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Author
Shimanuki, Tomoyuki

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Temporary Agency Jobs in Japan: Bad Employment Contracts or Bad Employment Relationships?

Tomoyuki Shimanuki
Associate Professor, Graduate School of Commerce and Management
Hitotsubashi University

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Abstract

Employment through a temporary agency, or temporary employment, typically offers a greater degree of flexibility in working hours than regular employment, but with low wages, few fringe benefits, little autonomy, and unstable employment, resulting in such jobs being deemed inferior. Previous studies have often treated this work as similar to part-time employment in terms of status differences compared to regular employment. In contrast, our study examines regular employment, non-regular employment, and temporary employment by considering the effect upon job quality of the three-party employment relationship among workers, client firms, and temporary staffing agencies compared to the traditional two-party employment relationship and the employment contract (non-fixed versus fixed term). The results of a statistical analysis of data gathered in our questionnaire surveying employees working in clerical jobs in the metropolitan areas of Japan show that both the three-party employment and fixed-term contracts have many negative effects, and each has negative effects that the other does not. Both three-party employment and fixed-term contracts have negative effects on fringe benefits and job security. Three-party employment has negative effects on job autonomy while fixed-term contracts do not, whereas fixed-term contracts have negative effects on wages and positive effects on working hour flexibility while three-party employment does not. These findings imply that the three-party employment relationship as a primary feature of temporary employment provides workers only with disadvantage in several aspects of job quality.

Unlike other types of non-regular employment, many generally see temporary agency jobs as an inferior level of employment. Despite providing flexibility in working hours compared to regular employment, some describe temporary agency jobs as having low wages, few fringe benefits, little autonomy in the workplace, and little job security or stability (Forde and Slater, 2005; Kelleberg, 2011).

Why is job quality for temporary employment worse than regular employment? Previous studies, for the reasons mentioned above, defined "non-regular" or "atypical" employment as part-time employment, contract employment, and so on. However, some researchers downplayed the differences in employment status between temporary agency jobs, part-time employment, and contract employment, as work outside of regular employment. The traditional employment relationship was essentially one of two parties: the company and the employee. Part-time employment and contract employment differ from regular employment in that the employment contract is of short duration, but the employment relationship is the same in that for directly hired employees.

However, externalized employment has proliferated over the past thirty years. In a typical example of temporary employment, a temporary agency employs workers sent to work for different companies (destination or client firms). Compared to the traditional employment relationship with only two parties, temporary employment involves a three-party employment relationship consisting of employees, client firms, and temporary staffing agencies (Cappelli and Keller, 2013). Previous studies focused on the differences between types of employment, but failed to consider how the differences in employment contracts and employment relationships affect job quality. Our study investigates the reasons why temporary agency employment, like temporary employment, produces an inferior job quality compared to regular employment. Additionally, rather than focusing on the type of employment, this study examines effects of the type of employment relationship and employment contract on job quality.

Literature Review

Recently, researchers have become increasingly concerned about job quality in Western countries (Clark, 2005; Kelleberg, 2011; Osterman and Shulman, 2011; Warhurst, Carré, Findlay and Tilly, 2012; Green et al, 2013). Job quality is a concept meant to indicate the desirability of work as seen by workers (Kelleberg, 2011). Conventionally, researchers evaluated good or bad employment in terms of desirability based on different dimensions

related to the relevant academic discipline. Economics would focus on economic aspects such as wages and fringe benefits, whereas sociology and psychology was interested in non-economic aspects such as job autonomy and flexibility of working hours. However, the concept of job quality as a feature captures the multi-faceted and comprehensive background of the desirability of jobs for workers with a multitude of dimensions as targets, including wages and fringe benefits, employment stability, job autonomy, flexibility of working hours, and so on.

Earlier research regarded job quality from a variety of dimensions. Tilly (1997) points to aspects such as wages, fringe benefits, flexibility of working hours, continuity of employment, control over the work process, and upward mobility. Green (2006) directs attention towards wages, skill development opportunities, participation in workplace decisions, job security, work effort, and job satisfaction. More recently, Holman (2013) raised points about work organization, wages, job security, flexibility of working hours, skills and development, representation, and engagement, among others. Kelleberg (2011) organized these various elements into five dimensions: wages, fringe benefits, job autonomy, flexibility of work hours, and stability of employment, taking wages or pay as the most basic dimension in assessing job quality. Added or fringe benefits also relate to economic rewards, including bonuses, retirement benefits, corporate pensions, as well as health insurance and other employee welfare benefits. Many regard work with pay in the form of highly valued fringe benefits as having high job quality in that they provide workers with economic affluence.

