



Women's work in offshore sector at Campos Basin-RJ: Perception of female workers and strategies used in the time management of life and work

**Trabalho feminino no setor offshore na Bacia de Campos-RJ:
percepção das trabalhadoras e estratégias usadas na gestão dos
tempos de vida e de trabalho**

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Abstract: Since the Industrial Revolution women have occupied positions in the job market that involve shiftwork and a wide availability for time shifts. Men, however, have not increased their participation in reproductive work. These findings evidence the difficulty of harmonizing work, family and home life. The text analyzes the relationships between the family life and professional life of women workers in the offshore at Campos Basin - RJ. To this end, 15 women who work in technical eminently masculine functions were interviewed. The results revealed the postponement of reflections on motherhood or planning to become pregnant after getting a job on land, difficulties in harmonizing family life and offshore work, and that these workers consider that work situation as a temporary way of life. The choices made by women workers at different personal and professional stages of life are oriented by values that are not static and that have been in constant debate and confrontation with the reality. Although most of the respondents were young, single and childless, there are some married women with children who “organize their lives according to boarding” and need a good infrastructure on land to continue in those functions.

Keywords: Work and gender; Women's offshore employment; Work organization; Work relationships.

Resumo: Desde a revolução industrial há mulheres no mercado de trabalho em funções que implicam trabalho noturno e em turnos não usuais e grande disponibilidade de horário. Os homens, porém, não aumentaram sua participação no trabalho reprodutivo. Essa constatação coloca em foco a dificuldade em harmonizar vida profissional e vida familiar e doméstica. O texto analisa as relações entre vida familiar e vida profissional de trabalhadoras offshore da Bacia de Campos – RJ e, para isso, foram entrevistadas 15 mulheres que atuam em funções técnicas eminentemente masculinas. Os resultados revelaram adiamento das reflexões sobre maternidade ou planejamento para engravidar após conseguir trabalho em terra, dificuldades em harmonizar vida familiar e trabalho offshore, a consideração do exercício nesse tipo de trabalho como temporário. As escolhas feitas pelas trabalhadoras em diferentes fases da vida pessoal e profissional são orientadas por valores, que não são estáticos e estão em constante debate e confronto com a realidade. Embora a maioria das entrevistadas fosse jovem, solteira e sem filhos, há algumas casadas e com filhos que “organizam a vida de acordo com o embarque” e precisam de uma boa infraestrutura em terra para continuar nessas funções.

Palavras-chave: Trabalho e gênero; Trabalho offshore feminino; Organização do trabalho; Relações de trabalho.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Time and work: the dramatic of the negotiations

During the 21st century, in Western capitalist societies, people live an increase of the labor and cultural activities and a diversification of these activities as an answer to the demands imposed by the technological sophistication and the intensity of the displacements (Bandeira, 2010). Thus, just as a constant update is required in order to stay in the work world, there are also new demands in the familiar and social life plans. Men and women run to work, to graduate and to update, to take care of their children's health and to educate them, to provide subsistence and to and to exercise their citizenship. However, a day and a night continues to last 24 hours but people find themselves under the pressure to perform a greater number of activities.

The 90s were marked by major changes in the working world, with "new production models", productive restructuring and outsourcing in the wake of globalization (Hirata, 2001). In this context, the evaluation and measurement of work begin to take into consideration much more the obtained results than the calculation of the worked hours, demanding greater involvement of the employee. This also resulted in work at irregular and not usual schedules, what, according to Martinez (2007), makes more pertinent the notion of time availabilities, which would represent, perhaps more appropriately, the attempts of synchronization between productive activities and wage differentiation processes.

Likewise, the meet to the market demand, the need of the 24 hours production, such as, investment return in equipment, costs issues related to the interruption of the production or even the increase of the production volume demand works to be available in different times. This temporal distribution occupies late evening hours and relay in shifts that do not consider holidays and commemorative dates. It's expected that workers are alert to the organization's needs, even though this may jeopardize the moments devoted to privacy. As the working time is dictated by the organization's necessity, there are different types of contract. The worker needs then to manage the time of the familiar and professional life, considering the supremacy of the last one. This places him/her in conflictive situations, which may be perceived in the activity and the constructions of the health of the selfbody (Durrive & Schwartz, 2010) that embraces either the physical plan as well as the psychic and social ones. This temporal ecology is present in the work worlds, including the offshore female work (Alvarez, 2010).

Considering is of fundamental importance for the for the society's welfare to have whoever is in charge

of the reproductive work (related to hygiene, food, clothing, taking care of children and elderly and other house activities), the entrance of the women in the job market has brought changes for the organization of the familiar life and it has promoted reflections about the work organization. How to manage the times between the professional and private life, if men and women work, have families and need some time dedicated to the self-care and to take care of their families?

By having this question in mind, the main objective of the study that originated this article was to understand how a group of women in the offshore oil industry in the Campos Basin realize the relationship between their professional and familiar life, acting in a sector and function, which, according to the authors, seems to be thought for the male world. Anchored in the guiding principle of the concept of activity and in the ergological perspective for the work analysis, it was sought understand which "uses of oneself" were made by these female workers and which life strategies they develop and implement in order to be able to work boarded. In this article the gender issues that are related to the sexual work division in this group are problematized and the strategies necessary for the management of the time and life (professional and familiar) imposed by the offshore work patterns are identified.

