

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Numerical Flexibility Practices in Working Relations and Their Effects on Intergenerational Solidarity Processes

Serkan Coşkun<sup>1</sup> 

### Abstract

This study examines the interactions between the numerical flexibility practices emerging in today's working relations and intergenerational solidarity relations and in this context aims to describe in depth the effect these practices have on these relations. This study is structured within the framework of the phenomenological design, a qualitative research method, with data being collected using semi-structured interview forms. The study uses the program MAXQDA Pro Analytics 2020 to analyze the data and conducted three-stage thematic coding to form code co-occurrence clusters. According to the analysis results, i) numerical flexibility practices in working relationships are multidimensional in terms of how they reflect onto individuals and are closely related to the precariousness of work conditions, ii) flexible work hours affect individuals' functional and associational sharing with their parents, and iii) individuals' consensual status with their parents regarding work shapes the processes of affectual solidarity. The interaction of normative solidarity in the cultural context is seen to be a crucial factor for making sense of the solidarity process, with normative solidarity's interaction with material resources possibly being the cause of solidarity processes taking different than expected forms.

**Keywords:** Associational solidarity • Consensual solidarity • Flexibility • Functional solidarity • Intergenerational solidarity • Numerical flexibility practices • Work • Work relations

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Societies have been experiencing fundamental changes in their sociodemographic structures over the last century. The most fundamental dimension of these changes has occurred in the structural characteristics of populations. Since the early 1900s, life expectancy has doubled, birth rates have declined, and old-age dependency ratios have increased globally as populations age (Bengtson & Martin, 2001). According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat), the old-age dependency ratio increased in Turkey from 12.2% in 2015 to 14.1% in 2020 (TurkStat, 2020). The percentage of the old-age population within the total population is expected to grow from 10.2% to 25.6% between 2023-2080 (Turkish Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Services & Directorate of Disabled and Elderly Services, 2020). According to data provided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), while the age dependency ratio in OECD countries was 32.4% in 2022, this ratio is expected to reach 58.6% in 2075 (OECD, 2022a). This increase in old-age dependency ratios has led to the development of multigenerational family structures called beanpoles or flagpoles (Bengtson & Martin, 2001). The increase in this type of family structure means an increase in responsibilities regarding the dependency relations within the family. Therefore, considering how and through which channels support for aged members of the family will be provided becomes important.

Families have been the leading actor in support and solidarity mechanisms throughout history and are the center of intergenerational assistance and support mechanisms based on unwritten obligations and expectations. Within the family unit, each generation is connected by a traditional social contract within the framework of i) biosocial generation/socialization, ii) geriatric-social succession, and iii) geriatric dependencies (Bengtson & Murray, 1993). Accordingly, an existential predisposition exists which assumes that the first generation will raise the second generation, that the second generation will raise the third, and that upon the retirement or death of the first generation, the second generation will have the resources to support the third generation. In this context, each generation is expected to transfer the sum of material and non-material resources inherited from the previous generation to the next one. Finally, all of these intergenerational solidarity relations are maintained within the framework of geriatric dependencies. The main question here is how can the existing social contract be maintained within multigenerational family structures today.

Two related transformations in the 21st century have hampered the sustainability of existing intergenerational solidarity relations. The first one is the withdrawal of the state from its role as the regulator of social welfare (OECD, 2022b, 2022c, 2022d, 2022e), and the second involves the transformations in the field of employment due to states withdrawing their regulatory role. These two dimensions affect the actors who will take responsibility in the geriatric-social succession and geriatric dependencies. With states' withdrawal from employment relations, atypical practices have emerged in the field of

employment, and the introduction of flexible implementations have caused contracts to become insecure and impermanence to increase. Increased productivity independent of work hours and employees has devalued employees' labor value, severed the union-state-employee bond, and abolished employee-protection mechanisms (Almanac, 1995; Belek, 2010; Bentolila & Dolado, 1994; Bowden et al., 2018; Bora et al., 2012; Castells, 1997; Fusch & Kemperman, 2012; International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2017; Kalleberg, 2009a; Rifkin, 1995). In addition to these changes, states' decreased effectiveness regarding employment in such areas as education, hiring, and job creation (OECD, 2022f, 2022g) has turned unemployment and underemployment into today's most fundamental realities (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2019, 2008).

These transformations regarding work relations have restricted the actors who assume responsibilities within their families in terms of time, income, health, and adaptation to social roles. Increased precariousness, falling wages, and temporary jobs (Bentolila & Dolado, 1994; Emmons Allison et al., 2020; IMF, 2017; Kalleberg, 2009a; Scicchitano et al., 2020) have led these actors to feel pressured to constantly move up the career ladder (Sennett, 1998), and climbing the career ladder inevitably involves a higher level of education, but this decreases one's ability to develop relationships with one's parents (Crimmins & Ingegneri, 1990). Falling wages and precarious work conditions affect individuals' decisions regarding adapting to social roles, such as postponing marriage (Ahituv & Lerman, 2010). In addition to social roles, personality development is also closely related to working conditions. Individuals gradually differentiate themselves from their parents and form their own identities and perceptions. This situation is perceived as a transition from dependence to independence (i.e., from childhood to adulthood). For example, if one wants to move to a different house but lacks sufficient financial resources, life will continue to follow the parents' rules most of the time. Thus, preferences and expectations are often driven by conflict and the imperative consensus in a relationship dependent on the parents. Accordingly, the material resources to be used in this process and the ability to mobilize them are closely related to being employed (Bora et al., 2012; Çelik, 2008).