Job quality pertains not only to economic aspects, but also includes non-economic elements, such as job autonomy, which is the extent to which workers have discretion during the process of performing a job and the extent of the impact of their decisions on the job. The elements of discretion and decision-making are desirable because they make the work worthwhile and create intrinsic motivation. Flexibility of working hours is also an important non-economic dimension. One aspect in this regard is the length of working hours. Prolonged labor is highly undesirable, even if total income increases, because it is likely to have adverse consequences on employee health. However, it is unclear whether longer or shorter hours are good or bad. Suitable durations relate not only to the time engaged in work, but also employees' evaluations in terms of work-life balance, such as having enough time guaranteed outside work to spend with their families.

Employment stability or job security is a dimension with an important impact on

employees' long-term careers. One part of job security is the low risk of unemployment for workers; another is the chance of finding new employment opportunities in the labor market and increasing the chances of doing so by developing skills and achieving a greater degree of expertise.

Earlier studies point out that other factors, such as gender and race, affect job quality. Some findings include how black employees are typically engaged in lower paying jobs than white employees, and men are presented with more opportunities to develop greater skills than women are. Furthermore, other studies demonstrate that job quality varies by occupation or job category. One long-standing finding is that managers and professionals in a skilled trade have high job quality, whereas sales positions and service jobs have poor job quality. From these issues, recent research focuses on the element of employment status or the type of employment. Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson (2000) showed that in the United States, atypical employment as a factor that reduces job quality has been on the rise. Although the definitions of typical and atypical vary based on the employment practices in the country, atypical employment in the United States usually refers to forms of employment with short expected durations or cases where the worker is not directly employed by the company. The former includes part-time employment, and the latter refers to temporary employment (Kalleberg, 2000). Both of these types of employment have low wages, few fringe benefits, little autonomy, and little job security, amounting to bad job quality (Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson, 2000; McGovern, Smeaton, and Hill, 2004; Clark, 2005).

However, not all atypical employment has poor job quality. Many workers engaged in part-time and temporary employment feel attracted to the short working hours and few overtime working hours, and made their choice in order to achieve a work-life balance (Tilly, 1996). Still, aside from flexible working hours, the other factors discussed above still contribute to the poor job quality compared to typical employment (Tilly, 1997; Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson, 2000).

Japanese research also discusses these job quality features (Houseman and Osawa, 2003; Kuroki, 2012). Houseman and Osawa (2003) considered jobs and working conditions for related to atypical employment in Japan. In addition to highlighting that a significant number of women work part-time or in temporary jobs, they showed that when compared to regular employment, these jobs have inferior wages, fringe benefits, and job security despite the flexible working hours.

Clearly, definitions of employment status vary by country, though previous studies showed that jobs falling outside of regular employment such as dispatch or temporary employment, part-time employment, contract employment, have poorer job quality across many dimensions (Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson, 2000; McGovern, Smeaton, and Hill, 2004; Clark, 2005).

However, in previous studies place too much emphasis on comparisons with regular employment, and thus overlook the important point that temporary and part-time employments are inherently different in terms of the employment relationship (Cappelli and Keller, 2013). Part-time employment connects workers and companies directly in a traditional two-party employment relationship. In contrast, dispatch or temporary employment has a three-party employment relationship between the temporary staffing agency, their client firms, and employees (Kunda, Barley, and Evans, 2002; Purcell, Purcell, and Tailby, 2004; Cappelli and Keller, 2013) where employees lack a direct employment relationship with the actual companies where they work.

Additionally, we highlight the salient characteristics of the employment contracts, notably the contracting period. For example, many dispatch workers in Japan are on a fixed-term employment contract while others have a non-fixed term contract. By looking carefully at the type of employment (temporary, regular, and non-regular) in terms of the employment relationship defined by the contracting period and the presence or absence of an employment relationship between the workers and the companies where they perform the work, we capture the situation more completely.