2 Theoretical grounding and context of the study

2.1 Productive work and reproductive work

The reproductive work continues performed mainly by women, despite their increasing participation in the job market. According to Melo & Castilho (2009), based on PNAD/IBGE – 2005's data, in Brazil, 91% of the busy women declare performing home tasks, against 51% of men. The study states that the differential of the average hours on average dedicated to these tasks decreases as it increases the level of education of both and it highlights the importance of the reproductive work in the society's welfare. Cyrino (2009) contributes with this discussion by stating that besides the cleaning and storage activities, the house working includes the socialization of children and the maintenance of family ties. Using focus groups composed of workers from different professions, retired people and housewives, the research finds that, for men, the work is a structuring and central activity in their lives, being the housework activities considered accessories. Yet the women felt responsible for different tasks, not saving time for relaxing and pleasure. The author highlights inconsistency between

the speech and the practice, where gender equality appears as a commitment only in speech.

According to Hirata & Kergoat (2007), the housework is not considered in the commercial companies, which demand the personal involvement of the worker, compromising the time that would be devoted to the reproductive activities. Thus, to be available for working, women need that other people take care of the housework. It's realized new configurations of work sexual division are realized, identifying a new model of conciliation between the professional and house spheres: the delegation. The increase in the number of well qualified and well paid women is only possible because there is also an increase in the number of women with a low qualification level, low salaries, who take domestic services in the residences of the first ones (designated by the authors as "employers"). Delegating the domestic activities to other women, the employers are available for the companies' demand. This delegation also contributes to pacify the social relationship of the couples and the companies, which, according to the authors, doesn't help to improve the fight for equality since it acts as a masking. The reproductive work is still being women's attribute and not being valued, what induces the creation of a "social classes relations" among women. The study mentions particularly the "social classes relations" among the employers in the European countries and the women in a precarious situation, being them immigrants or from their own North countries. It's also observed that this phenomenon also arises in semi-industrialized countries, such as Brazil.

Vieira & Amaral (2013) conducted a study on the triple journey of Brazilian women of middle class who are mothers, who work and attend to a postgraduate course. In this study, the housekeeper is fundamental in the process, also noting in Brazil, the process of "conciliation" by delegation (Hirata & Kergoat, 2007).

The fact is that, in order the productive work to happen, it's necessary a time to be devoted to the reproductive work or even other people to perform it. Several studies (Hirata, 2002; Nogueira & Castelhana, 2012; Rotenberg, 2012; Melo & Castilho, 2009) point the need of considering wide aspects of life in the discussions about work, since the time of work is not isn't something that could be separated from the worker's life. There is a need then to understand the relationship between productive work and reproductive work. This demands to see in the worker, human beings in all their multiple dimensions, what lead us to agree with Brito et al. (2012) when he states the importance of the study of the relationships of gender, work and the use of the time, by the fact that they feed the discussions about social policies for social reproduction, associating

the activities of house home activities organization with pleasure and sleep.

Hirata (2002), concerning to the management of labor of in Japanese companies, observes the relationship between the familiar and the company's organization. She points out that only the family modes of organization and the prevailing relations between the couple make possible some labor management practices. Figueiredo & Alvarez (2011) have already signalized this necessity in the work management in the oil multinational in drilling and profiling wells area, the Schlumberger Company. Aware the difficulties to maintain the professionals working under a regime of that nature, the company assures conditions for the professionals to have their attention and energy facing exclusively to work. Thereunto, it provides infrastructure to support the most varied demands, creating a sector completely turned to the resolution of the everyday personal affairs of field teams. Thus, the payable accounts arrive directly to this sector, which becomes a kind of "family support" for these professionals. The company assembles an arrangement that takes full advantage of the potential of its employees, what it would also goes through keep a use of time lived outside of the production space and obtain some "capitalization of rest". Attempt of expansion of the uninterrupted control that happens in the production sphere to the social reproduction sphere. In order to better compose this arrange, the workers use two cell phones and a radio that remain connected for any emergency involving the interruption of rest or vacation, if the urgency is imperious.

The functions that demand the workers to be away from their residence and from their families for consecutive days and nights, to be available to move to workplaces whenever the organization demands it, they assume that the worker isn't responsible for the care of their children, for instance, and that the family may prescind his/her presence at anytime with no further planning of time and the house activities. Traditionally, men in the role of main providers would take functions in organizations with these characteristics (senior executives of multinational companies, policemen, firefighters, oil workers, etc.). It seems like these arrangements of time have been thought in the male gender, disregarding the necessity of the reproductive work, which, as we have seen before, is primarily attributed to women in commercial contemporary societies. And this drives us to agree with Daniel (2009) when he state that for the women who work boarded, take functions at work that demand the continuous absence from the familiar nucleus push them not only to the choice of a career or profession, but also to the choices within their loving and family relationships.

The feminization of some professions provokes reflections over the organization of working times. Nogueira & Castelhana (2012), in a study about the time management with female bus drivers and policewomen, it was noticed that they build alternative professional routes, different from the men's. In professions thought in masculine and supposing complete availability for work, women use to give up a more favorable career in favor of a possible availability. Thus, they legitimate the forms of time and career management and promote reflections about the work organization for men also. In this regard, Brito (1999) raises issues concerning the possibility of the work conditions of women interfere with the men's. According to her, the inexistence of the female voice in the workers movements may mean an irreplaceable loss for the understanding of the problems that hit all of them.

2.2 Selecting some important concepts for the study

For the understanding of this article, it's important to present some concepts originated from the theoretical frameworks used (Ergology, Activity Ergonomics) that were put into operation during the study of offshore female workers.

The Ergology, which may be understand as a life and work analysis perspective, is interested by the real work, by the activity. In this way, it's aligned to the principles that guide the Activity Ergonomics (Guèrin et al., 2001; Duraffourg, 2010; Falzon, 2007). It can be said in a summary form, that its bases come from the crossing of the facts, or from the straight influence of three doctors (Canguilhem, Wisner and Odonne), as states Schwartz in his lectures and it's presented to us by Brito (2011, p. 479-480).

