contracts end requires workers to be constantly on the lookout for new jobs. Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) note that contract workers, on-call workers, and temporary workers rose from 10.7% in 2005 to 17.2% in 2015 in the United States. Similarly, in Canada, Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) show changes in part-time work and non-permanent work between public and private employees in Ontario from 1976 to 2018. There has also been an increase in part-time work among both public and private employees as approximately 11% of employees in the public sphere were part-time in 1976 compared to almost 15% in 2018. Among employees employed in the private sphere, almost 15% were part-time workers in 1976 compared to almost

20% in 2018. Similar trends were found in non-permanent jobs (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020).

To avoid contract jobs, some workers could turn to self-employment. However, self-employment can also be precarious as they rely on contract jobs, must compete against bigger companies, lack benefits, and lack labour protections (Lewchuk et al. 2013). Despite self-employment being an important component of precarious work, I do not study it because I focus on those who are employed. I focus on those who are employed to understand aspects of their employment relationship and how they relate to precarious work. Self-employment is beyond the scope of this research.

Non-unionized work is another form of precarious work because unionization provides more protection for workers. Workers without unions often experience a lack of regulatory protections, which adds to the precarity of their job (Campbell and Price 2016). Non-unionized workers tend to have less control over working conditions (McCann and Fudge 2017; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Therefore, due to the lack of control over working conditions, non-unionized workers may be at a higher risk of low wages, a lack of workplace benefits, or a temporary position (Noack and Vosko 2011).

Working for a small firm can also be a factor of precarious work. Small firms (fewer than 20 employees) are more affected by fluctuations in the economy, which can result in layoffs (Noack and Vosko 2011). Also, workers in small firms tend to report employment standards violations at a higher proportion than workers in larger

firms. Workers in small firms are also less likely to recover money that is owed to them when an employment standards violation does occur (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Although my study does not look at employment standard violations, these concerns facing workers in small firms emphasizes some of the precarious aspects of small firms. Furthermore, small firms are more likely to provide low wages, fewer benefits, and be non-unionized (McCann and Fudge 2017; Chen and Mehdi 2018).

Short job tenure, defined as being employed less than 52 weeks per year, is another indicator of precarious work as there is no security of knowing when one will receive continuous employment (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Short job tenure also makes workers more vulnerable during layoffs as they have low seniority. Lewchuk et al. (2013) find that job insecurity, not knowing how long one will be employed, can make it hard for people to make ends meet. Lewchuk (2017) also finds that those who are in a short job tenure also have fewer close friends at work. Overall, short job tenure leaves workers vulnerable to potentially relying on non-permanent work to avoid unemployment, even though temporary work carries the uncertainty of needing to find a new job after a contract ends.

It is important to analyze what jobs have more characteristics of precarious work to understand where precarious work is concentrated. Lewchuk (2017) reports that those who work in the service sector are significantly more likely to experience characteristics of precarious work compared to other sectors. Furthermore, a study by

the Library of Parliament (2018) reports that temporary work is more common in healthcare/social assistance, education, wholesale/retail, and accommodation and food services than other industries. Moreover, the accommodation and food services industry and the retail trade industry are the most likely to have aspects of precarious work (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Overall, precarious work has real implications for workers as it can be associated with a lower job and life satisfaction (Blustein et al. 2020).

Overall, current research has shown a growth in precarious work. However, it may be starting to stabilize. Lewchuk et al. (2013) found that in 1989, 13.3% of Canadian workers aged 15 to 64 were in precarious employment, which rose to 20.7% in 2007. Noack and Vosko (2011) found that 33.1% of workers were in precarious jobs in 2008. Furthermore, Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) show that between 1997 and 2018, there was a steady increase in “temporary employees” in Ontario, especially in the public sector (p.16). Overall, Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) find that in 2018, 27% of workers in Ontario were in a precarious job. Although this decline is down from 29% in both 1998 and 2008, it shows that rates have stabilized at a high level.

The high level of precarious work could be due to industries outside of the service sector, such as education and health care, using aspects of precarious employment, such as temporary work, part-time work, and a lack of benefits. (Lewchuk and Laflèche 2014). Problematically, traditionally secure industries start to

incorporate elements that are included as precarious work. Kalleberg (2012) explains that the rise in precarious work is due to global competition, deregulation of the markets, and fewer unions. Because there are fewer government regulations over companies and some companies are international, national governments cannot or choose not to regulate companies. Without these regulations, companies have more opportunities to make a profit by paying lower wages, having fewer benefits, relocating to areas where they can pay less, or having dangerous working conditions. Furthermore, with fewer regulations, Kalleberg (2012) explains how companies hire certain groups of people (women, younger people, and people who are racialized) they believe they can pay less and provide with fewer benefits. Kalleberg's (2012) analysis is supported by Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) who find that, in Ontario, younger workers, women, and recent immigrants are more likely to experience aspects of precarious work.

Who Works Precarious Jobs?

Education plays a role in who experiences low wages, which is an aspect of precarious work (Statistics Canada 2017a). Statistics Canada (2017a) shows that education levels relate to income. In 2016, men aged 25 to 64 who worked full time earned a median income of \$56,000 per year with a high school diploma, \$69,000 per year with a college diploma, and \$81,000 per year with a bachelor's degree. Women aged 25 to 64 in Canada earned a median income of \$42,000 per year with a high school diploma, \$49,000 per year with a college diploma, and \$69,000 per year with a bachelor's degree (Statistics Canada 2017a). These data demonstrate that people with

lower education levels typically earn less money than those with higher education levels. Therefore, those with lower education levels are more likely to work low-wage jobs, which is one of the components of precarious work. However, low-wage jobs on their own are not enough to qualify as precarious work.

Gender plays an important role in determining who is most likely to work in precarious employment. Women are more likely than men to be in precarious work (Cranford et al. 2003; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Kalleberg and Vallas 2018), regardless of education levels. Women who have the same education level as men typically earn less (Statistics Canada 2017a). Furthermore, women in precarious work are more likely to experience mistreatment, sexual harassment, and be responsible for balancing paid employment and unpaid work at home (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018). Women may experience a double disadvantage because they are paid less than men and are more often viewed as being responsible for both paid labour and unpaid labour.

Part-time and temporary jobs are indicators of precarious employment. Among employed Canadians in 2018, 13.3% worked a temporary job in 2018 compared to 11.8% in 1998 (Statistics Canada 2019). Cranford et al. (2003) use the General Social Survey and Labour Force Survey to study precarious work in Canada, specifically among women. They find that aspects of precarious work are more commonly experienced by women: 74% of people in permanent part-time jobs are women and 63% of people in temporary part-time jobs are women. Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) also find that women are more

likely to face precarious work, such as part-time and/or temporary jobs, than men. Furthermore, women face higher rates of permanent and temporary part-time work than men in Canada: 12.9% of men work part-time jobs and 25.6% of women work part-time jobs (Statistics Canada 2020).

Wages are also a way to understand gender differences in relation to aspects of precarious work. Low wages are more common among women as Pelletier, Patterson, and Moyser (2019) show that women earn \$0.87 for every dollar men earn. Furthermore, Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) find that, in 2018, 23% of men earned low wages while 31% of women in Canada earned low wages. The authors also found that in 2018, nearly 30% of women were in precarious jobs compared to 24% of men.

Age, on its own, is an important theme in the study of precarious work. Young people are more likely to be unemployed or under-employed (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018). Underemployment is being employed in a job that does not provide sufficient hours or is inadequate in relation to the worker's training or economic needs (Merriam-Webster 2021). Foster (2012) notes that youth, those aged 15 to 24, are more likely to face unemployment and the unemployment rate among youth has grown from 12.9% in 2001 to 14.1% in 2011 in Canada. Furthermore, Foster (2012) explains that younger workers are more likely to work "low-wage, non-unionized, temporary and/or part-time" jobs without benefits (p.3). These aspects of precarious work can be harmful for all young workers, maybe less so for high school students who work, but potentially more so for workers in their early twenties. In the same

vein as low wages, the minimum wage is common among young workers: over half of all minimum wage workers in Canada were between the ages of 15 and 24 in 2018 (Dionne-Simard and Miller 2019). Minimum wage rates vary across Canada with the highest rates (as of June 1st, 2020) in Nunavut at \$16.00 per hour, the highest among the provinces is British Columbia at \$15.20, and the lowest is Saskatchewan at \$11.45 (Statistics Canada 2017c)

Younger people seem to be aware of their position in the labour market. Foster (2013) interviews participants from a wide age range and finds that younger people are typically less satisfied with work and their employment opportunities. Younger people are also aware that there are few secure employment options available for them and there is a growing economic inequality (in terms of wealth). On the opposite end of the age spectrum, workers 50 years of age or older are at a “much greater risk of long-term unemployment” due to layoffs and career transitions (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018:16/17). Therefore, older and younger workers are more likely to be in precarious work as defined by low-wage work or exclusion from the labour force.

Racialized groups of people and ethnic minorities are also more likely to be in precarious work (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018). Racialized groups of people and ethnic minorities “have been especially exposed to market uncertainties” with plant relocations and shutdowns and cuts in public employment (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018:15). Additionally, Lewchuk et al. (2013) reports that white people tend to earn higher wages than racialized people. Moreover, white men are the least likely to experience aspects of precarious work. Racialized people are more likely to earn less,

live in poverty, and be unemployed (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020).

Immigration status also has a relationship with precarious work. Four out every five immigrants are racialized. This is important to note as “racialized immigrants (and racialized employees more generally)” tend to earn less than non-racialized workers and workers who are not recent immigrants (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020:21). Recent immigrants to Canada are more likely to be in precarious work (Lewchuk et al. 2013). However, after 10 years in Canada, immigrants have similar rates of precarious employment and the standard employment relationship to Canadian-born citizens (Lewchuk et al. 2013). Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) also find that those who are recent immigrants are more likely to experience precarious work. In Ontario, 37% of recent immigrants are in precarious jobs compared to 26% of other employees. Furthermore, Hira-Friesen (2018) finds that recent female immigrants (immigrants who have lived in Canada for five years or less) earn less money per hour than female Canadian-born citizens. Established female immigrants (immigrants who have lived in Canada for over 5 years) also earn less than female Canadian-born citizens, but the income gap is not as wide between established female immigrants and Canadian-born citizens. The results are similar for males; however, recent female immigrants earn less than recent male immigrants (Hira-Friesen 2018).

Intersectionality is important when determining who is most likely to work in precarious employment. Precarious work is more common among women, racialized

groups of people, ethnic minorities, younger people, older people (Kalleberg and Vallas 2018; May 2019), those without a post-secondary education, and recent immigrants (May 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Many people face more than one disadvantage in relation to work based on their socio-demographic characteristics emphasizing the need for an intersectional approach to studying precarious work.

Implications of Precarious Work

Job Satisfaction

Previous research has shown an association between job security and wages and job satisfaction. Typically, those with lower job security and lower wages report lower job satisfaction. Drobic et al. (2010) find that having a job that can provide good wages and is secure are the most important components to higher job satisfaction. Workers with lower job security and wages are more likely to report lower job satisfaction. Having good wages seems to have an association with an increased job satisfaction, whereas having an insecure job tends to be associated with a decreased job satisfaction.