Hypotheses

We are interested in understanding why job quality for temporary and other non-regular employment is worse than for regular employment, and we investigate the employment relationships and employment contracts for this end. Previous studies claimed that work with temporary agencies provides more flexible working hours, but with the other drawbacks discussed above. However, these studies miss any major differences in the characteristics of job quality with other forms of non-regular employment, such as part-time employment.

If temporary agency jobs and non-regular employment have worse job quality than regular employment, as prior studies pointed out, we predict that the three-party relationship more than the two-party relationship and fixed-term contracts more than

non-fixed term contracts will generally have a negative effect on job quality. Therefore, while three-party employment relationships and fixed-term employment contracts will provide greater flexibility in working hours than two-party employment relationships and non-fixed term contracts, they will have an adverse effect on wages, fringe benefits, job security, and work autonomy. If there are factors that decrease job quality for temporary employment, regardless of the contract length, then the three-party employment relationship would have an overall negative effect on job quality as opposed to the two-party employment relationship.

Methods and Data

We translated the questions from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) 2010 and designed our own questionnaire by adding questions that reflect the characteristics of Japan's employment practices. The EWCS contains a wealth of questions related to job quality in terms of wages, fringe benefits, job security, job autonomy, flexibility of working hours, and so on, that suited the aims of our study.

We collected data from a survey we conducted with employees in the capital region (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama prefectures) and the Kansai area (six prefectures including Osaka and Kyoto) working for private companies between the ages of 20 to 59. We classified the respondents into three categories. The first group includes regular workers defined according to Japanese employment practices as "hired directly by companies and having non-fixed term employment contracts with their companies." The second group includes non-regular workers "hired directly with a fixed-term employment contract with their company." This would include part-time workers, contract employees, and so on. The third group includes temporary workers " hired by temporary staffing agencies and dispatched to other companies for work." The temporary worker group included those with both fixed and non-fixed contracts with the staffing agency. The employment destination companies had 300 or more employees.

We aimed to survey 2,000 regular workers and 2,000 non-regular and temporary workers to ensure a total sample size of 4,000 people. We did this by distributing a survey to workers at private companies throughout the regions of interest with an internet monitor research company using the "Employment Status Survey (*Shugyo Kozo Kihon Chosa*) 2012" to create sample allocation criteria that reflected the age and gender distribution in those regions. We surveyed regular employees in September 2014 and non-regular and temporary

employees in March 2015. We distributed 3,191 surveys to regular employees and collected 2,000 responses (62.7% response rate), and 3,107 surveys to the other groups and collected 2,000 responses (64.4% response rate).

Although our questionnaire-format survey was valuable because it was one of the first large-scale surveys collecting data related to job quality for Japanese workers, we had a number of concerns. The first was that we conducted the survey at two different times six months apart, though it is more desirable to conduct them simultaneously. However, Japan's employment environment is much more stable compared to that in Western countries. There were no significant changes in terms of the working population, the unemployment rate, and so on within the target regions between September 2014 and March 2015, excepting seasonal variations. This survey followed the EWCS methods that collected data in Europe throughout the year, and by asking for average numbers and circumstances over the past six months for things like salaries and working hours. We could thus understand the normal state of the respondents' jobs and working conditions.

Another concern was the extrapolation of causal relationships according to the cross-sectional data. It is difficult to demonstrate the impacts on job quality using cross-section data that strictly apply to employment contracts and employment relationships. However, it is logical to use this format to deduce the influence of the employment contract or employment relationship on job quality. Companies select employment contracts and relationships depending on their objectives. Firms use non-regular and temporary employees due to changes in labor demand, including ensuring employment flexibility and reducing labor and training costs (Davis-Blake and Uzzi, 1993; Houseman, 2001; Kalleberg, Reynold, and Marsden, 2003). In this case, companies externalize their employment process to temporary agencies to gain a short-term contract period, reduce wages and fringe benefits, or to avoid the liabilities inherent in direct hiring. This results in temporary and non-regular jobs with low wages, fewer opportunities for skill development, and poorer job security. Panel data are more desirable, though cross-sectional data is sufficient.