We will see that it comes from a materialistic line (passing by Marx) and emerges in the crossing of three important facts: the repercussion of Georges Canguilhem's reflections about what life and health are; the finding [...] of the gap between prescribed and performed work; the referrals of the Italian labor model (ILM) of the fight for health.

Highlighting one of the three doctors, Brito (2011, p. 481) explains that the man-environment relationship (and also the relationship man-work) is in the center of Canguilhem's health concept.

Canguilhem contributed in a decisive way for the conception of health associated to the 'environment' [...] In his words, the environment is always unfaithful (unstable, adverse), being the health a tolerance margin to these infidelities and the capacity of the individuals (individual and collectively) of creating new standards [...], in other words, of acting over the environment.

However, one may not consider this infidelity as imprisoning or without alternatives. It may be managed by the people, driving to new alternatives and the health production. This means that not always the prescriptions are enough or pertinent and that in all situation of work and life unpredictable infidelities arise.

[...] this infidelity must be managed. And not managed as an execution (in this case, we might say that the environment is faithful), but as a "use of oneself". In other words, it's necessary to use its own capacities, its own resources and its own choices to manage this infidelity, to do something. This is what I call "lack of standards", because there the previous standards are insufficient – since there isn't just execution. (Duc et al., 2010, p. 190)

According to the Ergology principles, in line with the Ergonomics, unforeseen events and variabilities can occur at work, either related to the environment as with people, which demand adjustments and creativity from the workers to reach the objectives. So it's imperious the need of "seeing closer" as each one of them lives and tries to recreate their work situation (Abrahão et al., 2009).

In the same work, Durrive & Schwartz (2010) presents four ergological propositions in order to think the work: 1) one must consider the permanent existence of a distance between the prescribed and the real; 2) the content of the distance is always partially re-singled, since there is no way of knowing, previously, which will the distance be. So it's necessary to go to the field to check, inclusive discussing it with the worker; 3) the distance refers to the 'selfbody' activity, entity that streamlines and undertakes a complex universe of complicated arbitrations, from the most biological to the most cultural one; 4) the distance leads to a debate about values, since the workers chose based on criteria and values, where there are norms debates inside the work activity, of internal values as well as of social order.

In the author's words, the worker do the "use of oneself" to manage the work. The "use of oneself" by the others, among other motives, because he must deal with several standards and prescriptions. He will also have the "use of oneself by oneself", since these norms will be insufficient to respond to any unforeseen that will always arise, no matter what you plan to work. Finally, he will invoke his own resources: his education, his experience, his body, his senses, his momentary feelings... finally, a kinesthetic, cognitive, cultural myriad what the author calls as the "selfbody". In this movement, choices, where the worker evokes his/her values, are make. These choices are make involving body, reasoning, memory, values, all at the same time, and often the worker not is able to explain, immediately, the reason

by which he has made such choice, needing time and reflection to understand it.

Durrive & Schwartz (2010) uses the term “dramatic of use of oneself” to highlight the greatness, or even a little of drama, in these values debates occurring almost imperceptibly. He highlights the importance of not considering the word dramatic as a synonym of tragedy, but instead, as drama, meaning, where the story happens. When it’s asked “who does ratiocinate in here?”, Schwartz answers: “[...] this entity that rationalizes is the ‘selfbody’, in other words, something that crosses either the intellectual, the cultural, as the physiological, the muscle, the nervous system.” (Durrive & Schwartz, 2010, p. 44). The author explains that there are at the same time debates with themselves and debates of social order (the welfare together) where crises and conflicts may appear. He also states that, when looking at the situations of work, the Ergology, he considers the “work’s point of view”, since one cannot know a work situation without having access to the workers experience. This perspective in the look was the one that guided the study presented in this text.

2.3 Characterizing the work in the offshore oil industry in the Campos Basin

Campos Basin, located in Southeast Brazil, is the largest oil basin in the country. It is the main sedimentary area that has already been explored in the Brazilian coast, going from the vicinity of Vitória-ES until Arraial do Cabo-RJ, in an area of approximately 100,000 m². In the first quarter of 2014, Campos Basin was responsible for 74.93% of the total oil and LGN production in Brazil. The total number of employees of Petrobras in Brazil is of 78,595, being 52,900 in the Southeast region (Petrobras, 2013, 2014).

One of the characteristics of the oil industry is its uninterrupted and continuous process, which demands that the workers take turns in continuous shifts, and in the specific case of offshore, they live for 14 days with the work team in confinement at sea. This isolation has repercussions on family and social life (Alvarez et al., 2010), as this work organization assumes a familiar and domestic organization that dispenses the presence of (a) worker (a) for 14 consecutive days, at regular intervals. There are still other work shifts, always with time off for consecutive days and confinement offshore.

The work organization characteristics in the offshore oil industry make this activity not suitable for all the workers. A sample of this is the night shift work and the shifts that are against the biological rhythms and has repercussions on the health and family and social life. So it is paid differently. However, it’s probable that some workers show difficulties with the work

organization but they would remain there due to their financial need.

At the offshore work, there is a majority of male workers. Among women, the majority is of young, single and women with no children (Daniel, 2009). These aspects lead us to understand that this activity demands some familiar arrangements and land structure, which may not be feasible for all people. Thus, the workers who remain in the offshore oil industry create possibilities to adapt themselves to this work organization, or to remain on it temporarily.