Another aspect of employment that is associated with a higher job satisfaction is having control over decisions at work (Drobic et al. 2010). Unlike Drobic et al. (2010), who do not use the term precarious work but include elements of precarious work in their analysis, Blustein et al. (2020) focus on people working at precarious jobs. Blustein et al. (2020) find that those in precarious work have significantly lower levels of job satisfaction than those who have secure employment. A higher job

satisfaction comes from having control over one's job, the feeling of contributing to society, and feeling connected to one's work. Furthermore, "[i]ndividuals who had access to decent and stable work were more likely to report satisfaction with work and overall well-being" (Blustein et al. 2020:11). Therefore, like Drobnic et al. (2010), Blustein et al. (2020) find that the aspects of a good job, security and good wages, are associated with a higher job satisfaction.

Factors such as workplace benefits, good relations with co-workers, independence at work, influence at work, learning opportunities, task diversity, opportunities to be promoted, a good wage, and wage growth are associated with a higher job satisfaction (Cornelissen 2009). These characteristics are aspects of a secure employment relationship and are unlikely to be found in precarious employment. A lower job satisfaction is correlated with perceived job insecurity, conflict with supervisors, a bad work environment, hard manual labour, high levels of stress, a strict workplace, and non-standard working hours. Many of these characteristics, especially job insecurity and non-standard working hours, are associated with precarious jobs, when studying employment rather.

The work of Cornelissen (2009), Drobnic et al. (2010), and Blustein et al. (2020) find that lower job satisfaction is correlated with aspects of precarious work, specifically insecure hours and low wages. Despite the researchers studying aspects of precarious work in relation to job satisfaction, only Blustein et al. (2020) use the term precarious work. However, Blustein et al. (2020) study precarious work in the

American context. There is a lack of Canadian research on precarious work and job satisfaction.

Life Satisfaction and Work

Previous literature on work and life satisfaction shows that there is an association between a higher life satisfaction and access to adequate wages. Therefore, as low wages are a key component of precarious work, it is likely that precarious work is associated with a decrease in life satisfaction. Drobnic et al. (2010) analyze life satisfaction in relation to work in nine European countries and report that the “major positive contributions to high quality of life seem to come from having a well-paid job” (p.221). Furthermore, Drobnic et al. (2010) find that fair wages and good job security, the opposite of a precarious job, are also closely linked to higher life satisfaction. Their findings also show that bad jobs (with the characteristics of lower pay and higher insecurity, the defining features of a precarious job) are more closely associated with lower quality of life. In comparison, good jobs (higher pay and job security) are associated with a higher quality of life (Dorbnic et al. 2010).

Focusing on precarious work, an American study examined the relationship between life satisfaction and precarious work (Blustein et al. 2020). Blustein et al. (2020) provided participants with five statements of one’s life satisfaction and the participants ranked their level of agreement with the statements as a way for the researchers to understand the level of life satisfaction. Blustein et al. (2020) find that those who work in jobs that have more aspects of a secure employment relationship are significantly more likely to have higher life satisfaction, whereas those who work

in precarious jobs have lower life satisfaction. An American study by Schneider and Harknett (2019) has similar findings to the work of Drobnic et al. (2010) and Blustein et al. (2020) again showing that aspects of precarious work are more likely to be associated with unhappiness and aspects of a secure employment relationship are more likely to be associated with happiness.

Job scheduling and job instability, which are considered to be components of precarious work, are associated with a decreased well-being. Although, Schneider and Harknett (2019) do not study life satisfaction per se, they use sleep habits, psychological well-being, and happiness to understand the well-being of their participants. Schneider and Harknett (2019) report that workers who experience unpredictable scheduling, on-call shifts, rotating shifts, and shifts being cancelled, which they use as indicators of precarious work, are significantly more likely to experience psychological distress, less likely to experience good sleep quality, and less likely to experience a higher level of happiness. While these are not measuring life satisfaction, these aspects would contribute to how someone would experience satisfaction with their life.

Lewchuk (2017), similar to Schneider and Harknett (2019), does not focus solely on income, but examines precarious work as a whole in relation to well-being. Lewchuk (2017) finds that those who are employed in a precarious job are more likely to have fewer close friends at work, put off having children or serious relationships, and worry about the unpredictability of work interfering with their personal life. Therefore, the personal activities of one's life that typically provide joy

are put off or delayed while working in precarious work. Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) also explain that precarious work slows down life events as people, primarily men, typically put off getting married and having children when working a precarious job. This delay in marriage shows how precarious work could indirectly be associated with a decrease in life satisfaction as it is a barrier to marriage, which is associated with an increased life satisfaction (Bonikowska et al. 2013).

As precarious work focuses primarily, although not exclusively, on low-wage workers, understanding the association between poverty and life satisfaction is important. Poverty correlates with higher stress levels, which can be associated with problems in relationships, with productivity, and achieving goals in life (Higgs 2007). Furthermore, Higgs (2007), using a questionnaire studying subjective well-being, shows a correlation between people living in poverty and reported life satisfaction: affluent people score higher on the subjective well-being portion of the questionnaire than those living in poverty. Higgs (2007) finds that this difference is primarily due to more affluent people having secure and well-paying jobs, which is associated with less stress and a higher self-esteem. The opposite effect is found for those who do not have a secure and well-paying job, and who could possibly be experiencing aspects of precarious work. Even though Higgs (2007) does not study precarious work, the findings suggest that poverty, which can be associated with precarious work, correlates with lower life satisfaction.

The relationship between income and life satisfaction may not be as strong in Canada (Brzozowski and Visano 2019). Brzozowski and Visano (2019) analyze the

2005 and 2010 Canadian GSS. They conclude that lower incomes “corresponded only modestly to lower self-reported life satisfaction” (Brzozowski and Visano 2019:17). Furthermore, the authors found that having a low income does not predict financial concerns as the primary source of stress in a household. However, having a high income is modestly associated with lower chances of claiming financial stress as the main source of stress. Brzozowski and Visano (2019) find that financial stress, not only low income, has a negative association with life satisfaction.

Bonikowska et al. (2013) use the GSS to understand socio-demographic information of participants and how these relate to life satisfaction. Participants who have a family income of \$59,999 or lower are significantly more likely to have a lower life satisfaction than those who have a family income of \$60,000-\$99,999 per year (Bonikowska et al. 2013). Furthermore, Bonikowska et al. (2013) find that those who are married are more likely to report a higher life satisfaction than those who are unmarried. The work of Bonikowska et al. (2013) shows that low-wage work, as reflected by a lower family income, is significantly associated with reporting a lower life satisfaction. Lower income is only one component of the precarious indicator that I use in this study. Therefore, this research will fill the gap in the current literature that focuses primarily on income and not other aspects of precarious work.

Conclusion

The literature review presents the history of precarious work, defines precarious work, describes who faces precarious work, and describes how precarious work relates to job and life satisfaction. Despite some varying results when studying life satisfaction in relation to aspects of work, people with well-paying and secure jobs typically have higher levels of job and life satisfaction. Additionally, certain aspects of work, such as insecurity, stress, and low wages (among other things) can be associated with a decrease in job and life satisfaction.

It is important to understand which groups of people are concentrated in precarious work so policy makers can create strategies to help those people get out of precarious work situations. This literature review provides information on previous studies that show who is more likely to face precarious work based on gender, age, education levels, race, and immigrant status. Furthermore, the literature review provides information on how some scholars view precarious work to provide context to my thesis. While some scholars are concerned about the rise in precarious work and the decline of the standard employment relationship, others have argued that precarious work has historically been the norm. Whether precarious work is on the rise or has always been the norm, scholars are in agreement that precarious work has aspects that are associated with a lower life and job satisfaction. Although there has been some research attention to precarious work and life and job satisfaction, my research is unique. My research differs from other research by using the 2016 Canadian GSS (cycle 30) to isolate seven key indicators of precarious work, which I

use to examine how those who are in precarious jobs, based on the cumulation of the seven precarity indicators, rate their job and life satisfaction. Other scholars have focused primarily on wages (Bonikowska et al. 2013; Brzozowski and Visano 2019) or were not Canadian (Drobnic et al. 2010; Blustein et al. 2013).

Overall, this chapter explores the previous research on the topic of job and life satisfaction in relation to different aspects of work. This chapter also provides insight into the history of precarious work, defining precarious work, who works precarious jobs, and the relationship between work and job/life satisfaction. The themes in the literature review will guide my research and help understand the relationship between work and job and life satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3:

Theoretical Perspectives

The main theoretical ideas I use for my thesis are Marxism, feminist social reproduction theory, and an analysis of race and capitalism. These theoretical perspectives provide ways to explain the findings of how precarious work relates to job and life satisfaction, who is most likely to face aspects of precarious work, and the relationship between aspects of precarious work and industry.

Marxist Theory

Marxism offers a way to critique capitalism by analyzing it as a way for the few (the bourgeoisie, who own the means of production) to profit off the work of the many (Marx 1978). This profit comes from “surplus-value”, which is when the capitalists invest their money into the production of commodities and sell these commodities for more money than they paid in wages and materials (Marx 1978:332). In other words, surplus-value is created when the capitalists buy labour power and use it for the “production of commodities and of surplus-value” (Marx 1978:343). Employers in capitalist systems benefit financially by paying low wages as it allows them to maximize profits. Providing employees with higher wages may reduce the profit but would lower the exploitation of the employees. The “propertyless” labourers work to sustain themselves while putting capital in the hands of the “few” (Marx 1978:70). Alienation (Marx 1978) can occur under these circumstances as: “labour is external to the worker” as work is only done as a “*means* to satisfy needs

external to it” and the labour does not “belong” to the worker, but rather belongs to the capitalist as a way to generate profits (p.74). Therefore, the worker is only working to make ends meet and to acquire the necessities of life. As a result, workers lack “control over the work process” (Lavalette and Ferguson 2018:200) as their labour and product is a commodity under capitalism that is primarily produced for being sold on the market. Problematically, the worker is not content with working and does not feel connected to their work, but only does it to survive while the capitalist receives profit from the worker’s labour.

The idea that humans only engage in paid labour to sustain themselves is similar to Marx’s view on human nature and historical materialism. In the *German Ideology*, Marx explains that humans’ lives depend on “the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity” (Marx 1978:149). This quotation demonstrates that humans are not inherently good or bad, but that the material conditions (access to food, shelter, etc.) and the mode of production affects their lives, what they do, how they think, and how they feel: “ideas” come from the “productive forces” (Marx 1978:154). Marx (1978) also explains that by humans “producing their means of subsistence” they differ from animals (p.150). Therefore, producing subsistence makes humans human and the structure which humans use to produce affects their ideas and ideologies.