Work is the adaptational key to performing a role with a certain status and therefore inevitably shapes intergenerational solidarity relations. The transformations mentioned above have restricted the resources that individuals can mobilize with regard to intergenerational solidarity relations and collapse the past behavioral patterns in intergenerational solidarity relations in terms of geriatric-social succession and geriatric dependencies. In this context, the subject of the present research involves the flexibility practices regarding work relations and intergenerational solidarity processes.

When reviewing the literature, various studies are seen to have been conducted on the transformations in labor relations and their individual effects in Turkey (Belek, 2010; Bora et al., 2012; Kuşaksız, 2006; Nuro, 2014a, 2014b; Özşuca, 2003; Özdemir

& Yücesan-Özdemir, 2004; Şenkal, 2015; Tatlıoğlu, 2012; Tayşir, 2018; Yaprak, 2009). Similar studies are also found on generational and intergenerational solidarity relations (T.R. Prime Ministry Directorate General of Family and Social Research, 2010; Adıbelli et al., 2014; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982, 1986; Ocaklı, 2017; Özmete, 2017; Öztürk, 2016; Tamer, 2014; Tufan & Yazıcı, 2009; Yıldırım, 2015). When examining these studies, however, evaluations on how the phenomenon of flexibility in work relations affects intergenerational solidarity relations are seen to be lacking. Therefore, the present research aims to examine how the process of flexibility in working relations is experienced and how these practices affect intergenerational solidarity relations. In this way, the sustainability of the current intergenerational social contract can be evaluated while also understanding how transformations in work relations affect intergenerational solidarity relations.

### **Flexibility Practices in Work Relations and Their Effects on Intergenerational Solidarity Relations**

The phenomenon of flexibility in work relations corresponds to a radical transformation of past work conditions. The main reasons for this radical transformation have been the global supply-and-demand crises, the inability of mass production to respond to these crises due to its cumbersome structure, the transformation of the required workforce through mechanization, and state deregulation (Musso, 2013; Rifkin, 1995; Piore & Sabel, 1984). This crisis has also been attributed to the rigidity in the system preventing it from adapting to crises and change (Caballero et al., 2013), which is why rigid labor markets' lower resiliency to fluctuations has led to claims that this increases unemployment (Vergeer & Kleinknecht, 2012). Flexibility practices implemented within the framework of these realities have made contracts insecure, severed the union-state-worker bond, and created atypical employment conditions (Kalleberg, 2009a; Rifkin, 1995).

The phenomenon of flexibility in work relations has been defined differently by different scholars (Atkinson & Meager, 1986; Huws, 2006). This study considers the phenomenon of flexibility in the sense of numerical flexibility, which has been defined as employers' ability to adjust the level of labor inputs to meet the fluctuations in output and demand. In this context, numerical flexibility involves regulations regarding contract duration, work hours, payment structure, and job descriptions (Atkinson & Meager, 1986).

The current study discusses how numerical flexibility practices affect the support mechanisms within the family unit in the context of intergenerational relations, with the concept of generation as used in this study being defined in the context of biological and cultural succession within lineage and kinship relations. As such, the concept is used to classify the parent-child relationships within the family unit and its sociocultural, biological, and historical aspects (Bengtson & Black, 1973; Bengtson & Oyama, 2010).

Bengtson and Roberts (1991) intergenerational solidarity approach has been used to evaluate intergenerational solidarity relations and is comprised of six dimensions: i) associational solidarity, ii) affectual solidarity, iii) consensual solidarity, iv) functional solidarity, v) normative solidarity, and vi) structural solidarity. Associational solidarity is defined as the frequency of communication between family members, the channels through which it takes place, and the motivational elements of that communication (Bengtson & Mangen, 1988; Bengtson & Roberts, 1991; Bengtson & Schrader, 1982). Affectual solidarity refers to the feelings of trust, closeness, respect, understanding, and sincerity that family members feel toward each other (Bengtson & Mangen, 1988; Silverstein et al., 1998). Consensual solidarity is evaluated in terms of consensus, similarity, and harmony within the framework of ideas, attitudes, and values among family members (Bengtson & Mangen, 1988). Functional solidarity encompasses all practical, social, and financial support among family members (Bengtson & Mangen, 1988; Bengtson & Oyama, 2010). Unlike consensual solidarity, normative solidarity is the strength of adherence to the traditional expectation of familial roles. In other words, it emphasizes filial piety and commitment to family responsibilities. Structural solidarity corresponds to the opportunity structures that allow other dimensions of intergenerational solidarity to occur and draw the boundaries of these interactions (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991).