It’s necessary to consider, however, that for some workers, the resources coming from this kind of work are indispensable and the distress caused by this work organization is becoming every day more hard to bear. In those cases, the risk of getting sick is considerable. On the other hand, there are also people with financial ambition and less attachment to family relationships, besides their taste for adventure and the advanced technologies. These people although may present subclinical symptoms due to the used defense mechanisms (Losicer, 2004), will better tolerate the work at the offshore oil industry and they may remain on it for many years.

Castro (2013), by analysing the work process on offshore platforms in the Campos Basin, according to the perspective of the work psychology, states that working time, life and workers’ earnings are ambiguous, asymmetrical and dissociated. The respondents say that when they are on board, they count the days according to their working hours, not to the calendar. So, “it’s the first day” or “4 days to go” are common expressions to count the time at the platforms. It’s like their lives had stopped for 14 days but they know the world is moving “out there” and they will have to adapt themselves to the 14 days that they didn’t see, by the time they land. They feel these 14 days take longer to pass while the 21 that they are off work pass extremely fast. They say it is difficult to adapt to a “normal job”, since they feel they have “two lives” (about these aspects, it’s also recommended to check Losicer, 2004). The “separate lives” cause friction, make it difficult to adapt, for example, the pace of activities and meals at home that are different from the rhythm existing on the platform. The author highlights that the offshore workers realize the gains from the profession in an ambiguous form, by living with the feeling of accomplishment and a sense of loss: they feel they have a good salary but “lose their lives”. The cases related to the mental health in the work environment are recurrent and the personal life planning becomes difficult. Besides, the time off work occurs in a context of living together with relatives who work and study more regular rhythms, what can produce conflicts and difficulties in living with those people. Thus, this activity could hardly be adapted to all people, despite offering a differentiated wage

income that is desired by many but is not compatible with the work health to many others (Figueiredo et al., 2007; Leite, 2009).

2.4 Women in the offshore sector at Campos Basin

At Petrobras, from a total of 23,329 employees with college degree, 4,822 (20.67%) are women. In the high school level, from a total of 39,363 employees, 5,060 (12.85%) are women. The female workers have the right of 6 months maternity leave and, due to the Collective Bargaining Agreement from 2013, the paternity leave was extended to 10 days (Petrobras, 2013).

The 2012 sustainability report informs a greater proportion of women in the Southeast region, 17.18%, where it's located the Campos Basin. In the regions South, North, Midwest and Northeast, the women represent, respectively, 13.24%, 12.23%, 14.92% e 13.07% of the employees. The report doesn't specify how many of them are offshore workers (Petrobras, 2012).

According to the Image Magazine (Union Journal of the Northern Fluminense Oil Workers) (Sindipetro – NF, 2012) in the first quarter of 2012, 2,176 women work in the operational area in the Campos Basin, at platforms or at Cabiúnas Terminal, adding hired and outsourced workers. The magazine doesn't inform the number of women who work boarded, just the total of the operational areas.

Through the Law of Access to Information, in a consult performed on 07/29/2013, there was obtained information about the number of women offshore workers during the years of 2002, 2007 and 2012, in the effective of Petrobras, in the Campos Basin. Information pointed that between 2002 and 2007, there was an increase of more than 300% in the number of women offshore workers. Between 2007 and 2012, this number continued to grow, increasing more than 50%. It's worth to remember that this data refers only to the effective workers. There is a quite greater number of outsourced workers. Who are these women? Researches in the oil sector do not usually give visibility to women's presence. In Brazil, it was just found Daniel's dissertation (Daniel, 2009) contemplating the presence of women at the oil platforms, who has interviewed 15 workers, whose 10 of them were single, one was separated and four were married. Among these last ones, three were married to oil workers. Only three of them had children (one single and two married). The ones who had children would rather work on land, but consider the salary they would make working boarded as an alternative to generate income for their families and to ensure their children's support. The researcher observed that the women who had no children believed the housework could

be shared, but the care with their children, couldn't. The ones who intend to have children, plan to work on land. Although the majority of them point out the difficulties of reconciling social life and offshore work, it was also noticed the satisfaction and proud with their own work.

For the majority of women interviewed by Daniel (2009), the opportunity of working in the offshore oil industry came unexpectedly and it was evaluated as a good professional opportunity. The testimonials gathered by the author, as well as this study, reveal that women are breaking spaces historically male and allow a comparison to the observation made by Bruschini (2007). The author observed that until the 70s, the entrance of women in the labor market had as pioneers the young women, the single ones and the ones without children. Marriage and maternity pushed the women away from their professional activities. By the end of the 70s, maternity and marriage were no longer fending women from formal job. As the offshore world, the studies still show the predominance of young women, single women and women without children among the workers. Considering the peculiarities of offshore work and its effects on family life, it's worth remembering Brito's reflections (Brito, 1999), regarding situations raised by women that also afflict men. After all, families have men and women and thinking the work organization having in mind issues considered feminine, may favor workers of both genders.

In the oil industry, the increasing female participation in the sector, which is small related to the number of men, reveal surprises. In the UK, Debney (2008) observed that the offshore female engineers faced difficulties in reconciling family life and work. After marriage, the male co-workers continue their careers boarded, but they (women) occupy an undesired position on the ground.

3 Methodology

The literature review researched for the study that originated this article seek to know and apply the Ergology concepts that were considered operational for the theme ("dramatics of use of oneself", "norm debates", "norm and values debates"), besides analysing the studies about work and gender. It also sought data and documents about the women in the job market as well as about the female participation in the offshore oil industry in general and at Petrobras. The scarcity of data on women in oil platforms highlights the need for new studies that show the reality of work.