Furthermore, Lavalette and Ferguson (2018) point out that human nature, as viewed by Marx, starts with the “basic needs of human beings”, but these needs can change based on how societies produce (p.199). Also, Lavalette and Ferguson (2018)

show that these needs are satisfied, or not satisfied, through “class society” (p.200). The Marxist view of human nature and historical materialism can be used to understand why some people may report a higher life satisfaction or a lower life satisfaction in relation to their job. Working conditions and how much money they earn affects workers’ access to food, water, shelter, etc., which can relate to how they think about their life and their life satisfaction. Therefore, those who earn enough to comfortably support themselves and their families may report a higher life satisfaction as the mode of production gives them the opportunity to afford their basic necessities and the necessities that society deems important.

The Marxist view of human nature and historical materialism influences modern Marxist analyses today and provides a theoretical frame for understanding precarious work today. Badiou (2019), a Marxist philosopher, states that all humans are the same “at the biological and material level” (2019:6). Therefore, people need to sustain themselves by acquiring their basic necessities. However, in modern society, people “are living at a time of crisis in societies that is shaking off and destroying the last vestiges of tradition” (Badiou 2018:28). This reference explains how there is more precarity overall in life today. Betti (2018) builds off of Badiou’s (2018) point with her concept that people do not have the same job security and structure in life that they used to have in the Western world from 1945 to the early 1970’s, which means that their income and employment is jeopardized. That is to say, finding a secure job is not as easy and clear cut as it may have been in the golden age of capitalism, for white men. Badiou (2018) continues this point by stating,

“disorientation and fear”, from the lack of security, leads to the “false life of competition and material success” (p.29). Badiou explains how people are buying into the notion that if they cannot support themselves under the political economic structure, it is their fault. Therefore, people will play into the idea that they must compete with other workers for the security of being able to comfortably support oneself and family instead of questioning capitalist ideologies.

Fraser (2019), a modern social theorist, furthers Badiou’s (2018) analysis of modern capitalism through her critique of neoliberal capitalism and precarious work. Fraser (2019) states that modern capitalism “is a deeply predatory and unstable form of social organization that liberates capital accumulation from the very constraints (political, ecological, social, moral) needed to sustain it over time” (p.37/38). An example of the instability Fraser (2019) refers to is the “proliferation of precarious, low-wage McJobs” and the “consequent decline in living standards” (p.19). That is to say, the pursuit of profit that capitalist ideologies perpetuate makes capitalism unstable due to the workers facing aspects of precarious work, which means that the workers will have less money to spend to sustain capitalism. Therefore, it is possible that despite the wealth generated by exploiting workers, capitalism will be destabilized. Badiou (2018/2019) and Fraser (2019) demonstrate the inherent contradictions and precariousness of capitalism. Precarity harms the workers and the owners of businesses, in the long run due to the instability of capitalism.

Feminist Social Reproduction Theory

Feminist social reproduction theory is useful for studying life and work satisfaction among participants as social reproduction is part of everyone's lives. Social reproduction ranges from caring for family and friends to maintaining households (Fraser 2017). Social reproduction is any activity that "restore[s] the commodity labor power" (Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017:39) and "the reproduction of capitalist society" (Munro 2019:452). Social reproduction is typically viewed as "women's work" and is often done without pay. However, without social reproduction there would be "no culture, no economy, no political organization" (Fraser 2017:21). Fraser (2017) argues that under modern capitalism, there are fewer opportunities to perform social reproduction as more value is put on the paid labor force "in the sphere of production" (p.33), which creates an instability of capitalism.

Even with more women in the paid productive workforce, the work women do is typically undervalued in relation to the work done by men. Mohandesi and Teitelman (2017) state that women are often "relegated to working in low-paying and so-called 'unskilled' jobs" (p.44), because men are viewed as the primary earners. Fraser (2019) notes that women, typically American women influenced by liberal feminism, are urged towards "cracking the glass ceiling" (p.14) by earning higher wages in what are viewed as higher status jobs. Fraser (2019) argues against "cracking the glass ceiling" (p.14) and instead recommends creating a system where women are paid and treated fairly for the productive and reproductive work typically done by women. Therefore, the idea of "cracking the glass ceiling" (Fraser 2019:14)

is putting the emphasis on the individual woman to get a job that pays better, rather than changing the sexist undervaluing of the sectors that women more commonly work in and the ideologies that push women to certain sectors.

This ideology of cracking the glass ceiling can also be applied to bell hooks' (2015) critique of mainstream feminism. bell hooks (2015) states that focusing on cracking the glass ceiling is a "betrayal" of feminism and neglects the "feminization of poverty" by only supporting the "privileged" (p.42). Even though there is a call to get more women into the productive workforce and urge them to pursue higher wages, unpaid care work still tends to be the responsibility of women (Fraser 2017). Therefore, doing the "work of daily regeneration [becomes] more vulnerable and precarious" (Bhattacharya 2017:90) as women have the responsibility of participating in productive paid work and making time for reproductive unpaid work. Feminist social reproduction theory could be useful in analyzing the findings of women in precarious work and reproductive work, and the division between the two, in relation to their life satisfaction.

An Analysis of Race and Capitalism

Race is an important aspect to consider when studying wealth disparities, because Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) are exploited at a higher degree than white people. Frantz Fanon was a political theorist and activist. He is in the Marxist tradition but focuses on critiquing colonialism and racism under capitalism. Fanon (1957) makes it clear that BIPOC and/or people not living in a colonial country are "exploited, enslaved, despised by a capitalist, colonialist, western

white society” (p.163). Fanon (1957) explains that the political economy exploits Black people based on the idea that they are “inferior” (p.153). This notion of inferiority is perpetuated by modern capitalism to maintain the racist power structure that allows capitalists to generate more profits for themselves and create more opportunities for white workers. Fanon (1968) explains that “forced labor, [and] slavery” of the BIPOC population is to increase the “wealth and to establish power” (p.58). Even though work may be paid, for the most part today, the same capitalist and racist type of thought is present under modern capitalism. As Mireille Fanon (2018) states, “the capitalist system is based on enslavement, and on systemic racism” (p.14). Fraser (2019) further demonstrates that “racism is anchored in contemporary capitalist society” and “the forces destroying the life chances of people of color are part and parcel of the same dynamic complex as those destroying the life chances of whites” (p.35). Although the concentration of wealth of capitalism exploits all workers, the “systemic oppression” involved in capitalism amplifies the exploitation of BIPOC people (Fraser 2019:33).

Despite the fact that white workers are exploited by capitalism, it is clear that white workers are privileged from the exploitation of the BIPOC workers as white people are more likely to be financially secure, as workers, or even as capitalists, all over the world. As Fanon (1968) states, “we are rich because we are white, we are white because we are rich” (p.9). Furthermore, even those who are white workers typically have more opportunities and are not exploited to the same extent as BIPOC workers.

bell hooks (2015) addresses that race and gender are linked to exploitation under capitalism when she states, “black women/women of color saw white women from privileged classes benefitting economically more than other groups from reformist feminist gains” (p.42). bell hooks (2015) explains how race not only harms people’s chances at financial security, but gender does as well, especially when race and gender intersect. bell hooks’ (2015) also explains how mainstream feminism and political reforms still do not challenge the racism and sexism inherent in society.

Fraser (2017) focuses on early examples of systemic racism under capitalism and explains how industrialization was built off of the “destruction” of the Indigenous ways of life (p.28). This destruction was in the form of looting and wrecking their communities to “supply the cheap food, textiles, mineral ore, and energy without which the exploitation of metropolitan industrial workers would not have been profitable” (Fraser 2017:28). Fraser (2017) continues by saying that capitalism was built from the slavery of Black people, as Black women were used for their “reproductive capacities” to increase “profit” (p.28). Additionally, the “assimilation” of Indigenous people into white society (p.28) by raising children to be ‘productive’ is also beneficial for capitalism (Fraser 2017:28). Both Fraser (2017) and Fanon (1968) claim that being white and financially secure are correlated. This point is further emphasized by bell hooks’ (2015) argument that race and gender are connected to create an amplified exploitation of BIPOC women. Therefore, identifying, and being identified, as BIPOC makes it difficult to become financially secure.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Marxism, feminist social reproduction theory, and an analysis of race and capitalism will be used in this thesis as ways of understanding the findings. Marxism will be useful as a base to understand people's access to material resources, how the mode of production influences their lives, and how alienation can affect job satisfaction. Furthermore, Badiou (2018/2019) and Fraser (2019) can be used to understand the instability of modern capitalism. Although precarious work may provide profits for the capitalists, in the long run it could mean the workers have less purchasing power to sustain capitalism. Feminist social reproduction theory can be used to explain women's life satisfaction in relation to productive work and reproductive work. An analysis of race and capitalism will be used to analyze the differences based on race and ethnic minority status in the findings, which could explain the privilege of white people and the amplified exploitation of BIPOC people under the political economic structure.

CHAPTER 4:

Methodology

This thesis uses the public use data file from the 2016 Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) (Cycle 30). The goal of this survey is to understand the lifestyles of Canadians at work and at home and how that relates to their well-being (Statistics Canada 2018a). The GSS is a survey administered to Canadians. This cycle of the GSS includes questions about yearly salary, hours worked per week, workplace benefits, terms of employment, union status, work size, and the number of weeks worked per year.

I use the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) public microdata file to analyze how the cumulation of indicators of precarious work are related to job and life satisfaction in Canada. A quantitative methodology allows me to understand the role that work plays in the lives of Canadians on a large scale. Also, by using a large representative sample from a Statistics Canada survey, I can generalize my findings to the population to better understand how working conditions, such as precarious work, are related to people's job and life satisfaction. My research addresses the following questions: who is most likely to experience aspects of precarious work? What industries are more likely to include aspects of precarious work? What is the relationship between precarious work and job satisfaction? And, what is the relationship between precarious work and life satisfaction?

Sample

A total of 19,609 participants are included in the 2016 GSS. The target population of the 2016 GSS is people who are 15 years of age and older, living in one of the ten provinces, and who are non-institutionalized (Statistics Canada 2018b). To gather data, Statistics Canada created strata in each province and then used simple random sampling. Statistics Canada produces survey estimates that are used to weight the data to represent all people of the target population. Participants completed the survey either through computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) or as a self-completed questionnaire (Statistics Canada 2018b).

The public use datafile was used in this thesis as I was initially unable to access the Atlantic Research Data Centre due to COVID-19 restrictions. While the public use data is useful, there are some limitations. One example of the limitations of the public use data was that the income variables were already coded into categories instead of as a continuous variable. The categories limit the analyses I can do with the income variables, which are important for analyzing precarious work.