Another concern was potential sampling bias. This survey was not a random sample because the people receiving the survey registered with an internet survey company. However, we incorporated elements of random sampling, and made efforts to extract the sample carefully. We created sample allocation criteria based on the "Employment Status Survey" to reflect for each employment status—regular, non-regular, or temporary employment—in the target regions and for a representative gender and age distribution. We

requested replies in excess of the allocation criteria for each layer and pulled these at random for the survey. Moreover, from among the responses, we use random numbers, which we call the sample cut, to ensure that the sample size for each layer was be equal to the allocation criteria. Our overall sample, although not completely random, ensured a certain representativeness of the characteristics of workers with jobs in the Japanese metropolitan areas.

Still, while we were able to account for gender and age representation in the sample, we did not have full control over the occupations we sampled, though it is a main factor in job quality. We therefore extracted samples for employees engaged in office jobs. In addition, since there was a wide range of working hours, we limited the samples to respondents with an average of five workdays per week over the course of the past six months. This would exclude respondents working less than five days a week, though instead of controlling the number of working days per week we could compare the length of work hours. In our survey, 87.2% of all respondents for all forms of employment worked five days a week. After applying these restrictions, the final sample for analysis was 1,093.

Variables and Analysis

Variables

We established five variables related to job quality as dependent variables based on previous research: wages, fringe benefits, job security, work autonomy, and flexibility of working hours measured with one to two variables each.

We measure wages in terms of the average monthly salary (tax-included) for the past six months, excluding any bonuses or benefits. In a normal employee survey, it is difficult for employees to say exactly how much revenue they earned, so we did not ask for a specific amount but rather provided ten categories in units of ￥50,000 between less than ￥100,000 as the lowest category up to over ￥500,000 in the highest category. As the income level increased, we assigned a larger corresponding variable number. However, since the question of income can be sensitive for respondents, 7.8% declined to answer.

We measure fringe benefits in terms of bonuses and retirement benefits. We assigned the variable a value of 1 if the respondent's own employer provided a bonus scheme and a system for retirement income, and 0 otherwise. We grouped retirement plans and company pension plans together because they are economic rewards received after retirement, though the Japanese system typically lists these as different kinds of fringe benefits. We asked

temporary workers about the bonus and retirement system offered by their employment agency.

We measured job security in terms of the risk of unemployment and opportunities to develop skills. Both of these elements contain the possibility of continued employment at the current job location and employability at other companies. We asked respondents about the possibility of losing their current job within the next 6 months through restructuring, and so on to reflect unemployment risk using six levels. To address opportunities to develop skills, we asked respondents to use a six-level scale to define their ability to improve their professional competence and skills at their current jobs.

We used two variables for job autonomy: discretion in the work performed and involvement in decision-making. In terms of the exercise of discretion, we asked respondents to use a four-point scale to define the degree to which they were free to determine or change the order of tasks and the amount of time devoted to each at their current jobs. We also asked respondents to gauge their degree of involvement in decision-making on a six-point scale the impact of their important decisions on the job.

We used two variables related to the flexibility of working hours: working hours per week and work-life balance. We asked respondents about the average number of hours worked per week in the previous six months, including overtime. Like monthly salary, since it could be difficult for respondents to answer the question accurately, we provided ten preset categories with five-hour intervals, ranging from less than 20 hours per week to 60 hours or more per week. We asked respondents to rate work-life balance on a four-point scale based on the current actual working hours (including overtime) according to whether they had the time necessary for activities outside of work, such as relaxing and spending time with family. While the first measure can have an objective assessment, the latter could have only a subjective assessment from the respondents themselves. Table 1 provides the questions and scales related to job quality.

(Table 1 goes here.)

The independent variables relate to the employment relationship and contract. For employment relationship, we used a dummy variable of 1 for a three-party employment relationship and 0 for a two-party employment relationship. We used a dummy variable of 1 when respondents had a fixed-term contract and 0 for a non-fixed term employment

contract.

We also assigned control variables pertaining to individual and company attributes. For individual attributes, we used dummy variables for gender (male = 1, female = 0), age, education (with junior high/high school graduate as the standard; and junior and technical college graduates, undergraduate, and graduate school graduates each with a similar dummy variable), marital status, children, main household provider (yes = 1, no = 0), years of office work experience, management, and labor union membership. There were two company attribute variables: industry type and scale. We defined industries according to 19 categories, and used four categories for company size according to the number of regular and non-regular employees. We asked temporary workers to provide this information for the company at which they actually provided labor. Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for the main variables.

(Table 2 goes here.)