The interdisciplinary character of the ergological perspective and the comprehension of the work from the "worker's point of view" and from the activity demand a qualitative approach. Having tease premises in mind, the methodological contributions utilized, sought a greater approximation of the real

work. This happens via indirect methods, through the participation of the female workers in planned discussions, where it was valued their experience accumulated over the years, their know-how and their knowledge that arise in the course of the activity. The activity was the central concept that allowed the look over the subjective dimensions of the action also allowing the understanding of the work as a permanent place of strategizing, of micro choices, of norms and values debates. That because in the work the subject is placed facing different rationalities and values (Figueiredo & Alvarez, 2011). This kind of approach is also consistent with Minayo's (2008, p. 24), who states that "the universe of qualitative investigations is the daily life and the experiences of common sense, interpreted and reinterpreted by the subjects that have experience them." Having this orientation as a guide, the methodology used was a transversal exploratory study.

As basic primary source, it was analyzed the material from the research project called "Work, health and safety in the Campos Basin (RJ) offshore oil industry". In summary, the main objective of this project is to analyze the conditions where is developed the job of "oil workers" - term that designates both the gazetted professionals (hired ones) as the outsourced ones, in the Campos Basin (North of Rio de Janeiro State -, as well as to discuss their relationship with the health and the work safety. Anchored in an union demand from the health sector from the North Fluminense Oil Workers Union, SINDIPETRO-NF, who intended to better know and analyze the health and safety problems related to the offshore work, the project is being developed since 2002, generating results as 4 common seminars, 7 final years monographs, 4 dissertation, 2 researches reports, several scientific articles and a book (Figueiredo, 2012). The study that has originated this article is inserted in this scope.

During the validity of the research project, as well as during the data collection of the study that is being presented here, it was not possible to observe the work activity in the service units in the platforms and in the extraction oil fields due to the several obstacles that that hindered the shipment in maritime units (release to the path via helicopters, lack of vacancies in overnight cabins, difficult negotiations with Petrobras management). One may nevertheless perceive the overall operation of oil extraction processes, as well as to be in contact with problematic situations mobilizing a "Extended Research and Intervention Community" (ERIC), using as inspiration the contributions in previous interventions (Athayde et al., 2003; Brito & Athayde, 2003; Athayde, 2011). The ERICs are somehow, inspired at the Expanded Scientific Community (ESC), from Oddone, and defined as follow. In the research project, this ERIC involved, during the greater

implication period, the "direct researchers" (the project coordinators), the "union group" (claimant) and "a group of workers straightly interested" (contacted via union representatives), besides an indirect researcher (who followed the research without any direct and systematic participation in the field and with different academic graduation).

The study of the women at the offshore work was aligned to this perspective, operating with interaction devices, which streamlined the relationship between different areas of knowledge (the scientific knowledge and the practice experience). Alternatively that constructs a dialogue (synergistically) between the disciplinary knowledge (1st polo) with the knowledges invested in the activity (2nd polo), also considering the creation of the possibility of links between the meeting and the confrontation of these two poles and that could be named as an ethical and epistemic concerning (3rd pole), according to the ergological demarche and the dynamic three poles device (D3PD) (Durrive & Schwartz, 2010). Inspired at the Expanded Scientific Community (ESC), created by Oddone, where the workers were subjects of the knowledge production together with the specialists of the different disciplines, Schwartz and his group, since the 80s, have been working with an adaptation of this device. For them, besides the register of two poles (specialists and militant workers), there was a third one, run, in that case, by the union. Thus, the dynamic three poles device (D3PD) proposes for the work studies, where the first pole is the one scientific disciplines that have as a target the study of the work, the second is the one of the convening and validation forces (managers, professionals, representative of the Internal Commission of Accident Prevention, etc.) and the third, is the ethical and epistemological demand and the development in the field of the (re)production of knowledge that considers the politic role of the transformation and allows the materialization of the social process (Athayde & Brito 2011).

This was possible because the work is understood as a vital experience, constituent of the human species throughout its existence, including the psychic plan. It's then prioritized the optical of those who live the everyday work, and to do so, the dialogue is prepared starting from a dialogic device manufactured for this purpose. The role of the researcher, in this case is to give support for the work to be analyzed by their players. This movement brings singularity for each dialogical activity (França, 2007), which happens during the research (Alvarez et al., 2015).

Having this perspective of method, semi-structured interviews were done, namely, conducted from a basic guide in the form of topics. The key characteristic of this kind of interview is its flexibility, when it's up to the researcher to evaluate the need of possible adaptations during the event. The choice of this

technique aimed to reduce the risks of conducting the visions of the respondents through closed questions, laden with assumptions, allowing the respondents to place the problematic in terms different from the ones proposed by the researchers (França, 2003).

They also have in mind the perspective of Rocha et al. (2004), who question the way the technique of the interview is treated in the books about the methodology in Brazil. The authors also highlight certain numbers of works where the definition of interview presupposes a conception of language as a mirror of reality. They observe that, not rarely, in these works, the interview discourse genre is defined as a tool that allows to capture instantly the desired information. In the selected samples, the responder is taken as "informant" who knows what the interviewer needs to know. This conception is followed by the belief that whatever is said by this informant is equal to an information with the value of a truth (Alvarez et al., 2015).

Also according to França (2007), one seek to work with the notion of "dialogical activity" where it was sought to act in order to change the statute of the subject ("the respondents") building bridges for him to self-invest in the dialogue as the subject of the analysis. The objective the worker takes for him (her) self the task of interpreting the work is what allows that an interview can turn into a kind of activity of a new type. So, the sequences of dialogue activities that we performed were named of "interview". We understand, however, just like Rocha et al. (2004) and França (2007), to be necessary to explore the consequences of the polyphonic nature of the language, when it comes to this genre, task to be considered at another time.

