

Exploring the Intersection Between the Labor Market Realities Facing Low- Income Families and Child Care

Julia Henly

Pam Joshi

Erica Greenberg

Heather Sandstrom

Helen Blank

Overview of Labor Market

- Job quality declined and employment instability increased in the U.S. over past four decades

Low wages, limited wage growth, few benefits

Between-job instability (unemployment; job changes)

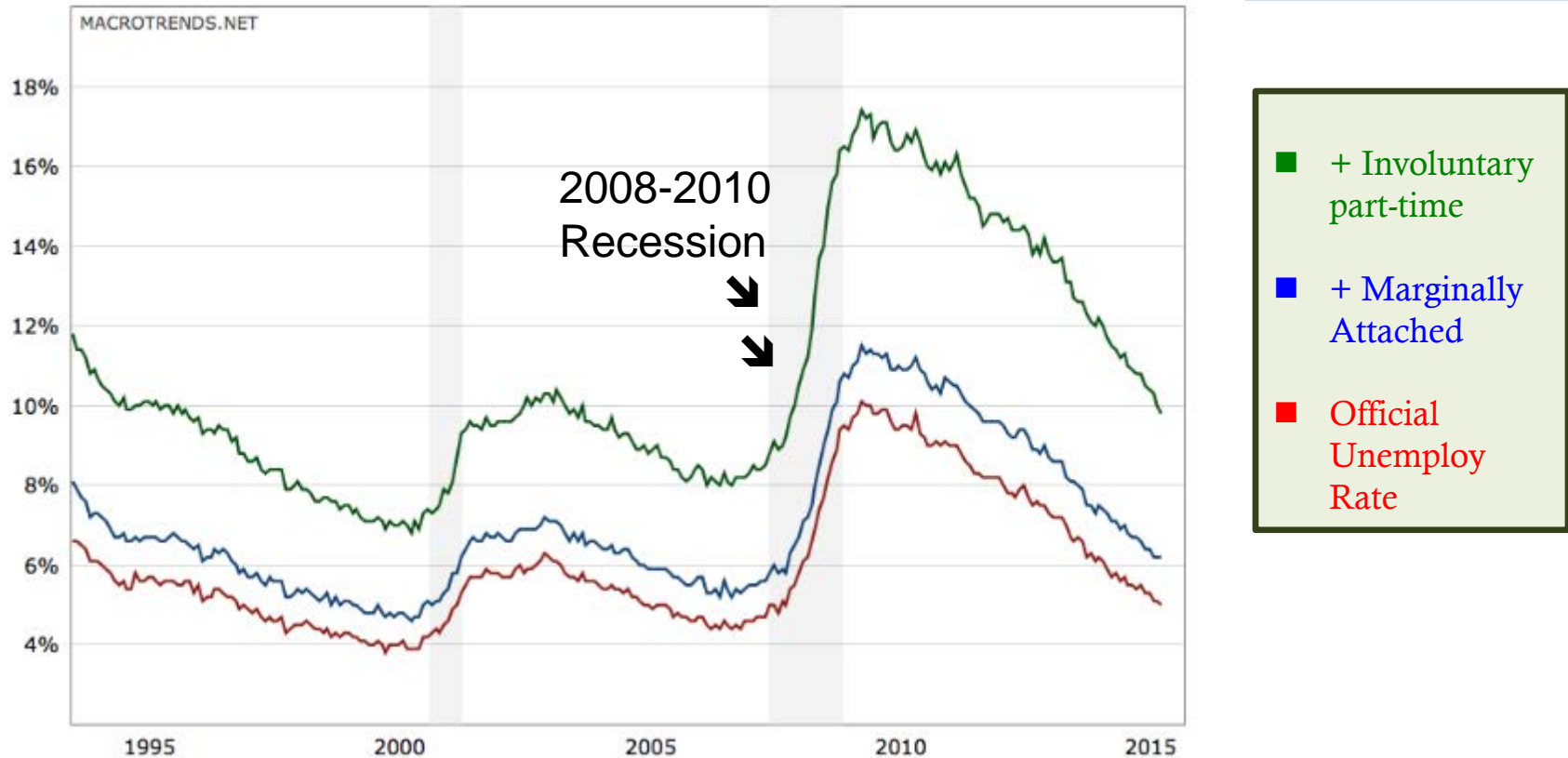
Within-job instability (underemployment; work schedules with nonstandard timing, variable hours, unpredictable hours, limited schedule control)

- Less-educated, younger workers, and workers of color have been most affected by changing labor market

(Kalleberg 2013; 2009; Holzer & Hlavec, 2011; Blank, Danziger, & Schoeni 2006; Gottschalk & Moffitt 2009; Hacker 2006; Lambert 2008; Henly, Shaefer, & Waxman, 2006)

3 Measures of Employment Instability

(From US Bureau of Labor Statistics)



NLSY – 97 New Work Schedule Items

Advance Notice (Predictability)

- How far in advance do you usually know what days and hours you will need to work?
 - One week or less; Between 1 & 2 wks; Between 3 & 4 wks; 4 wks or more)

Hour Fluctuations

- In the last month, what is the greatest number of hours you've worked in a week at this job?
- In the last month, what is the fewest number of hours you've worked in a week at this job?
- How many hours do you work for [employer name] in a normal week?

Schedule Control

- Which of the following statements best describes how your working hours are decided?
 - Starting and finishing times are decided by my employer and I cannot change them on my own;
 - Starting and finishing times are decided by my employer but with my input;
 - I can decide the time I start and finish work, within certain limits;
 - I am entirely free to decide when I start and finish work;
 - When I start and finish work depends on things outside of my control and outside of my employer's control

NLSY, Dimensions of Precarious Scheduling: Vulnerable Groups of Hourly Workers

	Hour fluctuations	Short notice	No schedule input
	Max – Min Hours / Usual	One week or less advance	Employer decides
Mothers	.45	32%	46%
Fathers	.43	46%	50%
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	.45	49%	55%
Latino/a	.48	46%	58%
White	.51	39%	47%
Low-Wage Jobs			
Full-time	.30	43%	57%
Part-time	.78	49%	43%

NLSY, Dimensions of Precarious Scheduling: Select Occupations, Hourly Workers

	Hour fluctuations	Short notice	No schedule input
	Max – Min Hours / Usual	One week or less advance	Employer decides
Janitors and housekeepers	.43	40%	50%
Food service	.70	66%	41%
Retail	.50	52%	46%
Home care	.66	56%	36%

(Lambert, Fugiel, & Henly, 2014)

Why should child care researchers care about labor market conditions?

- Low & variable earnings, frequent job changes, unemployment, and precarious work schedules
 - make it difficult to afford child care
 - complicate access to quality early care & education
 - interfere with child care subsidy use
 - negative implications for parental and child wellbeing

Education and Training

- Low-income parents in education and training also constitute a group whose schedules do not fit the child care market
 - Half are working and in school (Eyster, Callan, & Adams, 2014)
 - Education and training schedules often short-term activities, irregular hours

See: *Bridging the Gap*

<http://www.urban.org/research/publication/bridging-gap>

Presentations

- The misfit between the cost of child care and earnings from low-wage work (Pam Joshi)
- How well do child care center characteristics match the characteristics of parental jobs? (Erica Greenberg)
- Implications of job characteristics for subsidy use and parental wellbeing (Heather Sandstrom)
- Job schedules, child care, and CCDBG reauthorization (Helen Blank)