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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we celebrate International Workers' Day, The Shift Project wanted to share a few highlights from our recent and ongoing work.

This newsletter describes our research on a workplace intervention at IKEA to enhance workers' schedule control. We also share our plans for research aimed at understanding supportive workplace climates for early career workers with prior systems-involvement.

We are also pleased to share new publications, welcome new staff members, and thank staff members who are headed to graduate school.

We look forward to keeping in touch.

The Shift Team

IKEA Baseline Report

Since the Fall of 2019, researchers at The Shift Project have been working with IKEA to design and implement technology designed to give IKEA co-workers more schedule flexibility and control.



RESEARCH BRIEF: [IKEA Self-Scheduling Intervention: Baseline Report](#)

IKEA aims to enhance co-workers' schedule control by introducing four new features to their workforce scheduling system. These new features allow workers to more easily update their availability, swap shifts, pick up open shifts, and request shift coverage.

To understand how these changes will affect worker and business outcomes, the Shift Project research team worked with IKEA to select a set of intervention store locations to test the new features, and a matched set of comparison stores to represent status quo conditions.

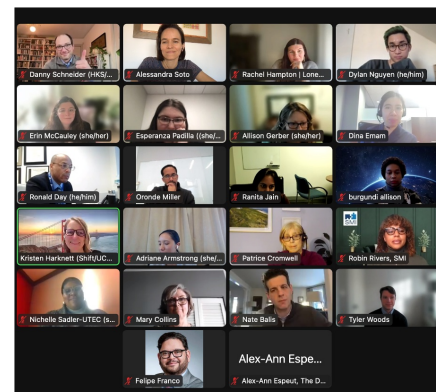
In the baseline report, we describe scheduling conditions at IKEA before the intervention went into effect and outline our plans for evaluating the effects of the new scheduling features. Our future evaluation will link IKEA administrative records data to IKEA-administered surveys that capture workers' reports of work-life conflict, health and wellbeing, and perceptions of work schedule control and quality. We will then be able to compare how conditions changed for workers at the stores that implemented the new features compared with stores that did not.

Early Career Workplace Climate and Early Life Adversity

Many young people acquire their first work experience in the service sector, and first jobs and early career experiences are foundational in a person's career development and opportunity for upward mobility. As such, the Shift Project, in collaboration with the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) (AECF), is particularly interested in what supportive and healthy **workplace climates** look like in the service sector for early career workers. Positive workplace environments are particularly important for young workers with a history of trauma and/or involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice systems.

Learning Session on Supportive Workplace Practices

In January of 2024, the Shift Project and the Annie E. Casey Foundation hosted a learning session where more than two dozen practitioners and academics convened to discuss key elements of a supportive workplace environment, particularly for vulnerable young workers. The group also gave input on potential survey measures that can capture young workers' experiences with systems-involvement and gauge workplace climate.



Next Steps

The learning session informed a new Shift Project initiative to design survey items that capture adverse early life experiences and measure supportive workplace environments. Future analyses will use these novel data resources to inform researchers, policymakers, and practitioners about the types of settings that support young workers and launch them on a positive career and life trajectory.

New Papers!

Precarious Scheduling and Children's Sleep Quality

Allison Logan & Daniel Schneider (2024). *Work, Employment & Society*



Allison Logan and Daniel Schneider find that workers' exposure to precarious scheduling practices is associated with their children having more sleep problems. They demonstrate that factors such as child behavior and parental stress and wellbeing explain a little more than half of this relationship.

These findings suggest that the consequences of unstable work schedules extend beyond workers to their children, carrying significant implications for the ways through which social inequality is reproduced across generations.

Inequalities in the labor market extend to workers' experiences on the job. Harknett et al show that, in the service sector, where workers are expected to remain on their feet for long hours, Black women are less likely than their counterparts to get a break during their work shift.

Union membership and laws mandating work breaks effectively increase access to breaks for all workers. However, these protections are unable to address the inequality Black women in the service sector experience in access to work breaks.

These findings not only carry implications for racial health inequalities, but also demonstrate that while worker power and labor protections can raise the floor on working conditions, they can still leave social inequalities intact.

[Can't Catch a Break: Intersectional Inequalities at Work](#)

Kristen Harknett, Charlotte O'Herron, & Evelyn Bellew (2024). *Sociological Science*



Team Updates

We are excited to welcome three new post-doctoral research fellows starting this fall! Dr. Rebecca Wolfe will work on the AECF workplace climate project. Dr. Tyler Woods will investigate the role of technology in the workplace, and Dr. Gonçalo Costa will conduct research on strategic enforcement.



Dr. Rebecca Wolfe

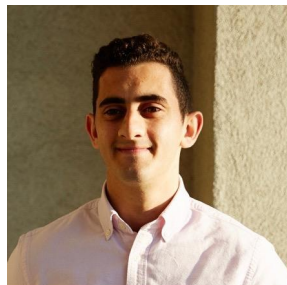


Dr. Tyler Woods



Dr. Gonçalo Costa

Finally, we want to extend a round of congratulations to Jeremy Mopsick and Dylan Nguyen. Their time as pre-doctoral fellows on the Shift Project will come to a close this summer, but they will remain near the Boston team as they start their PhDs in sociology at Harvard this fall!



Jeremy Mopsick



Dylan Nguyen

Shift in the News



[L.A. law aims to make retail workers' schedules more predictable. Is it working?](#)



[The Problem of Presenteeism: Employees Coming to Work Sick Costs Businesses](#)



[Why getting workers their schedules in advance is good for business](#)

The Shift Project

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