The used method didn't intend to be a clinic interview, but certainly, in an effort to introduce a new dialogic frame, the undertaken dialogue activity was not restricted to withdraw the content concerning the female workers experience. The objective was, instead, to create certain estrangement, to cause controversy, so the workers would be able to find the ways to develop the dialogue with the researchers. This what we call "cause activity in the dialogue" has also been experienced by other researchers (França, 2007; Alvarez et al., 2015).

It's worth to highlight the criteria of the chosen workers: women who performed technical functions and not the ones more common in the female gender stereotypes in the working world, such as the care activities (hotel, feeding, health). So, the heard women were engineers or technicians, except for a stewardess.

From the material of the mentioned Research Project, the interviews from two workers (one technician and one engineer) were selected, and they were performed in 2006 and 2008 and took part on them, the coordinators of the research and the

scientific initiation scholarship students. To better contemplate the differences, it was performed in February 2013, a collective interview with other six women from a company outsourced of Petrobras. They were all chemistry technicians, five of them worked on board and one worked in this regime for eight years and then changed to the onshore regime, although she still occasionally works on board. The collective interview was performed when the workers were taking part in an event organized by the company. Between March and July of 2013, individual interviews were performed with more than seven women (different from the previous) whose functions were: safety technician, automation engineer, radio operator, tool operator drilling, two operations techniques and a stewardess. In the total, for the study results, 15 women were listened and the performed interviews were analyzed in three different moments: two individual interviews done in 2006 and 2008, one collective interview done in February of 2013 and seven individual interviews done between March and June of 2013. Minayo (2008) was followed about the criterion concerning the number of performed interviews. The author points out that the scaling of the number of interviews should follow the "saturation criterion", in other words, the understanding, by the side of the researcher, of the internal logic of the group in study. One must also reflect the totality of the multiple dimensions of the object in study. This way, it was possible to understand the internal logic of the group (Minayo, 2008) and contemplate the diversity, married and single workers were listened, with and without children, from different ages and with different time of offshore working experience.

Comparing different uses of the interview genre, it was possible to perceive that, in the collective interview, the deposition of a worker caused reflections on the other, what contributed for the enriching of the discussion and the raising of new questions. On the other hand, it made more difficult the mediation and increased the risks of not explore sufficiently a statement, since sometimes some lines overlap.

Although the respondents have reported different situations where the "dramatics of use of oneself" arise when they are carrying out their duties, in this article, only the lines related to the use of time and the relationship between the personal and professional life were analyzed.

4 Results

There were analyzed the offshore work effects on the familiar and social life as well as the strategies used by women to be able to handle their professional and familiar and social life, in other words, one tried to understand which were the *dramatics* involved there (Durrive & Schwartz, 2010). In relation to the data organization, the pieces chosen for analysis

were characteristics of the workers, adaptation to the boarding regime and aspects of the familiar and social life.

4.1 Characteristics of the workers

The following Chart 1 allows to be visualized the diversity of the workers who were listened, designed by fictional names in order to preserve their identities.

The results confirmed that the majority of the female workers at the offshore oil industry is young, single and without children. Just two of them, Cristina and Alessandra, started working in platforms after they were 30 years old, both of them because of the necessity of getting better salaries and both with children. Just five of the respondents were mothers.

Among them, two left the oil industry, one goes boarded sporadically and two are still boarding. It was also possible to notice that there is a tendency among the offshore women of dating/marring offshore male workers. Luciana explains that by living the same work regime, one better understands the other.

4.2 Adaptation to the offshore work patterns

Although the confinement brings greater difficulties for mothers, some young and without children workers also reported to be depressed during the boarding. Feelings such as loneliness, desire to cry, sense of social dislocation (caused by the living with the male and older population), wish to change areas, these

Chart 1. Summary chart of the interviewed workers.

Identification	Work Regime	Function	Age at the offshore time	Boarding time	Familiar Situation
Suzana	14 x 14 (shifts of 12 h)	Operation Engineer	24-28 (2003-2006)	4 years in 2006 Listened in 2006	Single – no children
Kátia	Irregular boardings	Drill technician	19-24 (2003-2008)	5 years (stopped) Listened in 2008	Married – 1 child
Cristina	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	37-39	2 years	Married – 3 children
Sônia	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	26-34	8 years in 2012 (after <i>onshore</i>)	Married – no children
Valéria	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	19-21	1 year e 2 months	Single, dating boarded
Diana	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	22-24	2 years	Single, dating boarded
Carolina	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	23-27	4 years	Single – no children
Luciana	14 x 14 (7 to 19 h)	Chemistry technician	22-28	6 years	Single, dating boarded
Amanda	Irregular and unpredictable boardings	Tool operator drilling	21-23 (2006-2008)	2 years (stopped)	Married, no children. Dated oil worker
Alessandra	14 x 14 (7 to 19, until 0 h in the radio)	Stewardess	Between 30 and 40	2 years (stopped and want to return)	Widow – one child
Raquel	Sporadic boardings	Safety technician	24-33	9 years	Separate – 1 child
Flávia	14 x 21 (shifts of 12 h)	Operator technician	20-31	10 years	Separate – 2 children
Beatriz	14 x 21 (shifts of 12 h)	Operator technician	19-21	1 years e 8 months	Single – no children
Rita	14 x 14 (shifts of 12 h)	Radio operator	25-31	5 years	Stable relationship – no children
Larissa	14 x 14	Trainee Engineer - chief in electronics in 2014	25-26 Occasional boarding between 23 and 25	1 year (besides the 2 previous years of occasional boarding)	Stable relationship with boarded - no children