This study includes participants between the ages of 15 and 64 who report paid employment. I only include those who are in paid employment as I am interested in understanding precarious work in relation to employment. Therefore, I do not include self-employed people, even though they could face aspects of precarious employment. Ideally, I would have liked to exclude people aged 15 to 17 as this group of workers tend to be more segregated in precarious work as they are more

likely to be students and living with their parent/guardians. However, the public data has age in predefined categories, and I was unable to separate people from the youngest age grouping (15 to 24). I included participants aged 15 to 24, because even though they are more likely to be going to school, and part-time work maybe desirable, low wages, having no benefits, working for a small business, contract work, and being non-unionized could still leave them in a precarious position. Additionally, the early work experiences of young people will have an impact on their later careers (Luijkx and Wolbers 2009; Nilsen and Reiso 2014). Therefore, addressing precarious work among younger workers is important as it would provide them with a better start. Younger workers require the same job protections as older workers and these protections are often missing from precarious jobs (Stuth and Jahn 2020). Furthermore, Foster (2012) explains that younger workers are more likely to experience low wages, be non-unionized, and have no benefits. The acceptance of precarious work among younger workers is problematic as it makes them vulnerable and at risk of exploitation. Finally, young people still have expenses that must be covered, including the rising cost of postsecondary education.

Participants aged 65 and older and those who did not report paid employment were removed from the dataset. As the purpose of this study is to research precarious work, it was necessary to focus only on employed participants. While some participants 65 and over were employed, restricting the sample to participants between the ages of 15 to 64 means that the research will focus on those who are in

the height of their working careers and are less likely to be relying on pension plans, the Canada Pension Plan, or Old Age Security.

Table 1: Demographics of the Participants from the 2016 GSS (cycle 30)

Demographics (n=9869)	Percentage
Sex	
Male	51
Female	49
Age	
15 to 24	19
25 to 34	24
35 to 44	21
45 to 54	21
55 to 64	15
Visible Minority Status	
No	77
Yes	23
Education	
High School and Less	34
College or Trade	30
University Degree/Certificate	36
Marital Status	
Married or Common-Law	60
Separated/divorced/widowed	7
Single	33
Children	
No	58
Yes	42
Industry	
Public Services (health, education, etc.)	33
Accommodation and food services	8
Retail Trade	12
Private Services (management, finance, etc.)	20
Manufacturing, construction, agriculture, etc.	27

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER.

Table 1 provides an overview of the demographics of the study participants. The total number of participants in the sample was 9,869. The distribution of males and females in the sample is almost equal. The majority of participants are between the ages of 35 and 64. Most participants (77% of participants) do not identify as a visible minority. Most participants are either married or common-law and the majority do not have children. Some form of post-secondary education was the most common level of education completed by the participants. The majority of people have some postsecondary education. Over one-third of the participants work in the public service, while 20% work in the accommodation and food services sector and the retail trade.

The variables in Table 1 will be used as explanatory variables in later tables where I use regression analyses. Gender was coded as either a male or female with males being the reference category. This coding was done to analyze job and life satisfaction without stratifying gender (see Appendix A). I recoded age into six categories: 15 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, and 55 to 64. The age category of 25 to 34 is the reference category. Visible minority status was already coded as either a visible minority or not. Participants who did not identify as a visible minority are the reference category. Education levels were recoded into three categories: having a high school diploma or less, having a college or trade certificate, or having any type of university degree/certificate. Having a high school diploma or less is the reference category. Marital status was recoded into three categories: married or common-law (the reference category), divorced/separated/widowed, or single. The variable

concerning children was dummy coded into those who did not have a child, the reference category, and those with children.

Data Analysis

I used IBM SPSS 26 to recode the variables and to conduct some early descriptive statistics. After recoding and conducting descriptive statistics, I used STATA 16 to conduct ordinary least squares and logistic regression analyses and crosstabs. STATA 16 was necessary as it allows bootstraps to be used with regression analyses, which is not possible with the level of SPSS 26 I purchased. Bootstrapping is only possible with SPSS 26 at the premium level.

Many scholars have contributed to understanding and defining precarious work (Vosko 2006; Vosko and Clark 2009; Noack and Vosko 2011; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk 2017; May 2019; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Similar to the work done by others (see Noack and Vosko 2011; McCann and Fudge 2017; Chen and Mehdi 2018; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020), I also use a multidimensional approach when studying work as work is not only wages or hours worked per week.

As explained in Chapter Two, I will be using the following indicators: low personal income, part-time employment, lack of pension, lack of medical and or dental coverage, lack of paid sick leave, non-permanent employment (seasonal, casual, term, on-call), non-unionized, small firm size, and short-term employment

status (less than one year at their current job). These precarity indicators were dummy coded into 0 and 1 where the following response options: personal earnings less than \$25,000, working less than 30 hours per week, having no pension, no paid sick leave, no medical/dental care, being employed in a job that is seasonal/term/casual/on-call, not unionized, a workplace with less than 20 employees, and being employed less than 52 weeks per year were coded as 1.

I created an indicator for access to workplace benefits (workplace pension, paid sick leave, and medical/dental coverage). Participants who report not receiving any of the three benefit options were coded as being precarious in terms of access to workplace benefits. This new variable was used in addition to the other six variables, low personal income, part-time employment, non-permanent employment, non-unionized, small firm size, and short-term employment status. I created a new variable which is a cumulation of all these indicators (see Tables 2a to d). I conducted a correlation analysis of the indicators of precarity and there were no values above 0.38. Therefore, there was no multicollinearity issues. I also conducted a factor analysis and found that low income, part-time work, short job tenure, and non-permanent work load on to each other and explain most of the multidimensional precarity indicator. These four characteristics are among the most commonly used when studying precarious work. However, I still include the other indicators as they have an association with overall job quality and job security.

The precarity indicators were summed and the new count variable is used as a continuous variable to understand how the cumulation of precarious indicators relates to job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Furthermore, this continuous variable for precarity allowed me to analyze the average number of precarity indicators experienced by certain groups of participants, which industries include aspects of precarious work, and the association between precarious work and job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The cumulative indicator is useful as one aspect of precarious work by itself is not precarious work. Therefore, to understand precarious work, as a whole, I needed to understand the multiple aspects of precarious work in relation to one another. I analyze each precarious work indicator with job satisfaction and life satisfaction. I do this to show how each indicator on its own is not enough to explain how precarious work influences job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Rather, the cumulation of these indicators can impact a worker's job satisfaction and life satisfaction.

Aspects of precarious work can be experienced by anyone, but certain groups of people are more likely to experience precarious work. The following socio-demographic characteristics were recoded and used to determine who experiences precarious work (see Tables 2a to d): gender, age, visible minority status, recent immigrant status, Indigenous status, and education level. Gender was coded as 0 for men and 1 for women. Age was coded as 0 for 25 to 34, 1 for 15 to 24, 2 for 35 to 44, 3 for 45 to 54, and 4 for 55 to 64. Visible minority status was coded as 1 for yes and 0 for no, recent immigrants were coded as 1 and all others were coded as 0. Indigenous

status was coded as 0 for non-Indigenous and 1 for Indigenous. The education variable is coded as 0 for the high school and less, 1 for trade and college, and 2 for any university degree/certificate. Table 3a to d analyzes industries in relation to aspects of precarious work. I recoded the original industry variable to make five categories: public service (0), accommodation and food services (1), retail trade (2), private services (3), and manufacturing/ agriculture/ construction/ etc. (4).¹

Logistic regression models, using odds ratios, are used to study the relationship between job satisfaction and precarious work while considering the impact of certain socio-demographic variables. The socio-demographic variables are used as explanatory variables. The models are stratified (created separate models) by gender. Stratifying by gender allows for an understanding of how being a man or a woman affects the relationship between precarious work, the other socio-demographic explanatory variables, and job satisfaction. Stratifying by gender was important since women are more likely to work precarious jobs (Cranford et al. 2003; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020).

The dependent variable, job satisfaction, was originally coded as a Likert-scale with the following categories: “very satisfied”, “satisfied”, “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, “dissatisfied”, and “very dissatisfied”. I recoded this variable so that the

¹ Public service is made up of public administration, health care and social assistance, educational services, arts/entertainment/recreation, and information and cultural industries. Accommodation and food services and retail trade remain the same. Private services are made up of professional, scientific, technical, management, finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing, and other services (not public). Manufacturing/ agriculture/ construction/ etc. is made up of manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil/gas extraction, construction, wholesale trade, transportation, warehousing, and utilities.

responses of “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, “dissatisfied”, and “very dissatisfied” were coded as a 0 and “satisfied” and “very satisfied” were coded as a 1. I coded it this way as I was interested in whether participants were satisfied at their job.

The independent variable was the cumulative precarity measurement. The explanatory variables used are age, visible minority status, education levels, marital status, and having children. These explanatory variables are used to understand how these socio-demographic characteristics are related to job satisfaction among precarious workers and are included in the model in multiple stages. Model 1 is the unadjusted model and examines the relationship between precarious work and job satisfaction. Model 2 includes age (25 to 34 was the reference category) and visible minority status (not identifying as a visible minority was the reference category), Model 3 adds education level (high school or less was the reference category), Model 4 adds marital status (married and common-law were the reference category), and Model 5 includes children (participants without children were the reference category) (see Tables 4 and 5). I chose this order for the models as the main focus of the study was precarious work and the other socio-demographic characteristics were added in a sequential order that represents whether people were able to change or modify the attributes. Therefore, visible minority status and age came before education, marital status, and having children.

The following formula is used to understand job satisfaction:

Job Satisfaction

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}(y) = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Precarious Work} + \beta_2 \text{Age}(15 - 24) + \beta_3 \text{Age}(35 - 44) \\ & + \beta_4 \text{Age}(45 - 54) + \beta_5 \text{Age}(55 - 64) + \beta_6 \text{Visible Minority} \\ & + \beta_7 \text{Education (College or Trade)} \\ & + \beta_8 \text{Education (Any University Certificate)} \\ & + \beta_9 \text{Marital Status (Divorced, separated, widowed)} \\ & + \beta_{10} \text{Marital Status (Single)} + \beta_{11} \text{Children} \end{aligned}$$

α = the intercept

β = the coefficient

To understand logistic regression, I use odds ratios. An odds ratio of less than one means that the independent variable is associated with a lower job satisfaction. An odds ratio above one means the independent variable is associated with a higher job satisfaction.

Ordinary least squares regression models are used to understand the relationship between standard of living (referred to as life satisfaction) and precarious work while taking into account certain socio-demographic variables. These socio-demographic variables are used as explanatory variables. Similar to the models for job satisfaction, I stratified (created separate models) men and women to understand how gender relates to life satisfaction based on precarious work. In addition to being more likely to work in precarious jobs (Cranford et al. 2003; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020), women are more likely to report a higher life satisfaction than men in Canada (Bonikowska et al. 2013). These differences may not be as clear in a model that is not stratified by gender.

The dependent variable for the ordinary least squares regression model is life satisfaction. The variable is captured through a 0 to 10 scale and represents whether people are satisfied with their standard of living. In this scale, 0 represents being not at all satisfied and 10 represents being completely satisfied. Life satisfaction is used as a continuous variable similar to the work of Bonikowska et al. (2013). The independent variable is the cumulative precarity measure, and the explanatory variables are: age, visible minority status, education levels, marital status, and having children. These explanatory variables are used to understand how the socio-demographic characteristics impact life satisfaction among precarious workers and are included in the model in multiple steps.