The ways in which numerical flexibility practices in labor relations affect intergenerational solidarity are grounded in structural solidarity, which determines the structural limits and possibilities of other forms of solidarity in intergenerational solidarity relations. According to Dahrendorf (1988), work in a society organized around work is not just a key to accessing various commodities and resources but may also constitute a condition of citizenship or the possibility of being a citizen. Therefore, being involved in work relationships also means having the resources to adapt to specific roles in society. Being involved in intergenerational solidarity relations is closely related to being able to mobilize the material and moral resources used in those relations. A person who does not have a job or lives on an insufficient income will most likely not be able to fulfill their parents' requests for financial support. From this point of view, the present study accepts that transformations in work relations affect the amount of resources individuals can possess and mobilize with regard to the relations in their social space. Thus, flexibility in work relations provides the fundamental cognitive grounds for this study, in addition to the intergenerational solidarity approach.

## **Research Method**

### **Research Design**

This study uses the qualitative research method, which is concerned with discovering how people interpret their experiences and shape their worlds, as well as what meanings they attribute to their experiences. The primary aim is to comprehensively understand

the nature of experiences to reveal what the process consists of and how it proceeds. For this reason, the current study has chosen a phenomenological qualitative research design aimed at describing the essence of experiences (Merriam, 2009). Phenomenological designs are suitable for studies that aim to understand the shared meaning of an experienced phenomenon and to describe the phenomenon in depth based on shared experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Clearly defining the research questions in a phenomenological study is critical as this shows how the research problem is to be constructed. Research questions also establish the boundaries and scope of the research, show which context the researcher will focus on, and provide content control (Punch, 1998). For qualitative studies, Creswell & Creswell (2017) drew attention to two forms of research questions: central questions and their associated sub-questions. In this context, the study has identified three main central questions and their associated sub-questions.

### **Research Questions:**

#### ***1. How does numerical flexibility affect work relationships?***

1.1. How is this situation experienced in terms of employment contracts?

1.2. How is this experienced in terms of work hours?

1.3. How is this experienced in terms of job descriptions?

1.4. How is this experienced in terms of wages?

#### ***2. How are numerical flexibility applications reflected onto individuals?***

#### ***3. How do numerical flexibility practices affect intergenerational solidarity relations?***

3.1. Do they affect individuals' communication with their parents?

3.2. Do they affect individuals' affectual solidarity with their parents?

3.3. Do they affect individuals' practical, social, or financial solidarity with their parents?

3.4. Do they affect their consensual status with their parents?

3.5. Do they affect the normative expectations of individuals in their relationships with their parents?

## Data Collection and Participant Profiles<sup>1</sup>

The study has used the purposive sampling method from the participant group and conducted interviews using semi-structured interview forms. After preparing the interview forms, five pre-interviews were conducted to finalize the nature and scope of the questions. After these pre-interviews, suggestions were received from two experienced academicians regarding the content and scope of the questions. In this context, simple adjustments were made to the questionnaire that did not cause structural changes. After this revision, interviews were conducted with 23 participants, taking into account the data saturation point during the data collection process, which ended once the data began repeating. Information about the participant group is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1  
*Participants' Descriptive Features*

Participant Number	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Education	Socio-economic status*	Profession
P1	33	Female	Married	Bachelor's	Middle	Entrepreneur/skin care specialist
P2	33	Female	Married	Bachelor's	Middle	Turkish literature teacher
P3	31	Female	Married	Associate's	Middle	Kindergarten teacher
P4	25	Female	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Non-gov. org. manager
P5	28	Female	Single	Bachelor's.	Middle	Financial analyst
P6	25	Female	Single	Bachelor's	Low	Guidance teacher
P7	26	Female	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Guidance teacher
P8	26	Female	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Geologist
P9	28	Female	Married	Bachelor's	Middle	Kindergarten teacher
P10	26	Female	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Ground-service crew
P11	28	Male	Single	Associate's	Low	Medical imaging technician
P12	25	Male	Single	Postgraduate	High	Academic
P13	26	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Special education teacher
P14	36	Male	Married	Associate's	Low	Medical imaging technician
P15	26	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Booking clerk
P16	25	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Social worker
P17	24	Male	Single	Associate's	Low	Store manager
P18	25	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Low	Yard boss
P19	25	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Low	Editor

1 Ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from the Hacettepe University Ethics Committee on March 10, 2020, numbered 35853172-300).

P20	26	Male	Single	Bachelor's	Middle	Digital advertising expert
P21	25	Female	Single	Postgraduate	Low	Assistant specialist
P22	25	Male	Single	Associate's	High	Shipmaster
P23	26	Female	Single	Postgraduate	High	Academic

\*Participants' socioeconomic statuses are self-reported.