Analysis

In the analysis, we compared the average values for the variables and conducted a t-test to determine any corresponding statistical significance.

The left side of table 3 reports the results from comparing the job quality of two-party and three-party employment relationships. The sample size for two-party employment was 875 and for three-party employment was 218. The average values for the three-party employment relationship are lower than those for the two-party employment relationship for monthly salary, bonuses, retirement money, skill development opportunities, discretion, involvement in decision-making, and working hours. In addition, the unemployment risk and work-life balance average values were higher for the three-party employment relationship than the two-party employment relationship. The results of the t-test indicate statistically significant relationships for all dimensions of job quality.

(Table 3 goes here.)

The right side of Table 3 provides the results of comparing the job quality of fixed and non-fixed employment contracts. Of the sample, 523 respondents had non-fixed term contracts and 512 respondents had fixed-term contracts. The total sample size of 1,035

based on employment contract was smaller than the original total sample of 1,093 because we excluded respondents who were unaware of the contract period for their current job. The results indicate that monthly salary, bonuses, retirement money, skill development opportunities, discretion, involvement in decision-making, and weekly hours, have a smaller average value under fixed-term contracts than under non-fixed term contracts. Additionally, the values for unemployment risk and work-life balance for fixed-term employment contracts are higher than those for non-fixed term employment contracts. The t-test results demonstrate statistically significant relationships for all dimensions except the level of discretion.

The results show that fixed-term three-party employment relationships have an overall inferior job quality to non-fixed two-party employment contracts. Specifically, employees in three-party employment relationships work more than those two-party employment relationships, and those with fixed-term employment contracts work more than those with non-fixed term employment contracts while having greater flexibility in working hours, but lower wages, fewer fringe benefits, less work autonomy, and more unstable employment.

We next evaluated whether these relationships hold when examining the individual and company control variables. In the analysis, we used an ordered logit analysis for seven of the nine variables because they are ordinal variables. We used a binomial logit analysis for the two variables related to fringe benefits because they are dummy variables.

Tables 4a to 4e show the results of the analysis of each dimension related to job quality. Each variable set in each dimension has three sets of analytical results: one analysis that includes the control variables with the three-party employment relationship dummy variable, one that introduces the fixed-term employment contract dummy alone, and one that includes both variables. The results show that the three-party employment relationship dummy and fixed-term employment contract dummy variables have different effects according to the job quality dimension. In particular, the three-party relationship dummy showed a significant effect on fringe benefits, job security, and job autonomy. There is a significantly negative effect on bonuses, retirement money, skill development opportunities, discretion, and decision-making, and a significantly positive impact on unemployment risk. On the other side, the fixed-term employment contract dummy variable has a significant effect on wages, fringe benefits, job security, and flexibility of working hours. There is a significantly negative effect in the correlation with monthly salary, bonuses, retirement money, skill development opportunities, and weekly work hours, and a significantly

positive effect on unemployment risk and work-life balance.

(Tables 4a to 4e go here.)

The discrepancies in the effects of the three-party employment relationship dummy variable and the fixed-term employment dummy variable on job quality reveal significant findings. The three-party and two-party employment relationship dummy variables have common effects on fringe benefits and job security. Compared to two-party relationships and fixed-term contracts, fixed-term contracts and non-fixed term contracts have fewer instances of bonuses and retirement payment systems in terms of fringe benefits, and have poorer job security in terms of unemployment risk and opportunities to develop skills. On the other hand, only the three-party employment relationship dummy variable had an effect on job autonomy: the results indicate lower autonomy in terms of discretion and decision-making compared to two-party employment relationships. Since the fixed-term employment contract dummy variable does not show a significant effect on job autonomy, jobs with fixed-term employment contracts and jobs with non-fixed term employment contracts have no significant difference in this regard. In contrast, the fixed-term employment contract dummy variable did affect some dimensions where the three-party employment relationship dummy variable had no impact. Jobs with fixed-term contracts had a lower monthly income than non-fixed term contracts, but had more flexibility of working hours, shorter average weekly working time, and a better work-life balance. In terms of wages and working hours, since the three-party employment relationship dummy variable showed no significant effect, jobs with a three-party relationship and jobs with a two-party relationship had no notable difference.