The explanatory variables used to study job satisfaction are the same explanatory variables used in the models for life satisfaction (see Tables 6 and 7). The same model builds used for job satisfaction are also used for life satisfaction. The following formula is used to understand life satisfaction:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \textit{Life Satisfaction} \\
 = & \alpha + \beta_1 \textit{Precarious Work} + \beta_2 \textit{Age}(15 - 24) + \beta_3 \textit{Age}(35 - 44) \\
 & + \beta_4 \textit{Age}(45 - 54) + \beta_5 \textit{Age}(55 - 64) + \beta_6 \textit{Visible Minority} \\
 & + \beta_7 \textit{Education (College or Trade)} \\
 & + \beta_8 \textit{Education (Any University Certificate)} \\
 & + \beta_9 \textit{Marital Status (Divorced, separated, widowed)} \\
 & + \beta_{10} \textit{Marital Status (Single)} + \beta_{11} \textit{Children}
 \end{aligned}$$

α = the intercept

β = the coefficient

The master weight variable, WGHT_PER, was used to make the data representative to the Canadian population. Bootstrapping was used when conducting analyses on job and life satisfaction. Bootstrap weights in the GSS were “created for the purpose of design-based variance estimation” (Statistics Canada 2017b:43). I used estimates based on 500 bootstrap replications of the sample to ensure confidence that the regression analyses represent the target population (Statistics Canada 2018b). I used the bootstrap formula: [pweight=WGHT_PER], vce(brr) fay(0) brrweight(WTBS_001-WTBS_500) mse. The [pweight=WGHT_PER] tells STATA to use the person weight variable, vce(brr) tells STATA to use bootstrapping for the replication approach, the brrweight(WTBS_001-WTBS_500) states that the names of each bootstrap weight ranges from WTBS_001 to WTBS_500 (making 500 bootstrap replications), the fay(0) command means there was no need to test for Fay’s adjustment, and the mse command tells STATA to calculate the variance between “the bootstrap estimates and the full-sample” (Statistics Canada 2018b:42).

Missing Data

Data were missing from approximately 5% of the sample. The following variables do not have missing cases: age, marital status, having children or not, and personal income. Life satisfaction has 0.5% missing data and job satisfaction has 0.9% missing data. Other variables, such as Indigenous status has 0.5% missing data and recent immigrant status has 0.4% missing data. Although personal income has no missing values, the data come from linking participants with their tax information.

Among those who did not consent to linking their data (9.4%), the personal income amounts were imputed by Statistics Canada (Statistics Canada 2017b).

Conclusion

Conducting a quantitative study using the 2016 General Social Survey (cycle 30) allows me to explore the relationship between precarious work and job and life satisfaction. It also provides the opportunity to look deeper into the relationship between one's personal characteristics and the likelihood of facing aspects of precarious work, which industries are more precarious, and job/life satisfaction in relation to precarious work while controlling for socio-demographic characteristics. Overall, the main purpose of this thesis is to determine who is more likely to work at jobs where there are indicators of precarious employment and to determine the impact of precarious work on job and life satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5:

Results

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the main findings from the analysis of the 2016 cycle 30 GSS. The first section of the results chapter analyzes the demographics of workers in relation to whether or not they are employed in precarious work. The next component of this chapter explains which industries are more likely to include aspects of precarious work. The final part of this chapter analyzes the relationship between job and life satisfaction and precarious employment.

Who Faces Aspects of Precarious Work?

Precarious work is a common experience for Canadians but there are certain characteristics of precarious work that are more common than others. A low personal income, less than \$25,000 per year, is experienced by 28% of workers. Further, 19% of workers work less than 30 hours per week, which is considered part-time employment in Canada. Precarity is even more common when analyzing who has access to benefits: 61% of workers do not have a pension plan through their work, 58% do not have access to paid sick leave, and 54% have no workplace medical or dental care. Overall, 45% of workers have none of these benefits. Furthermore, 69% of workers are non-unionized, 62% of workers work in a small workplace, and 29% of workers have a job tenure length of less than one year. The precarity variable includes the cumulative seven indicators of precarious work: low income, part-time employment, no benefits, non-permanent work, non-unionized work, small work size,

and short job tenure. On average, workers experience 2.1 indicators of precarious work.

Tables 2a to d provide a detailed breakdown of the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the participants and their experience with precarious work. Tables 2a to d contain percentages in all the columns except the last column of Table 2d, which are the mean scores for the cumulative precarity indicator. It is important to understand that while everyone can be affected by precarious work, there may be certain people, based on their demographic characteristics, who are more vulnerable to precarious work. Women have a slightly higher average in their count of precarious indicators. Young workers have the highest average of precarious indicators followed by those who are 25 to 34. Indigenous workers and workers who are a visible minority have an average score of 2.2. Recent immigrants have a slightly higher average at 2.3. Workers with a high school education or less have an average score of 2.6 indicators. However, there is not much variation between workers with a college or trade diploma and university degrees.

Table 2a: Indicators of Precarious Work – Reported as Percentages

	Personal Income Less than \$25,000	Hours Worked Per Week Less than 30 Hours
All Employees	28	19
Gender		
Men	24	13
Women	33	25
Age		
15-24	82	49
25-34	27	12
35-44	10	12
45-54	11	10
55-64	13	16
Indigenous Status		
Not Indigenous	28	19
Indigenous	37	19
Minority Status		
Not a visible minority	26	18
A visible minority	35	23
Recent Immigrant		
Non-recent Immigrant	20	14
Recent Immigrant	33	20
Education Level		
High School or Less	47	30
College or Trade	20	14
University Degree/Certificate	18	13

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 2b: Indicators of Precarious Work – Reported as Percentages

	Workplace Benefits			
	No Workplace Pension	No Sickleave	No Medical/Dental	No Benefits
All Employees	61	58	54	45
Gender				
Men	60	58	50	43
Women	63	57	58	48
Age				
15-24	78	73	76	59
25-34	61	57	51	43
35-44	58	53	48	41
45-54	57	55	51	45
55-64	60	55	51	45
Indigenous Status				
Not Indigenous	61	59	54	46
Indigenous	58	53	43	37
Minority Status				
Not a visible minority	61	58	53	45
A visible minority	63	57	55	45
Recent Immigrant				
Non-recent Immigrant	62	58	56	48
Recent Immigrant	67	60	59	48
Education Level				
High School or Less	67	67	60	50
College or Trade	59	55	50	41
University Degree/Certificate	59	53	52	47

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 2c: Indicators of Precarious Employment – Reported as Percentages

	Terms of Employment	Union Status
	Seasonal/Term/Casual/On-Call	Non-Union
All Employees	19	69
Gender		
Men	18	72
Women	19	67
Age		
15-24	44	81
25-34	16	71
35-44	10	67
45-54	9	65
55-64	16	63
Indigenous Status		
Not Indigenous	20	67
Indigenous	25	70
Minority Status		
Not a visible minority	19	68
A visible minority	19	74
Recent Immigrant		
Non-recent Immigrant	11	71
Recent Immigrant	15	78
Education Level		
High School or Less	28	76
College or Trade	14	66
University Degree/Certificate	14	65

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 2d: Indicators of Precarious Work – Work Size and Weeks Worked Reported as Percentages and Precarity Variable is Means and 95% Confident Interval (CI)

	Work Size Small	Weeks Worked Less than 1 Year	Precarity Variable Mean (95% CI)
All Employees	62	29	2.1
Gender			
Men	61	29	2.0 (1.9-2.0)
Women	63	30	2.2 (2.1-2.2)
Age			
15-24	79	62	3.7 (3.6-3.9)
25-34	61	27	2.0 (1.9-2.1)
35-44	58	20	1.7 (1.6-1.8)
45-54	56	18	1.7 (1.6-1.7)
55-64	59	23	1.8 (1.7-1.9)
Indigenous Status			
Not Indigenous	63	29	2.0 (2.0-2.1)
Indigenous	65	37	2.2 (2.0-2.5)
Minority Status			
Not a visible minority	63	28	2.0 (2.0-2.1)
A visible minority	59	34	2.2 (2.1-2.3)
Recent Immigrant			
Non-recent Immigrant	55	22	1.9 (1.8-2.0)
Recent Immigrant	64	37	2.3 (2.2-2.5)
Education Level			
High School or Less	80	42	2.6 (2.5-2.7)
College or Trade	62	24	1.9 (1.8-1.9)
University Degree/Certificate	61	22	1.8 (1.7-1.8)

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Industry in Relation to Aspects of Precarious Work

Tables 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d provide data on which industries include more aspects of precarious work than others. The industries are public services, accommodation and food services, retail trade, private services, manufacturing/

agriculture/ construction/ etc. These tables contain percentages and a means score for the precarity variable.

Table 3a: Working in a Precarious Industry – Reported as Percentage

Industry	Personal Income Less than \$25,000	Hours Worked Per Week Less than 30 Hours
Accomodation and Food Services	69	46
Retail Trade	51	39
Private Services	24	12
Manufacturing/agriculture/construction/etc.	17	6
Public Services	22	19

Note: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 3b: Working in a Precarious Industry – Reported as Percentages

Industry	Workplace Benefits			
	No Workplace Pension	No Sickleave	No Medical/Dental	No Benefits
Accomodation and Food Services	85	80	76	65
Retail Trade	69	68	62	51
Private Services	67	57	55	48
Manufacturing/agriculture/construction/etc.	59	60	47	40
Public Services	51	47	52	42

Note: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 3c: Working in a Precarious Industry – Reported as Percentages

Industry	Terms of Employment	Union Status
	Seasonal/Term/Casual/On-Call	Non-Union
Accommodation and Food Services	20	88
Retail Trade	14	83
Private Services	16	91
Manufacturing/agriculture/construction/etc.	17	75
Public Services	23	42

Note: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Table 3d: Working in a Precarious Industry – Reported as Percentages Except for Precarity Variable is Means and 95% Confidence Interval (CI)

Industry	Work Size	Weeks Worked	Precarity Variable
	Small	Less than 1 Year	Mean (95% CI)
Accommodation and Food Services	47	46	3.4 (3.2-3.6)
Retail Trade	38	34	2.7 (2.5-2.8)
Private Services	40	27	2.3 (2.2-2.4)
Manufacturing/agriculture/construction/etc.	30	29	1.9 (1.8-2.0)
Public Services	21	26	1.6 (1.5-1.6)

Note: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

Overall, employees working in the accommodation and food services industry have the highest percentages in almost all of the indicators for precarious work (see Table 3a to d). Nearly 70% of participants employed in the accommodation and food services industry report a personal income that is less than \$25,000 per year. Employees in accommodation and food services jobs are unlikely to have workplace benefits or to be unionized. Over 45% of participants in accommodation and food services work in part-time jobs.