### Data Analysis

MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2020 is used for the data analysis, which was carried out at three levels of abstraction. Open coding was performed first, during which the aim was to prepare the data for a transition to more abstract conceptual categories (Punch, 1998) by seeking their constitutive components in understanding the experience (Moustakas, 1994). The second stage performed axial coding by asking questions about the interactions and processes, during which the study specifically asked whether the existing concepts could be sub-dimensions or sub-categories and whether closely related concepts could be combined into a more general structure (Neuman, 2014). By answering these questions, integrative axes were created in the coding. The last stage performed selective coding, which is a construction process related to the main themes within the framework of the research. While this includes a general review of the previous coding, the main purpose involves theoretical integration and definitions. In this context, the final categories of the experience were revealed by integrating the participants' experiences with the literature (Neuman, 2014; Punch, 1998), with Table 2 presenting the themes and sub-themes that were obtained in this way.

Although the themes in Table 2 are the final findings of the analysis, they do not answer the study's research questions nor allow inferences about how experiences are formed. For this reason, a code co-occurrence cluster map was created to understand how experiences are formed among the codes. In this context, the codes of *failing to fulfill goals* and *differentiating the meaning attributed to work* in the first coding were determined to be unrelated to the general scheme and therefore excluded from the code co-occurrence cluster mapping.

Table 2  
Code Matrix

Themes and sub-themes	# of participants with each theme and sub-theme
<b>A) Numerical flexibility practices in working relations</b>	
<b>Atypical wage negotiations and payments</b>	
<i>Threatening employee's job</i>	4
<i>Devaluing employee's education</i>	4
<i>Irregular and arbitrary payments</i>	5

<i>Unpaid overtime</i>	6
<b>Flexibility of work hours</b>	14
<b>Unclear job descriptions</b>	9
<b>Precarious work conditions</b>	20
<b>B) Reflections of numerical flexibility practices onto individuals</b>	
<i>Failure to fulfill goals</i>	4
<i>Living on meager wages</i>	7
<i>Worrying about future uncertainty</i>	9
<i>Feeling pressure to perform and prove oneself</i>	8
<i>Inability to balance business and private life</i>	13
<i>Being exploited</i>	12
<b>C) Effects of numerical flexibility practices in working relations on intergenerational solidarity relations</b>	
<b>Associational solidarity</b>	
<i>Not maintaining daily communication</i>	8
<i>Not participating in family rituals</i>	3
<b>Consensual solidarity (disagreements between work life and the family)</b>	
<i>Differentiating the meaning attributed to work</i>	4
<i>Irregular and insufficient income</i>	4
<i>Precarious work</i>	2
<i>Erratic workplaces</i>	2
<i>Uncertain work hours</i>	3
<b>Affectual solidarity</b>	
<i>Trust and closeness from parents' perspective</i>	5
<i>Trust, respect, and sympathy from children's perspective</i>	6
<b>Normative solidarity (familism)</b>	
<b>Functional solidarity</b>	
<i>Practical support between parent and child</i>	10
<i>Social support between parent and child</i>	9
<i>Financial support between parent and child</i>	11

The values in Table 2 were obtained by activating the following selections in MAXQDA: # (Count hits only once per document),  $\Sigma$  (Sum), 123 (Display nodes as values), # (Names, columns: short).

## Findings

This section presents the three code co-occurrence clusters that were established according to the analysis results: i) the precariousness of work conditions and its reflections on individuals; ii) flexibility of work hours and its effects on associational and functional solidarity, performance pressure, and inability to balance business and private life; and iii) wage, job description, and consensual and affectual solidarity. The

findings are respectively presented under the three headings of having precarious work conditions, failing to strike a balance between private and business life, and inability to reach a consensus with family about work life.