Lastly, we highlight the control variables that had a significant effect. The gender dummy variable showed a significant positive effect on monthly salary and skill development opportunities, in that men benefitted more than women in this regard. However, the significant positive effect of gender on unemployment risk and weekly working hours show that men face a higher risk of unemployment than women and work longer hours. Additionally, years of service at the current place of employment had a positive effect on monthly income, bonuses, and retirement money; and in many cases, the longer the period of time a worker was at the same company, the higher the wages and fringe benefits. Additionally, the management dummy variable showed a significant positive impact on

monthly income, retirement money, and decision-making, but a negative impact on work-life balance. Management positions thus provide better wages and fringe benefits but these employees have some difficulty ensuring a work-life balance.

Conclusion

In this study, we aimed to determine why jobs with a temporary employment status have a lower job quality than regular employment from a different perspective. Most previous studies examined regular and non-regular employment without differentiating between types of non-regular employment.

However, temporary and part-time employment are essentially different forms of employment, in that the former involves a temporary work agency in a three-party employment relationship between workers, the agency, and the agency's client firm where the employee actually provides labor. We examined whether the different job statuses (regular, non-regular, and temporary) influenced job quality in terms of employment relationship (two-party versus three-party) and employment contract (fixed-term versus non-fixed term). Using the EWCS as a reference, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on workers with each employment status in metropolitan areas of Japan, and performed a statistical analysis of the data to investigate the effects of employment relationships and contracts on job quality.

The results of the analysis displayed some interesting discoveries. In terms of employment contracts, while job quality for fixed-term contracts is generally worse than non-fixed term contracts overall, there were no differences in some aspects. Fixed-term contracts have fewer weekly working hours than non-fixed term employment contracts, and despite the greater flexibility of working hours enabling a work-life balance, these jobs have lower monthly income and fewer fringe benefits in terms of bonus plans and retirement money. Furthermore, job security is low, with a high unemployment risk and few opportunities to develop work-related skills. However, there was no difference in terms of job autonomy.

Additionally, the job quality in three-party employment relationships was generally poorer than in two-party employment relationships, though again there were no differences in some aspects. Jobs with a three-party employment relationship had fewer fringe benefits, lower employability in terms of unemployment risk and opportunities to develop skills, and had less job autonomy according to discretion and involvement in decision-making. There

was no difference between these employment relationships regarding wages and flexibility in working hours.

The results suggest that although temporary and non-regular employment are generally worse in terms of job quality than regular employment, the factors behind this low quality differ in terms of the employment contract and the employment relationship. That is to say, temporary employees tend to receive fewer fringe benefits compared to regular employees, fixed-term three-party relationships tend to produce lower job security, fixed-term contracts provide more flexibility in working hours and low wages, and the three-party employment relationship yields low job autonomy.

If the three-party employment relationship is the essential feature of temporary employment, then temporary workers will have few fringe benefits, less job security, and no autonomy. Additionally, the low wages in temporary employment result from fixed-term employment contracts and not the three-party employment relationship. Although temporary employment tends to come with low wages, it is more likely that this is a result of fixed-term employment contracts than the three-party employment relationship. Still, fixed-term arrangements provide flexible working hours and better work-life balance in temporary employment rather than the three-party employment relationship. Thus, the three-party employment relationship as a primary feature of temporary employment has a negative effect on job quality in a variety of ways.

It is important to note that the analytical results came from a survey of workers in Japan performing office work five days a week. It would be beneficial to study other occupations in terms of the effect of three-party employment relationships on job quality, such as more specialized professions and lower-level production jobs. However, the classification of employment status in terms of regular, non-regular, and temporary employment based on the employment relationship and employment contract should yield interesting insights in future research into issues around job quality. International comparative studies on job quality are important (Findlay, Kalleberg, and Warhurst, 2013). Temporary employment in three-party employment relationships is common in both Western countries and Japan. However, there are differences, such as the length of the contract period based on each country's labor laws and labor market, employment practices, and employment-related social norms. For example, in non-fixed contracts for regular employment in the United States, companies can dismiss employees based on the employment at will doctrine, though this is generally rather difficult in Japan and Germany (Houseman and Osawa, 2003;

Mitlacher, 2007, 2008). We hope that future research will develop based on comparisons of temporary and non-regular employment statuses in terms of employment relationships and employment contracts.