Source: The authors.

were all reported. Some of them said to be initially stimulated, since “everything was new”, although they didn't like the offshore confinement, which made them “can't stand” the boarding regime anymore. Cristina reported a greater difficulty in adapting, since besides having 3 children and having to face the boarding regime's difficulties, she also needed to adapt herself to the work aspects that really scared her (helicopter flights, climb height, isolation, etc.). By the time of the interview, she said she felt victorious for overcoming the difficulties:

Man, what am I doing here? [...] working with supplying, handling pipe wrench! Man, I climbed in the tank, – I said – guys, where am I? Kind of not believing that I was really doing that.

Some of the respondents reported strategies of adaptation, which consist basically of organizing the activities according to the boarding and also, as observed Losicer (2004), considering that they “have two lives”, adapting themselves to the life on the platforms. Diana, single, without children and dating on board, reports to have built friendships in the platform, even organizing a music band.

4.2.1 What drives these women to start, to stay or to get away from this activity?

All the respondents started the work at the offshore oil industry seeking for a good remuneration and opportunity to “build a life”, acquire goods. For the very young ones, the beginning in this activity occurred unexpectedly, just after the conclusion of high school or technical education. Some female workers felt attracted by the characteristics of the sector, such as the lack of routine and the appreciation of the technical field. These women feel accomplished by “performing an activity that only a few are able to do”, of “having a great technical field” and “being able to solve problems on risk situations”.

The continuity at work, the hardness of the boarding regime and the confinement, place these workers facing a reality that many of them do not want to try for many years, as observed Carolina:

After boarding, it was not as glamorous after all. It's good for a while but it's not something that you would like to do for life. We miss many things. [...] I think it's very difficult someone here to say he/she would want to do this for the rest of his/her lives.

This speech is part of the collective interview and none of the respondents disagreed or said they would rather be boarding “the rest of their lives”. On the contrary, there were comments about the difficulties related to the boarding regime.

As for the reasons to abandon the offshore work, the three respondents who have done it, even though claiming different reasons, they quote markedly the problems with the confinement. Amanda, even being single and without children, couldn't stand the confinement, was depressed and said that “even nowadays” the smell that her husband's clothes (oil workers) brings when he lands, brings her bad feelings. Alessandra greatly appreciated her work, but she found it very difficult to manage the house and her 14 years old son complained about the responsibility he had to take. Kátia pointed different reasons, being evident the presence of the values debate, where issues as the remuneration, comfort and a good life condition for the family, a sense of justice/injustice, the desire to grow professionally confronted with the harshness of not being able to pay attention to her little son even when he was sick, the unpredictability of her available time and the consequences for her family. Sonia could work on land after 8 years working boarded and reported that she couldn't stand to board anymore. The confinement revealed to be more difficult for mothers. The distance of the family on special occasions, parties and celebrations is a cause of suffering for almost all of the respondents, being more emphatic on mothers, perhaps because they assume greater responsibilities in the upbringing of their children, what can strengthen the emotional bonds between mother and children. For men, due to cultural issues, perhaps the sense of responsibility for the family support makes it easy for them to stay in this job. Apparently, the factors that most cause difficulties for the offshore workers are the confinement and the distance from their family.

Just one respondent (Beatriz) showed the desire to land by disliking the activity. She complains not just about the confinement, but says she identifies herself with other professions and wishes to do other courses. The other women who think about abandoning the boarding regime (medium or short-term) mention the difficulties brought up by the confinement. Cristina doesn't say she would stop working boarded, since she has already had other professions and she found at the offshore work a best remuneration. Although she reports experiences of suffering from the whole family due to the boarding regime and that her children have already asked her to leave this job, she tried to show she is able to offer them better life conditions if she stays in this function. In her reports it's visible the anguish because of the *use of oneself by others*, in the situations where she met the tasks that demand her to go in the outside of the platform (thing she was afraid of) or when she couldn't land in the foreseen time and had to manage the familiar conflicts originated from this impossibility. It was also noticed the values debate, when she decides to keep working boarded but pondering the difficulties she

has to face, the remuneration, other job possibilities, the care with her family.

Some young workers have no concrete plans as to leave the boarded work, instead they seem to postpone the reflections about their own professional future and the plans of a life in family. Just Rita reports the desire of keep working boarded and states she has plans of getting pregnant and stay at the radio operator function. She sees the confinement as one of the conditions of the job she has chosen.

4.3 Aspects related to the familiar and social life / Strategies for the management of the times

Social isolations causes sadness in most of the respondents. Spend commemorative dates away from the family and friends is hard, even to the single female workers. Most of the respondents believe that the marriage (mainly with offshore workers) may be conciliated with the job they perform, but not the maternity. The used strategies are basically summed up in “organizing life according to the boarding”. Planning that includes celebrating festive dates when on land, scheduling birthday parties according to their landing time. The mothers observe the health of their children before boarding, book doctors previously and need a good infrastructure on land (support from family and a good housekeeper). Flávia is concerned in keeping herself informed about everything that happens to her family during the boarding period; since she knows her mother spares her when something happens. She has then a deal with a cousin, who calls her up if something happens with her family.