Another industry where workers are at risk of being in a precarious job is retail trade. Over 50% of participants in the retail trade report a low personal income. Furthermore, almost 40% of workers in the retail trade are in part-time work. Those who work in the retail trade are less likely to receive workplace benefits and to be unionized. However, seasonal, term, casual, or on-call is most common in the public service and in the accommodation and food services and least common in the retail trade. Finally, those who are employed in accommodation and food services or the

retail trade have the highest rates of being employed less than one year (being employed for less than 52 weeks per year) and working in a small workplace.

The Relationship between Individual Indicators of Precarious Work and Job and Life Satisfaction

Table 4 compares the relationship between each individual indicator of precarious work with job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Focusing first on job satisfaction, I analyse two outcomes for job satisfaction: workers who are satisfied or very satisfied with their job compared to workers who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with their job (classified as dissatisfied in Table 4). Among both men and women, those who earn a low wage, are working part-time, do not have workplace benefits, or are non-permanent workers are less likely to report being satisfied at their job. There is little variation between workers based on union status and small workplaces. Finally, men who have been employed for less than 52 weeks are more likely to report satisfaction at work but this is the opposite for women.

Focusing on life satisfaction, I compare the average score on life satisfaction for each individual precarity indicator. Both men and women who earn low wages, work part-time, or are in non-permanent jobs report slightly higher averages for life satisfaction. Women who are non-unionized or who have been employed for less than 52 weeks have slightly higher life satisfaction scores than women who are unionized or who have been employed for a year or more but this is the opposite for men. Both men and women who do not have workplace benefits have lower life satisfaction

scores than workers who do have workplace benefits. These results, in part, are explained by focusing on who is included in the sample. I included younger workers, who are more likely to be employed in precarious jobs and have higher life satisfaction. Including younger workers is important, for the reasons explained earlier, but it does have an impact on the results. Furthermore, Brzozowski and Visano (2019) find that income is not a deciding factor in life satisfaction in Canada, which could also explain the relationship between income and life satisfaction in Table 4.

Table 4: Precarity Indicators by Job and Life Satisfaction - Reported as Percentages for Job Satisfaction and Means with 95% Confidence Interval (CI) for Life Satisfaction

Indicators of Precarity	Job Satisfaction (%)				Life Satisfaction (mean)	
	Men		Women		Men	Women
	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Mean (95% CI)	Mean (95% CI)
Personal Income						
Less than \$25, 000	25	75	19	81	7.8 (7.6-8.0)	8.1 (8.0-8.2)
\$25, 000 and more	15	85	12	88	7.6 (7.5-7.7)	7.6 (7.5-7.7)
Hours Worked Per Week						
Less than 30 hours per week	21	79	17	83	7.9 (7.6-8.1)	8.1 (7.9-8.2)
More than 30 hours per week	16	84	13	87	7.6 (7.6-7.7)	7.7 (7.6-7.8)
Workplace Benefits						
No benefits	22	78	18	82	7.4 (7.2-7.5)	7.6 (7.5-7.7)
Benefits	13	87	11	89	7.9 (7.8-7.9)	7.8 (7.7-7.9)
Terms of Employment						
Seasonal, term, casual, on-call	23	77	16	84	7.7 (7.5-7.9)	8.0 (7.8-8.2)
Permanent	16	84	14	86	7.6 (7.6-7.7)	7.7 (7.6-7.8)
Union Status						
Non-unionized	17	83	15	85	7.6 (7.5-7.7)	7.7 (7.7-7.8)
Unionized	17	83	13	87	7.7 (7.6-7.8)	7.8 (7.7-7.9)
Work Size						
Small workplace	16	84	14	86	7.7 (7.6-7.8)	7.8 (7.7-7.9)
Medium or large workplace	17	83	14	86	7.7 (7.6-7.8)	7.7 (7.6-7.9)
Short-Term Employment						
Employed less than 52 weeks	15	85	17	83	7.6 (7.4-7.7)	7.9 (7.8-8.0)
Employed for at least one year	24	76	13	87	7.7 (7.6-7.8)	7.7 (7.7-7.8)

Notes: Data are weighted using WGHT_PER

The Relationship between Indicators of Precarious Work and Job Satisfaction

Tables 5 and 6 describe the relationship between precarious work and job satisfaction using odds ratios. An odds ratio of less than one means a lower likelihood of reporting job satisfaction. An odds ratio that is larger than one means a higher likelihood of reporting higher job satisfaction. Table 5 demonstrates the relationship between job satisfaction and the cumulative precarity measure for men using logistic regression analysis. Explanatory variables are used to understand their relationship with job satisfaction and precarious employment.

Table 5: Logistic Regression of Job Satisfaction for Male Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	0.84***	0.88**	0.87**	0.88*	0.88*
Age (25-34)					
15-24		0.89	0.84	1.02	1.03
35-44		1.30	1.27	1.08	1.13
45-54		1.33	1.30	1.06	1.11
55-64		1.14	1.09	0.88	0.87
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		0.96	0.95	0.97	0.99
Education Level (High School or less)					
College or trade			0.91	0.90	0.90
University degree/certificate			0.91	0.90	0.91
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				1.30	1.22
Single				0.60***	0.54***
(No Children)					
Children					0.81

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 5, using odds ratios, demonstrates that men who work at jobs with at least one indicator of precarious work are significantly less likely than men who work at jobs with no precarious work indicators to report job satisfaction. With every additional precarious work indicator, men’s likelihood of reporting job satisfaction decreases. This finding holds true in every model. All control variables, except being single, are not significant. When marital status is added to the model, men who are single are less likely to report job satisfaction while holding all other variables constant.

Table 6 shows the relationship between job satisfaction and precarious employment for women using logistic regression analysis and is interpreted using

odds ratios. Explanatory variables are used to understand their relationship with job satisfaction and the cumulative precarity measure.

Table 6: Logistic Regression of Job Satisfaction for Female Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	0.87***	0.89**	0.88**	0.88**	0.88**
Age (25-34)					
15-24		1.00	0.94	1.05	1.07
35-44		1.13	1.09	1.04	1.02
45-54		1.43*	1.39	1.35	1.32
55-64		1.45	1.38	1.38	1.39
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		0.79	0.82	0.82	0.82
Education Level (High School or less)					
College or trade			0.94	0.94	0.94
University degree/certificate			0.86	0.84	0.85
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				0.61**	0.61**
Single				0.76	0.79
(No Children)					
Children					1.10

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Women whose work includes at least one indicator of precarious work are significantly less likely than women whose work does not include an indicator for precarious work to report job satisfaction. With every additional precarious work indicator, women are significantly less likely to report job satisfaction as seen in models 1 to 5. Model 2 shows that age is significant as women aged 45 to 54 are significantly more likely to report a higher job satisfaction than women aged 25 to 34. However, age is no longer significant in models 3, 4, and 5 when the following variables are added: education, marital status, and having children. Visible minority status and education are not significant in any of the models. Models 4 and 5 show

that women who are divorced/separated/widowed are significantly more likely to report a lower job satisfaction than those who are married or common-law. Having children is not significant.

Life Satisfaction by Precarity Factors and Demographics

Life satisfaction for men working in precarious jobs is presented in Table 7. Life satisfaction is modeled using an ordinary least squares regression. Age, visibility minority status, education level, marital status, and children are used as explanatory variables.

Table 7: Ordinary Least Squares Regression of Life Satisfaction for Male Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	-0.07*	-0.16***	-0.16***	-0.15***	-0.15***
Age (25-34)					
15-24		0.83***	0.85***	0.99***	0.99***
35-44		-0.09	-0.12	-0.21	-0.19
45-54		-0.23*	-0.25*	-0.34**	-0.32**
55-64		0.08	0.06	-0.03	-0.03
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		-0.18	-0.25*	-0.25*	-0.24*
Education Level (High School and less)					
College or trade			-0.03	-0.04	-0.04
University degree/certificate			0.24*	0.21*	0.21*
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				-0.64***	-0.69***
Single				-0.38***	-0.43***
(No Children)					
Children					-0.08

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Precarious employment is significantly associated with a decreased life satisfaction (see models 1 to 5). However, it has a small impact on the relationship.

With every additional precarious work indicator, men report a decrease in life satisfaction by approximately 0.15 (varies depending on the model). In models 2 to 5, age is significant as it is associated with an increased life satisfaction for men aged 15 to 24 in relation to the reference group. Also in models 2 to 5, being aged 45 to 54 is associated with a decreased life satisfaction when compared to those aged 25 to 34. There is no significant relationship for the other age categories in models 2 to 5. Although identifying as a visible minority is not significant in model 2, it becomes significant when other explanatory variables are added in models 3 to 5. Those who identify as a visible minority have lower life satisfaction rates. Model 3 shows that compared to having a high school diploma or less, having any type of university certificate is associated with an increased life satisfaction. This pattern remains in models 4 and 5. Model 4 demonstrates that being divorced/separated/widowed or single is associated with a decreased life satisfaction in relation to the reference category of being married or common-law. Having children does not have a significant relationship with life satisfaction for men.

Table 8 explores life satisfaction for women working in precarious jobs. Life satisfaction is modeled using an ordinary least squares regression. Age, visible minority status, education level, marital status, and children are used as explanatory variables.

Table 8: Ordinary Least Squares Regression of Life Satisfaction for Female Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	0.04	-0.04	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02
Age (25-34)					
15-24		0.73***	0.78***	0.90***	0.86***
35-44		-0.20	-0.19	-0.23*	-0.13
45-54		-0.15	-0.12	-0.15	-0.07
55-64		-0.11	-0.07	-0.04	-0.07
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		-0.21*	-0.25*	-0.24*	-0.22*
Education Level (High School and less)					
College or trade			-0.01	-0.02	-0.02
University degree/certificate			0.19*	0.18	0.18
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				-0.81***	-0.85***
Single				-0.34***	-0.50***
(No Children)					
Children					-0.37***

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 8 shows that the indicators of a precarious job have no significant relationship with life satisfaction for women. This finding is quite different from men in precarious jobs. Model 2 shows that age has a significant relationship with life satisfaction. Being younger (aged 15 to 24) is associated with an increased life satisfaction in relation to the reference category of those aged 25 to 34. This positive relationship remains significant in models 3, 4, and 5. Models 2, 3, 4, and 5 show that women who identify as a visible minority have lower life satisfaction. In model 3, participants who have any type of university certificate report a significantly higher life satisfaction than those with a high school diploma or less. However, this relationship is no longer significant in models 4 and 5. Model 4 shows being a woman

who is divorced, separated, widowed, or single is associated with a significantly decreased life satisfaction in relation to those who are married or common-law, a finding which is similar to men. However, women with children have a significantly lower life satisfaction in relation to women without children (see model 5).

CHAPTER 6:

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter aims to interpret the results by using theoretical perspectives and by putting my research into the context of other research done on the topic of precarious work and job/life satisfaction. The goal of my research is to understand who is most likely to experience precarious work, which industries use aspects of precarious work, and to understand the relationship between precarious work and job/life satisfaction. The results presented in Chapter Four show that women, people aged 15 to 24, those who identify as a visible minority, those who are Indigenous, those who are recent immigrants, and those who have lower education levels are the most likely to experience precarious work. Furthermore, the results section shows that aspects of precarious work are more commonly associated with accommodation and food services and the retail trade.