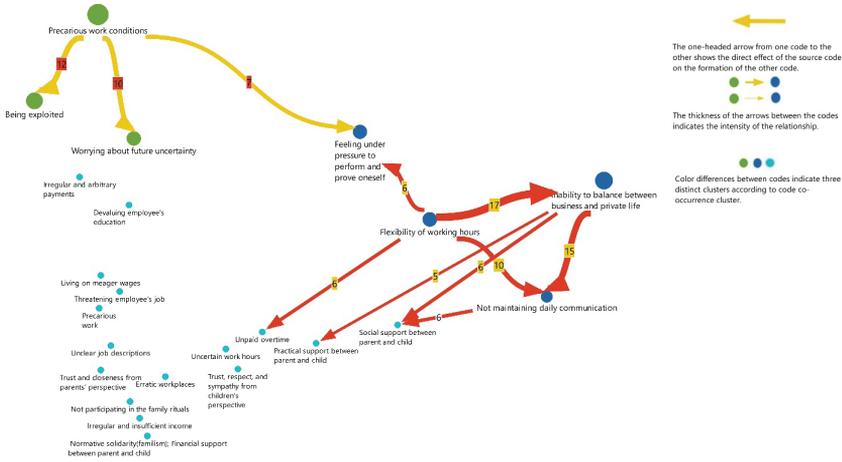


Figure 1. Code co-occurrence cluster map

### Having Precarious Work Conditions

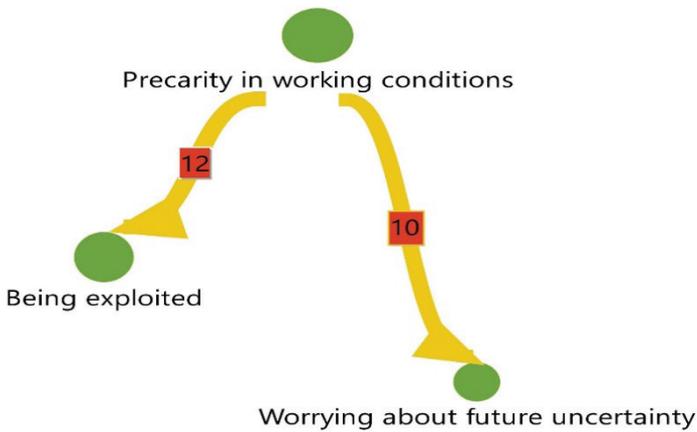


Figure 2. Code co-occurrence: Cluster 1

According to the first cluster, numerical flexibility practices are linked to severe insecurity in work conditions. Negative reflections at the individual level are seen in precariousness. While precariousness in work conditions causes individuals to have anxiety about the future, precariousness combined with exploitation becomes a situation that consumes the individual with performance pressure. This shows having precarious work conditions to not be able to be considered only a work-related phenomenon. In addition, contracts' precariousness for the employee were identified to be a type of employer assurance. Increased precariousness in work conditions gives employers the opportunity to regulate their employees' conditions as they see fit. This means that employees are faced with arbitrary regulations that are independent of objective criteria. P1 expressed this situation as follows:

*The contracts completely make guarantees for the employer; [leaving] one directly open to abuse.*

P6 described how contract duration is determined solely by the employer:

*He might fire me or might renew my contract for the next year. This process is entirely up to the employer's initiative and proceeds entirely in line with their decision.*

Precariousness in labor relations was not observed to differ between the public and private sectors, with a severe transformation has occurred in the understanding of unconditional lifetime employment in the public sector. P15 explained how precariousness in work conditions arises and the purpose for which it is applied:

*Our current employment started within the scope of an administrative service contract, in which everyone had a time-limited contract. In short, the administrative service contract... is a contract that is renewed every year unless there's a contrary situation, thus making it easier to fire people. I constantly struggle to feel secure because employers can fire me at the end of the year.*

The precariousness of contracts exacerbates the pressure on individual performance. Individuals must endure an intense work tempo to become partially secure in precarious work conditions. This performance pressure is also reflected in employer expectations, which P21 described as follows:

*I have to read, study, and research constantly. Meet with that person, do this, read an article, and so on. An incredible performance awaits. You're expected to outperform an average person five times. [The employer] approaches you as if you had no concerns other than work.*

These types of employer expectations place severe pressure on employees. P20 described the tension created by these expectations as follows:

*I have to prove myself constantly. I can't stand still anywhere, can't even breathe, and have to work all the time. But, I feel exhausted from the pressure.*

However, as noted by P21, individuals have different expectations and desires beyond their work lives. When the insecurity of work conditions and high-performance

expectations are accompanied by insufficient wages, the process becomes more destructive for individuals. The most basic reflection of this process is the feeling of exploitation that emerges in individuals, which P6 described as follows:

*I feel enslaved and have a terrible economic situation. My salary isn't enough even for myself. I don't have to pay rent or bills, but still my salary isn't enough for me.*

Inadequate wages, precarious work conditions, and performance pressures create uncertainty for individuals' futures. Not being able to predict what work conditions will be like in the future or not knowing if they'll even be working affects every decision that is made. P5 described how uncertainty regarding work conditions has affected her plans:

*Because you don't have a regular income, you can't make long-term plans and must constantly think about the short term. This affects your investment plans. There is usually no work in winter and projects slow down then, so your life patterns become uncertain because when the next project will start is unclear.*

P8, on the other hand, expressed the uncertainty created by current work conditions as follows:

*I try to do better, but I can't say whether it will happen or not. Thinking about where I work, when I think about my situation five years from now, it's only a matter of time before I become depressed.*