The majority seems to consider they have “two lives” and postpone the reflections about maternity. Larissa has plans that are more concrete. She enjoys the activity she performs and feels no difficulty with the social isolation. She explains that to be boarded “*one must not be needy*” and also says she doesn’t miss hearing the voice of family, she communicates with them through social networks or by email, when she is boarded. She intends to work a few more years offshore, after that, gets a good function on land and two years later, get pregnant. She says she doesn’t want an onshore job due to the pregnancy because in these cases the function offered by the company is not interesting. She intends to build “a solid career” and also says she has been working to achieve that by fixing deadlines to fulfill her plans. Larissa seems to manage her career so she will not have major difficulties in making the management of family and work lifetime later.

It’s observed that, despite the differences between the female workers, it’s possible to state in a general way that the young, single and without children’s women imagine they won’t be boarding anymore by

the time they are getting married or getting pregnant, although they don’t make concrete plans about it. The mothers live a conflict of values where it matters: the desire to be more present in their children’s life, the desire to offer them better material conditions, different levels of adaptation to work in shifts, previous professional experience and expectations of other job possibilities.

5 Discussions

As people are different from each other so is the tolerance to the confinement. Men and women may or may not have the necessary divestiture to face the offshore work difficulties, may or may not appreciate the challenges and the work with advanced technology. Depending on the family relationships they have and the importance they give to the familiar coexistence and the moment of life they are at, they may tolerate differently the boarded work. What initiatives are possible in order to improve this tolerance?

If the strategies of management of the professional and private lifetime involve, besides the familiar and housekeepers support, some predictability regarding the boarded work period for the workers to plan their domestic, familiar and social life, what one may say about the necessities of unexpected boarding? The drilling work usually have unpredictable shifts and the worker lives with the extension of the work shifts until he/she fulfills their mission on that project. In other sectors of the offshore oil industry, according to the company’s need, even the workers with regular timetables may be called for extra boarding. How to minimize this unpredictability or give a better land structure to the boarded workers?

The entrance of women in the labor market taking technical functions shows a change in the sexual division of the work. However, it’s possible that this insertion, differently from what has been happening in other sectors, is hiring a profile, a type-population as it has been observed in this study: single and young women adapt themselves better to the boarding regime. When these women become adult, get married, and have children, they can only adapt themselves to the boarding regime when they build a wide domestic-familiar infrastructure. Some few respondents didn’t show interest on stop boarding, but one may not know for how long they will keep this purpose. Many of them aim to work on land and some make concrete plans about it. So it’s established a value debate that place these women to face difficult choices that can even end their professional career. How, aligned with the health and safety of offshore female workers, expanding the possibilities of building a career that allows, in a medium and long-term, the performance of an onshore activity that doesn’t mean a wage lost or a decrease in the professional career?

Taking into consideration the relationships between family, and domestic life and professional life, these alternatives would be considering the necessities raised mainly by the female participation in the sector, but doubtless, also benefiting men, who would have greater alternatives to plan their careers and to manage their professional and familiar life. However, perhaps this form of career planning is not compatible with the company's economic objectives. So, the workers would have to continue to choose between working or seek for another activity, in another sector that would offer better possibilities of conciliation between professional and family life. Perhaps the inversion of this process would be possible through a major equity and the enhancement of reproductive work, which may have its social face in the increasing of public and sectorial policies (unions, technical commissions, etc.) that favor the reception of these familiar tasks.

These questions show the importance of the knowledge under the "work's point of view" by the people who act in different sectors of the company. It's necessary to understand the various aspects involved in labor, remuneration and issues of management of work time and life time. In this no exact equation, it must be considered the worker emotional state, his(her) resources related to land infrastructure, familiar relationships, financial needs and the labor contract itself.

6 To conclude

Brazil stands out in oil production since the 80s. The Campos Basin is the largest oil basin in the country and attracts workers by the expectation of good wages and 21 (or 14) days off. The work at the oil platforms implies at night shiftwork and workshift, offshore confinement and high risk. For the workers have such availability for work, it's necessary a land structure that assure the care with the welfare of their family or the renunciation of family life. Women are present in an increasing number also in the platforms. The text debates on how the offshore work affects the familiar and social life of these women and which strategies are necessary to handle the personal and professional life.

It was chosen a qualitative analysis where 15 offshore workers were heard, including women that are married, single, with and without children, the very young and the ones older than 30, the ones boarded for a little time, the ones boarded for more than 10 years and who stopped boarding, for the greater contemplation of the diversities. Women are rare in offshore work and the married and with children are even rarer. The youngest respondents, who are the majority, show the postponement on the reflections about maternity. From the 5 respondents who have children, two didn't board. The majority of the respondents seemed to postpone the reflection

about the maternity and think the marriage may be conciliated with the offshore work, but not the maternity. Three workers opted to not board by different reasons but they mentioned the confinement as the most important for their decision. From the 15 heard women, only one managed to work on land, boarding occasionally. In general, the ones that best suit this work can count with the support of family and housekeepers solve their problems on their time off and organize their lives according to the boarding. The confinement revealed to be most difficult for the mothers due to the distance of the family in special dates, parties and celebrations and perhaps because of assuming greater responsibilities with their children's education, which may reinforce the affective bonds between mother and children. Apparently, the factors that most cause difficulties for the offshore workers are the confinement and the distance of their family.

A longitudinal study on the age, marital status and number of children of workers in the offshore oil industry may indicate if, in this sector, it will happen the same phenomenon observed by Bruschini (2007) in the female participation in the labor market, where it was observed that the marriage and maternity were reducing their influence over the female participation in the labor market. Considering also the need to observe the various aspects of the worker's life and the relationship between productive and reproductive work, it would also be pertinent a study about the familiar relationships of the male offshore workers, aiming to identify if this work requires a singular family arrangement.

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