Additionally, Chapter Four demonstrates how the cumulation of precarious work indicators decreases job satisfaction for men and women, but only decreases life satisfaction for men. In this chapter I will analyze the results presented in Chapter Four with current literature to understand how precarious work is impacting the lives of workers. Using Marxist theory and feminist social reproduction theory, I will discuss how precarious work influences job and life satisfaction. Furthermore, the discussion aims to describe the significance of the findings from the results chapter in

relation to the previous work done on the topic of precarious work and job and life satisfaction.

As previously mentioned, precarious work is not just one indicator but rather a combination/cumulation of indicators. Many scholars use different definitions but have some overlap in their definitions (Vosko and Clark 2009; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk 2017; May 2019; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). For this thesis, I define precarious work as work that offers low-wages, lack of workplace benefits, work that is seasonal, temporary, casual, on-call, or part-time, working for a small business, and work that is non-unionized. I created a cumulative measurement for precarious work using these seven indicators. There is not one single feature that makes a job precarious, but several. Therefore, precarious work is a complicated concept and means that many jobs can have various levels of precarity.

Who Faces Aspects of Precarious Work?

Despite the fact that most jobs likely have at least one condition that could be classified as precarious, women are more likely to face multiple aspects of precarious work. Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020) report that, in 2018, 23% of men earned low-wages while 31% of women in Canada earned low-wages. These findings are very similar to my findings using the GSS where 23.6% of men were in low-wage jobs and 32.7% of women were in low-wage jobs. The authors also found that in 2018, nearly 30% of women were in precarious jobs compared to approximately 24% of men (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement

Gap Research Group 2020). This higher rate of women in precarious work may be explained by the wage difference between men and women. Pelletier, Patterson, and Moyser (2019) find that women earn \$0.87 for every dollar men earn. In addition to low-wages, women are much more likely to be in part time work than men. While I was unable to determine whether this was voluntary part-time work or involuntary based on the variables included in this dataset, my results are similar to what others have found when studying who is participating in precarious employment based on part-time employment (Cranford et al. 2003; Statistics Canada 2020). Considering these two important aspects of precarious employment, low wages, and part-time work, I found that women are more likely to face aspects of precarious work than men.

Feminist social reproduction theory provides one way to interpret why women are more likely to work in precarious jobs. Social reproduction is the work that needs to be done to restore labour power to sustain the economy and the rest of society. It is typically unpaid and viewed as the responsibility of women. Although women are engaged in social reproduction, they are pushed into paid employment because capitalism places more importance on the waged work, to allow for the “unlimited accumulation” of capital (Fraser 2017:22). Therefore, women often have the dual responsibility of balancing paid work and reproductive work, which means they may have to work part-time (in a potentially precarious job) to allow time to do the unpaid reproductive work. It is not possible with the GSS to determine why women are more likely to be in precarious jobs. Others who have researched this area, point out that

women are “relegated to working in low-paying and so-called “‘unskilled’ jobs”, because, under the sexist ideologies “of separate spheres” in capitalism, men are viewed as primary earners and the work women typically do is undervalued (either reproductive or productive work) (Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017:44).

Fraser (2019) recommends substantial changes in society that would address the systemic issues that keep women in low paying and part-time employment. Rather than urging women towards “cracking the glass ceiling” (p.14) and earning higher wages in what are viewed as higher status jobs, a system where women are paid and treated fairly for their productive and reproductive work is needed. However, the work of Fraser (2017) and Mohandesi and Teitleman (2017) can be used to understand why, under capitalism, women are more likely to face precarious work than men. The work women are typically pushed into is undervalued such as care-work, retail trade jobs, and jobs in the accommodation and food services. Also, the capitalist ideologies are that women are more responsible for unpaid reproductive work (Fraser 2017; Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017). Furthermore, the undervaluing of reproductive labour under capitalism is contradictory as reproductive labour is needed to maintain the system.

Age is another characteristic that can make someone more likely to face precarious work. Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) find that younger people are more likely to face precarious work. My findings are similar to the findings in Kalleberg and Vallas’ (2018) study, as those who are 15 to 24 most commonly face precarious work. Foster’s (2012) work on youth workers in Canada also has similar findings to

my research. Foster (2012) finds that youth workers are typically more likely to experience temporary, contract, or term employment.

Race and immigrant status are important to consider when studying who is more likely to be employed in precarious work. Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) find that racialized groups of people and ethnic minorities are more likely to face precarious work. Similarly, recent immigrants are more likely than Canadian born citizens to experience precarious work (Lewchuk et al. 2013; Hira-Friesen 2018). Using the cumulative precarious measurement, I found that visible minorities and Indigenous people, on average, report 2.2 indicators and recent immigrants report 2.3 indicators. The work of Fanon can be used to explain the exploitation of BIPOC people under capitalism. Fanon (1957) notes how Black people and those who are not white are viewed as “inferior” to white people (p.153). This idea of inferiority allows capitalists to exploit BIPOC people in order to generate more profit. Fanon (1968) explains that the exploitation of BIPOC people is used to create “wealth and to establish power” (p.58). By applying Fanon (1957/1968) to my findings, one can see that under capitalism, members of the BIPOC community are significantly more likely to face aspects of precarious work, which minimizes their power in society and gives power to white capitalists and white workers.

Education also plays an important role in understanding who is more likely to work in precarious employment. People who have higher levels of education typically earn more money per year (Statistics Canada 2017a). My findings are similar in that those who have higher education levels are more likely to have higher personal

incomes and less likely to experience elements of precarious work than those with lower education levels. Having a higher education can act as a buffer to protect against precarious employment. Getting a higher education is, to an extent, within one's control. However, education is not always feasible, due to tuition costs and support from family and friends to get a higher education. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the government to provide more support for people to access a post-secondary education and/or employment training programs.

In conclusion, precarious work has the potential to affect anyone, but some people are at a higher risk. Demographic characteristics such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, Indigenous status, and education are associated with an increased likelihood of experiencing multiple indicators of precarious work.

Precarious Industry in Relation to Aspects of Precarious Work

The components that make up the cumulative precarious measurement were used to examine which industries are more likely to include aspects of precarious work. I found that most of the factors scholars view as precarious, such as low-wages, part-time work, no benefits, non-union status, and being employed for less than one year, are found in accommodation and food services and the retail trade. Service sector jobs are less likely to be a secure employment relationship (full-time employment with benefits) and more likely to be precarious (Lewchuk 2017), which supports my findings that accommodation and food services and the retail trade are more likely to be precarious. Moreover, similar to Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group (2020), I also found that the accommodation and

food services industry and the retail trade industry are the most likely to have aspects of precarious work. The Library of Parliament (2018) reports that sectors of government jobs (healthcare, social assistance, and education) and jobs in the retail trade and accommodation and food services industry have higher levels of temporary work than other industries, which supports my findings that government jobs, retail jobs, and the accommodation and food services jobs are more likely to use temporary employment.

Fraser (2019) describes the concept of the “proliferation of precarious, low-wage McJobs” (Fraser 2019:19) as occurring due to the decline of secure and well-paying industrial jobs, which raises the number of precarious jobs primarily in the service sector. However, the public service industry contains the highest percentage (23%) of people who are in seasonal, term, casual, or on-call work, even though public services have the lowest overall percentage of precarious workers (10.9%). Stecy-Hildebrandt, Fuller, and Burns (2019) report that temporary workers are more commonly used in the public sector than the private due to neoliberal ideologies. They explain how public service jobs are becoming more like a competitive business that must “rein in spending” (p.565). Furthermore, permanent workers in the public sector are typically more expensive as they are more likely to be unionized and paid better, which is not seen in the retail trade or the accommodation and food services sector (Stecy-Hildebrandt et al. 2019). Hiring more contract workers would save the public service sector more money as the pay would be lower and contract workers often do not receive workplace benefits.

Job Satisfaction by Precarity Factors and Demographics

Both men and women who work in jobs where there are multiple indicators of precarity are significantly less likely to report job satisfaction. This finding is supported by the work of Cornelissen (2009), Drobnic et al. (2010), Blustein et al. (2020), who find that precarious work or experiencing aspects of precarious work, specifically low-wages and insecure work, results in significantly lower job satisfaction. Marx's (1978) concept of alienation can be applied to understand how people may not be satisfied with their jobs because they feel they are not in control of them. They are only doing their jobs to earn a wage to sustain themselves, but the work itself is owned by the capitalists as a way for the capitalists to generate profits. Therefore, the workers only do the work to earn a wage. Alienation can also occur when workers in precarious work have less control over aspects of their work, such as scheduling (Schneider and Harknett 2019). This lack of control could lead to lower job satisfaction (Marx 1978; Schneider and Harknett 2019).

Another reason to explain why workers who have jobs with multiple elements of precarity, especially those who earn low wages, have lower job satisfaction is that they are aware that employers are making profits from their labour. Fraser (2019) studies the rise in precarious work, which can create more profits in the short-term. However, these profits are based off precarious work which could leave people feeling even more alienated than the standard employment relationship due to the treatment and compensation that many scholars claim defines precarious work (Vosko

and Clark 2009; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk 2017; May 2019; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020).

Another interesting finding is that both men who are single and women who are separated, divorced, or widowed are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs than those who are married or common-law. Lewchuk (2017) explains that those who are employed in a precarious workplace often delay having children or serious relationships as they are concerned about the unpredictability of work interfering with their personal lives. Furthermore, Kalleberg and Vallas (2018) find that those in jobs with more aspects of precarious work are more likely to delay getting married or potentially re-married. Therefore, if participants in precarious work feel as though their personal life is impacted by their precarious job, they may internalize this and be less likely to be satisfied with their job.

Life Satisfaction by Precarity Factors and Demographics

As the main focus of this thesis is on precarious work, I will primarily discuss precarious work in relation to life satisfaction. My findings regarding precarious work and life satisfaction for men are supported by other scholars (Drobnic et al. 2010; Lewchuk 2017; Fraser 2019; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Blustein et al. 2020), who argue that precarious work, or aspects of precarious work such as low-wages and insecure work, is associated with a lower life satisfaction. Therefore, men who have less secure and lower paying jobs are typically less satisfied with their lives. My research shows that satisfaction with life decreases as men experience additional indicators of precarious work. However, my findings for women differ from the work

of these scholars, perhaps because other scholars did not separate men and women. Women are more satisfied with their jobs than men, but gender is not significant for life satisfaction when both men and women are analysed together (Appendix A). My results from the gender stratified models compared to the non-stratified models suggest that others should consider stratifying by gender when studying job and life satisfaction.