### Failing to Strike a Balance Between Private and Business Life

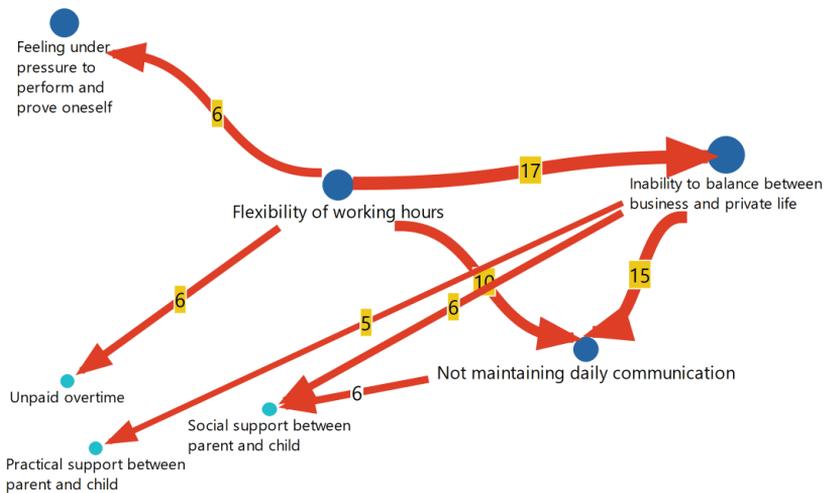


Figure 2. Code co-occurrence: Cluster 2

Cluster 2 shows how flexible work hours affect the balance between private and work life and how that situation is reflected in associational and functional solidarity relations. Individuals feel severe pressure to increase their performance and prove themselves in their work lives. Performance pressure is shaped by insecurity and is based on the fact that the more performance is improved, the lower the probability of unemployment will be. This situation brings with it long work hours and limits the time devoted to primary relationships in many respects. From this perspective, flexibility of work hours is seen to result in work invading all areas of daily life. In particular, work hours that have expanded to all areas of life are seen to constitute highly variable hours rather than a specific schedule. P10 described the irregularity of work hours and how this varies within a week:

*As for work hours, I work three shifts. I start at half-past two in the morning two days a week and finish at half-past two in the afternoon the next day. The following two days, I begin at half-past two in the afternoon and finish at half-past ten in the evening. I start at half-past ten in the evening for the remaining two days and finish at half-past six in the morning. Then I have two days off.*

P12, on the other hand, stated having no concrete concept of work hours and every area of life to be a work environment:

*I don't have specific working hours, so I don't fit the definition of 'nine in the morning to five in the evening.' I start work, and it lasts until I go to bed in the evening.*

Meanwhile, P2 briefly summarized her work hours as follows: “*I close and open my eyes around my work hours.*” Despite irregular work hours affecting all areas of life, none of the participants are paid overtime. Therefore, no change occurs in terms of earnings. The balance of business and private life being disrupted by the flexibility of work hours directly affects the dimensions of associational and functional solidarity. For associational solidarity, participants are seen to have difficulty maintaining daily communication and establishing relationships with their parents. Therefore, functional solidarity also gets affected by the inability to provide the social support parents demand. P2 described her experiences in this regard as follows:

*I have very little contact with my family. When my father reads a newspaper, he wants to tell me about it. But I get tired because I work so hard and don't want to hear the same things, so we can't find common ground.*

P20 similarly described how his workload affected his communication with his parents:

*My workload is so heavy that I can barely listen to their troubles. Even if it's my family, I don't want to hear what they have to say. When you leave work at 9 pm, you don't even want to see anyone anymore... My mother says she has a problem and wants to talk with me. I just say I've only got one pair of hands.*

P19 described his communication frequency as follows, despite living in the same house with his mother: “*I live in the same house as my mother, but I hardly see her.*” Due to workload and time constraints, participants might postpone talking with their parents and other practical support demands. However, participants are still unable to complete their tasks despite postponing such demands. While the rejected demands were legitimized, this situation resulted in further delaying parents’ requests. P8 described the situation as follows:

*My family expects me to help with housework. At least, that’s what they expect. However, due to the intensity of my schedule, I can’t even do all my work. How can I help them?*