In my research, I find that working at a job that includes at least one indicator of precarious work, for women, has no significant relationship with life satisfaction (see Table 8). To explain this finding, Vanassche, Swicegood, and Matthijs (2012) find that women in a relationship who work part-time are happier than women working full-time, but both men and women who have lower household incomes are less happy than those with higher household incomes. The difference in gender could be due to the notion that women are viewed to be more responsible for the unpaid care work at home and, therefore, must spread their time between paid work and unpaid work (Fraser 2017; Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017). Other research suggests that women in the workforce, and the more hours they work, are more likely than men to feel their spouse is tasked with an unfair level of domestic work (Young, Wallace, and Polachek 2013). This feeling of unfairness points to a guilt that could stem from gender norms that claim that women should be more responsible for the care-work. The emphasis on women doing more unpaid care work may mean that a smaller part of their life satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, comes from their paid work and more of their life satisfaction, and dissatisfaction, comes from other parts of their life, such as

care work (raising children). Men may not do a large share of care-work, which plays into the gender role of men as the wage earners and women as the caregivers (Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017), even though women are expected to work, as many households rely on a dual income (Fraser 2017). Additionally, women may be working part-time by choice, which I am unable to study.

I find there is a significant relationship for women who have children, as they have a lower life satisfaction compared to women without children. However, there is not a significant relationship between life satisfaction and children for men. Women's lower life satisfaction, when they have children, could be due to women taking more responsibility for childcare, as explained using social reproduction theory (Fraser 2017; Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017). Therefore, they may feel underappreciated for their social reproduction work, as it is undervalued and unpaid under capitalism. Mothers may feel unable to work as much as they would like to be financially independent, which leads to a lower life satisfaction compared to women who do not have children. Therefore, having children has a more significant association with life satisfaction for women than men.

To understand why men who work at jobs that include multiple indicators of precarity may have a lower life satisfaction, one could use the Marxist view of human nature and historical materialism. That is to say, human lives depend on "the material conditions under which they live" (Marx 1978:149). Therefore, if people have adequate access to their basic necessities, they will tend to be more content with their lives and the structure that provides for them, which would likely result in a higher

life satisfaction. However, if they do not have adequate access to their basic necessities, they may not be as content in their lives. The fact that many people do not have adequate access, or struggle with secure access, to their basic necessities is due to the precariousness and instability of capitalism (Badiou 2018; Badiou 2019; Fraser 2019). Badiou (2019) explains that capitalists, in their quest for profit, exploit people for profit and leave people out of the workforce, as capitalism cannot put the world to work. Therefore, capitalism hurts those who do not have access to the necessities of life, as the resources are inequitably distributed. But capitalism also creates an instability of the structure, as more people have less purchasing power and cannot sustain capitalism. Fraser (2019) supports Badiou's (2019) concept of the instability of capitalism, as she notes that capitalism, in its "unfettered pursuit of profit", destabilizes itself (p.38). An example of this destabilization is the "proliferation of precarious, low-wage McJobs", which create a "decline in living standards" (Fraser 2019:19). Therefore, while pursuing profit, capitalism creates instability as the workers facing aspects of precarious work have less money to spend to sustain capitalism and sustain themselves. This lack of money for the workers, due to precarious work, could result in a "decline in living standards" (Fraser 2019:19).

Precarious work can lead to poverty due to low-wages, not enough hours, a lack of benefits, insecure employment terms, and non-union status. Therefore, there need to be protections in place for precarious workers. These protections could be government social protections outside of work or policies to protect workers in the workplace. That is not to say that these protections make precarious work acceptable

but is to say that people who face aspects of precarious work need some sort of protection. May (2019) suggests that to combat poverty there needs to be more helpful social protections with less restrictions, fair wages, income supplements that are not based on employment, and investments in training programs to provide more opportunities for people to get good jobs. Stevens and Simpson (2018) argue for a basic income guarantee as poverty is defined by a lack of money and, therefore, a basic income would be the most adequate poverty reduction strategy. Mestrum (2018) goes beyond advocating for a basic income to critiquing neoliberal poverty reduction strategies that put markets first. Attempting to include people in the market through neoliberal policy reforms does not protect people from poverty as companies may not pay enough and the jobs are not secure (Mestrum 2018).

Improvements are needed so people can afford the basic necessities in life. This could be achieved by creating a basic income program or improving access to social services. Other options for improving the financial situation for workers is to increase hourly wages (Living Wage Canada 2013; McBride and Muirhead 2016). Living Wage Canada (2013) argues that a living wage would be put in place to provide families with a “basic level of economic security” (p.2). However, some scholars argue that higher wages could create negative economic impacts for low-income workers as the cost of living could increase (Adams and Neumark 2003). In contrast, McBride and Muirhead (2016) find that a living wage would have no significant negative impact on employment or costs of living. It is clear that people need employment that can support them. Therefore, there is a need for more studies

on increased wages and basic incomes which could reduce poverty and increase life satisfaction.

Another potential way for to combat precarious work and poverty is unionization. Unionizing could create away to protect workers' rights by giving them more control over the labour process (Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Similarly, Noack and Vosko (2011) find that workers who earn low wages are “likely to have no pension and no union coverage” (p.14). Therefore, showing how unionization can protect workers from low wages and a lack of benefits.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this research. First of all, there is some debate on how to define and study life satisfaction and there is no agreed upon way to study it (Higgs 2007; Drobnic et al. 2010). However, since I used the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) dataset, I could only use the 0 to 10 scale variable for life satisfaction. The 0 to 10 scale only analyzes the self-perceived life satisfaction of the participants. The second limitation of this study is that disability status is not included in the GSS public use file. Disability status would be interesting as Morris et al. (2018) find that people who live with a disability are more likely to face aspects of precarious work, such as low-wages, part-time work, and unemployment. Also, the 2016 GSS does not include variables that other researchers used when studying precarious work: multiple jobs, hourly wages, and a lack of control at work. Similarly, there was no variable for voluntary part-time work vs involuntary part-time work, which would have been

useful for younger people who may prefer part-time work to leave time to go to school and people who do more caregiving work. Finally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to go to the Atlantic Research Data Centre. Fortunately, I could use the public use data; however, there are some limitations as many variables were already in pre-defined categories. For example, income was in pre-defined categories, which meant that I could not use it as a continuous variable which limits my ability to analyze lower wages in greater detail. Furthermore, age was in pre-defined categories, which meant I was unable to analyze one age or create different age categories.

Future studies should move beyond looking at the cumulation of precarity indicators and determine the best way to capture precarious work as a binary concept (Noack and Vosko 2011; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk 2017; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020). Currently, this has not been done using the GSS (cycle 30). Future studies could also include self-employment.

Conclusion

Many people face aspects of precarious employment, regardless of their demographic characteristics. However, certain groups of people are more likely to work in jobs that include several indicators of precarious employment based on gender, age, visible minority status, Aboriginal status, recent immigrant status, and education levels. Other interesting findings from my research demonstrate that

aspects of precarious work are more commonly associated with accommodation and food services and the retail trade.

The findings also suggest that those who work at jobs where there are multiple indicators of precarity are more likely to report lower job satisfaction. I used models to understand which demographic characteristics impact the relationship between precarious work life satisfaction. Men who work precarious jobs are more likely to have a lower life satisfaction, but the relationship is not significant for women. Furthermore, women who have children report a lower life satisfaction, but the relationship between having children and life satisfaction for men is not significant. Overall, precarious work has influence on job and life satisfaction in relation to other socio-demographic characteristics.

CHAPTER 7:

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study analyzed the 2016 GSS (cycle 30) to understand who is more likely to work precarious jobs based on their socio-demographic characteristics, the relationship between industry and precarious work, and how precarious work and socio-demographic characteristics affect job and life satisfaction. Precarious work has been studied and defined by several scholars (Vosko and Clark 2009; Lewchuk et al. 2013; Lewchuk 2017; Kalleberg and Vallas 2018; May 2019; Schneider and Harknett 2019; Vosko and The Closing the Enforcement Gap Research Group 2020); however, more research on precarious work in Canada is still needed. This study is unique as it uses the GSS to study precarious work in Canada. I defined seven key examples of precarious work using examples from other scholars: work that offers low wages, a lack of benefits, work that is seasonal, temporary, casual, on-call, or part-time, working for small businesses, and work that is non-unionized. I then used these characteristics to create a cumulative precarity indicator to identify how many indicators of precarious work people experience on average, which industries include elements of precarious work, and how precarious work relates job and life satisfaction.

The results show that women, younger people, people with less education, people of the BIPOC population, recent immigrants, and those who have lower education levels are more likely to report multiple indicators of precarious work. Precarious work is also more common in certain industries. The retail trade and the

accommodation and food services industry are more likely to have aspects of precarious work. The models regarding job satisfaction (Tables 5 and 6) show that all participants, both men and women, report a decreased likelihood in reporting job satisfaction for each additional precarious indicator. Finally, Tables 7 and 8 show that life satisfaction among men decreases slightly for each additional precarious indicator, but the relationship between precarious work and life satisfaction is not significant for women.

An interesting finding for women is that being a mother reduces women's life satisfaction. This finding suggests, using feminist social reproduction theory, that capitalist society primarily views women as care providers. Therefore, more of women's life satisfaction/dissatisfaction may come from their care work, whereas men are viewed as the wage earners so more of their life satisfaction comes from their paid work. Furthermore, being a mother, and viewed as the primary caregiver of children, while also being part of the paid labour force can add stress and may explain why being a mother reduces life satisfaction.

Overall, this research provided insight into precarious work among Canadians, how it relates to industry, and how precarious work and other socio-demographic characteristics relate to job and life satisfaction.

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Appendix A

Table 9: Logistic Regression of Job Satisfaction for All Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	0.86***	0.88***	0.88***	0.88***	0.88***
Gender (Men)					
Women		1.24**	1.26**	1.26**	1.27**
Age (25-34)					
15-24		0.93	0.88	1.03	1.03
35-44		1.21	1.19	1.07	1.09
45-54		1.37*	1.34*	1.19	1.21
55-64		1.26	1.21	1.07	1.06
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		0.88	0.89	0.90	0.90
Education Level (High School or less)					
College or trade			0.92	0.91	0.91
University degree/certificate			0.89	0.87	0.87
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				0.82	0.81
Single				0.67***	0.65***
(No Children)					
Children					0.93

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 10: Ordinary Least Squares Regression of Life Satisfaction for All Participants

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Precarity Indicators	-0.01	-0.10***	-0.09***	-0.08***	-0.08***
Gender (Men)					
Women		0.07	0.05	0.08	0.09
Age (25-34)					
15-24		0.78***	0.81***	0.95***	0.94***
35-44		-0.14	-0.15	-0.21**	-0.15
45-54		-0.19*	-0.19*	-0.24**	-0.19*
55-64		-0.01	0.01	-0.03	-0.04
(Not a Visible Minority)					
Visible Minority		-0.20**	-0.25***	-0.25***	-0.23**
Education Level (High School and less)					
College or trade			-0.01	-0.02	-0.02
University degree/certificate			0.22***	0.19**	0.20**
Marital Status (Married or Common Law)					
Divorced, separated, widowed				-0.76***	-0.80***
Single				-0.37***	-0.48***
(No Children)					
Children					-0.23***

Notes: bootstraps used; reference categories (omitted group) are in brackets

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001