### Inability to Reach a Consensus with the Family about Work Life

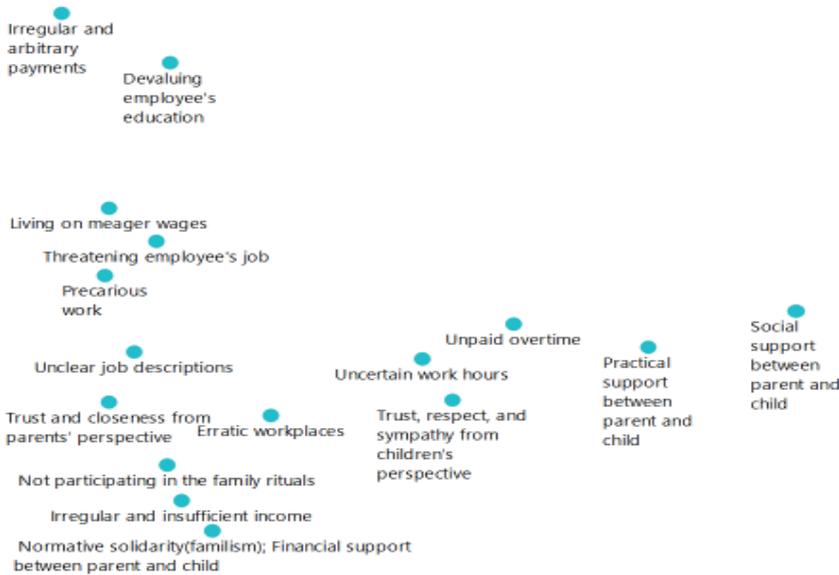


Figure 3. Code co-occurrence: Cluster 3

The third cluster contains the parents’ evaluations of their children’s working conditions, how these evaluations are interpreted in terms of parent-child emotional solidarity, and how income status relates to functional and normative solidarity. In addition, it explains the impact of individualized wage bargaining and atypical wage payments on individuals. It was seen that the main source of parents’ consensual problems with their children about work lies in their habit of considering trends of the past while interpreting today’s business realities. Their children do not have specific job security, sufficient income, regular working hours, or a working place in line with

their parents' expectations for working conditions and this is a central point of conflict. The contradiction here is that parents' expectations for their children were the same conditions that their children are aiming for themselves. However, although the same conditions were sought, the parents interpreted unfulfilled expectations as having been intentionally not fulfilled by their children. This situation negatively affects both the children and the parents in terms of affectual solidarity.

Fundamental differences occur between individuals and their parents when assessing work and work conditions. The participants differ from their parents in evaluating what a job is. P15 explained what a job should be and the difference with his parents' idea as follows:

*Any job where I earn money for my family is [supposedly] regular and good. But for me, it's the opposite. A job I take just to make money is a temporary job. If it's not something I can improve myself by doing, it's an ordinary, crappy job.*

Differences between parents and children about ideal jobs and their general structures did not turn into conflicts or affect their evaluations of each other. However, wages, insecurity, uncertain work hours, and irregular workplaces negatively affect intergenerational affectual solidarity because parents' assessments of these work condition elements are harsher. Parents make more comparisons in terms of wages, contract security, and work hours, increasing the emotional tension between them and their children. P8 conveyed her parents' evaluations of her wage as follows:

*My mother says briefly, "Are you working so many hours for minimum wage? Have you studied all these years for minimum wage?" You can't say anything.*

The understanding of security in the context of parents' work conditions had previously been provided either by an insured and permanent job or by work in the public sector. Linking the understanding of security with public employment produces direct tensions for individuals working in the private sector. For example, P1 is an entrepreneur who was evaluated by her parents as follows because she did not have regular insurance:

*According to my family elders, I should quit my job. They tell me that I have to have a job with insurance. They cannot comprehend that I want my job.*

P13's family makes similar statements due to his work conditions in the private sector:

*[They say,] "You work in the private sector; your job is not guaranteed compared to a public teacher. Get yourself together!"*

Parents' evaluations of the uncertainty of their children's workplaces and work hours differ according to the gender of the child, with female participants observed to

being exposed to harsher evaluations than male participants. For example, P5 was criticized by her mother not only for having a project-based job but also for the irregular workplace conditions that could hinder her ability to get married:

*[She says,] “Why do you work in a project-based job; go find a new job for yourself! You can’t get married if you continue to work on project-based jobs. Do you think you can get married if you keep this job? Nobody will accept you; this job has no future.”*

The consensus problems between individuals and their parents regarding working conditions was observed to affect both the individuals and their parents in different contexts in terms of affectual solidarity. These consensus problems affect the dimensions of trust and closeness for the parents and trust, respect, and sympathy for the children. For example, P2 could not visit her parents often enough due to her current workload nor maintain as much communication with her parents as they demanded. The inability to maintain communication in line with the parents’ expectations caused trust problems regarding the dimension of affectual solidarity:

*They have concerns about whether they can trust me. They have doubts that I can look after them in the future. They always have questions like, “Will you care for us and visit us?”*

The most severe reflections occurred regarding the closeness between parents and their children. The children’s inability to attend family events with their parents and their failure to maintain face-to-face communication at the level their parents expected caused critical intimacy problems for the parents. P5 and P17 described how missing family events and the lack of communication were reflected in their affectual relationships with their parents:

*When a family gathering occurs, my parents want me to be there. Everyone goes in family groups, but when you can’t be with the family there they feel much more alone. (P5)*

*Because I have no spare time, my family thinks I don’t want to meet and don’t want to come. They feel lonely, as if I’m gone and not with them anymore. (P17)*

While the affectual reflections of these relations with parents that were limited by their work conditions can be summarized within the framework of these dimensions, this situation had different reflections for the children. Their parents’ lack of empathy and respect for their children’s work lives and their lack of confidence in their plans also had repercussions for the children. For example, P2 expressed reflections of not seeing support from them and understanding what she expected from her parents regarding her work conditions as follows:

*They get mad at me for not being how they want me to be. They are of a certain age; they should give me moral strength, but instead, they’re angry with me. They should behave more maturely and understand me. This makes me sad.*

P4 explained that she did not feel the trust she expected from parents regarding her decisions. The basis of this is that she does not have a job that lines up with her parents' expectations:

*Frankly, I would expect to hear my mother and father say, "We raised this child correctly, she can make her own decisions and will not deviate from our truth." However, they still tell me that I haven't grown up and can't make the right decisions.*

These parents' attitudes indirectly affected the children's positions in communication with their parents. For example, P5 said that, as a result of her parents' constant non-understanding and unempathetic criticisms of her work, she has reduced the frequency with which she communicates with them and withdrawn from them:

*Since I'm constantly criticized, I stopped calling, because if I call again after a while, I'll be exposed to the same things again.*

This research has seen normative solidarity to function as a buffer zone in intergenerational solidarity relations despite the problems experienced in the dimensions of affectual and consensual solidarity. Normative solidarity is a state of familism that prioritizes family expectations. For this reason, because the participants approached the solidarity process with a sense of duty, they were involved in the process despite insufficient resources or affectual problems. For example, P10 conveyed this sense of responsibility as follows: "I have to support her in every way. I have to support my mother in every way. It's as if that's my duty." Similarly, P11 expressed the motivation for the support he provides to his parents as being based on obligatory loyalty:

*The relationship between my family and me is not a very strong bond. I'm doing all these things more from a sense of loyalty. I do these things even though I don't want to fulfill these expectations.*

A similar situation was seen among other participants; however, the assistance provided by the participants who described acting out of duty was limited to only financial support. They had no direct awareness of providing practical or social support in this respect. Participants paid their families' bills and helped with their loans. However, they did not display sensitivity in providing practical or social support. Therefore, having sufficient financial resources to be able to share with one's parents appears to act as a safety valve for these participants, where they compensate for their inability to provide practical and social support to parents due to workloads and work hours by providing financial support. P9 summarized the general situation as follows:

*My family wants me to be with them all the time, to spend time with them. Despite the things I've provided, I could never make my mother feel the feelings she expected.*

## Discussion

This study has evaluated how the phenomenon of numerical flexibility regarding work relations affects individual and intergenerational solidarity relations and, in this context, the sustainability of the intergenerational social contract. The results reveal the numerical flexibility practices applied with regard to work relations to have caused radical transformations in traditional employment structures. Numerical flexibility practices have brought about negative changes to employees regarding wages, work hours, and contract security. The main factor behind this negative situation is the precariousness of contracts. Precariousness ensures that the other aspects of work conditions can be regulated in favor of the employer. Therefore, the effects of precariousness become more severe for the employee. However, the important difference here is that, while one usually associates these strategies with the private sector in the cultural context, this distinction has disappeared in today's reality. In other words, precariousness exists in both the private and public sectors (Conley, 2006; Özsoy Özmen, 2016), with Conley arguing this situation to be even more pronounced in the public sector. Therefore, being unemployed or having a temporary employment contract have become general realities today (Anderson et al., 1994; Charles & James, 2003; Kalleberg, 2009a; Rugulies et al., 2008; Scicchitano et al., 2020). Numerical flexibility practices are applied as direct deregulation and cost-reduction strategies (Casey et al., 1999) and have been found to affect both genders, albeit likely at different intensities (Charles & James, 2003; Duruoğlu, 2007; Rugulies et al., 2008). In the individualized wage negotiations that developed during this process (European Commission, 2002), insecure employees found themselves in unfavorable situations with resultant decreased wages (Bentolila & Dolado, 1994; Emmons Allison et al., 2018).

Transformation in work relations inevitably permeates individual lives (Çelik, 2008; Rugulies et al., 2008) and through individuals to intergenerational relations. Work conditions that affect people's cognitive and psychological status also affect the basic structure of their communication with their parents in the short and long term, causing social withdrawals in these relationships (Repetti & Wang, 2016). While parents working long hours may affect the well-being of a child (Strazdins et al., 2006), the irregularity and uncertainty of the adult child's work hours also make maintaining relations with the parents in the same context challenging. Modern work life has been determined to not allow the development of the aging curve and the resources owned within the framework of an inverse parabolic curve (Dowd, 1975). In this regard, despite the advancing ages of their children, parents remain the most important supporters in achieving welfare for these children (Scodellaro et al., 2012). When individuals internalize responsibility toward their parents within the context of familial duty, the process of being involved in solidarity relations is observed to be sustainable independent of positive emotions. Responsibilities internalized from a sense of duty

are essential motivational factors for individuals who are faced with the limitations of work life while striving to be included in solidarity relations (Lee, 2002; Özmete, 2017; Jarret, 1985). In this respect, the importance of the internalized cultural context emerges when interpreting the normative dimension and intergenerational solidarity.

As a consequence of these findings, the idea of strengthening and maintaining intergenerational relations is seen to be inseparable from the resources provided by work conditions. As Dahrendorf (1988) pointed out, work means much more than merely access to specific resources in a society organized around work: It is the fundamental key to adapting to the roles embedded in a social space. Therefore, work life is seen as one of the essential elements shaping the processes for maintaining the social contract upon which intergenerational relations are based and for adapting individuals to their social roles.

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