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Table 1. Scales, Variables, and Questions

Job Quality		Question Item	Choices/Scale
Wages	Monthly Income	Please answer based on your average monthly salary over the last 6 months at your current place of employment (including tax, excluding bonus, overtime allowance, etc.).	Under ¥100,000=1 ¥10-149,999=2 ¥15-199,999=3 ¥20-249,999=4 ¥25-299,999=5 ¥30-349,999=6 ¥35-399,999=7 ¥40-449,999=8 ¥45-499,999=9 ¥500,000+=10
Fringe Benefits	Bonus	At your current workplace have you been enrolled in a bonus system?	Yes=1 No=0
	Retirement Money	At your current workplace, have you been enrolled in a retirement plan or company pension plan?	Yes=1 No=0
Job Security	Unemployment Risk	At my current workplace, I will probably become unemployed due to restructuring, etc. within the next 6 months.	True=6 Mostly True=5 Somewhat True=4 Somewhat Untrue=3 Mostly Untrue=2 Untrue=1
	Skill Development Opportunities	At my current workplace, I have the ability to improve my professional capabilities and skills.	True=6 Mostly True=5 Somewhat True=4 Somewhat Untrue=3 Mostly Untrue=2 Untrue=1
Job Autonomy	Discretion in Work	At your current workplace, can you decide or change freely how much time is devoted to each job or the order of jobs performed?	Definitely Can=4 Mostly Can=3 Mostly Cannot=2 Cannot at All=1
	Decision-Making Involvement	At my current workplace, I can influence important decisions on the job.	True=6 Mostly True=5 Somewhat True=4 Somewhat Untrue=3 Mostly Untrue=2 Untrue=1
Flexibility of Working Hours	Weekly Work Hours	How many hours of work per week do you do at your current workplace? Please answer using an average of your working hours over the past six months. Please do not include any break time, such as lunch breaks, in your working hours, but do include your overtime hours.	Under 20 hrs=1 20-24 hrs=2 25-29 hrs=3 30-34 hrs=4 35-39 hrs=5 40-44 hrs=6 45-49 hrs=7 50-54 hrs=8 55-59 hrs=9 60+ hrs=10
	Work-Life Balance	At your current workplace, including overtime in your working hours, do you find that you can secure sufficient time to spend with your family and do other necessary activities outside of work?	Sufficiently Secure=4 Mostly Secure=3 Not Too Secure=2 Not Secure=1

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficients

Variable	Frequency	Max Value	Min Value	Average	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1 Monthly Income	1008	10	1	4.21	1.90	1.00																					
2 Bonus	1093	1	0	0.57	0.50	0.29	1.00																				
3 Retirement Money	1093	1	0	0.45	0.50	0.45	0.68	1.00																			
4 Unemployment Risk	1093	6	1	2.43	1.43	-0.08	-0.26	-0.22	1.00																		
5 Skill Development Opportunities	1093	6	1	3.19	1.34	0.23	0.13	0.20	-0.10	1.00																	
6 Discretion in Work	1093	4	1	3.19	0.79	0.08	0.06	0.06	-0.15	0.16	1.00																
7 Decision-Making Involvement	1093	6	1	2.97	1.34	0.24	0.17	0.20	-0.09	0.43	0.11	1.00															
8 Weekly Work Hours	1093	10	1	5.63	1.60	0.40	0.21	0.29	-0.02	0.10	0.00	0.15	1.00														
9 Work-Life Balance	1093	4	1	3.13	0.81	-0.13	-0.09	-0.09	-0.09	0.06	0.12	-0.07	-0.29	1.00													
10 3-Party Employment Relationship	1093	1	0	0.20	0.40	-0.18	-0.56	-0.44	0.28	-0.14	-0.07	-0.23	-0.10	0.09	1.00												
11 Fixed-Term Contract	1035	1	0	0.49	0.50	-0.48	-0.63	-0.79	0.20	-0.21	-0.03	-0.22	-0.30	0.15	0.40	1.00											
12 Gender (Male=1)	1093	1	0	0.26	0.44	0.44	0.26	0.32	0.05	0.17	-0.08	0.23	0.24	-0.10	-0.21	-0.35	1.00										
13 Age	1093	59	22	39.55	9.34	0.18	-0.02	-0.06	0.07	-0.10	0.04	-0.04	-0.09	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	1.00									
14 Junior/Technical College Grad	1090	1	0	0.28	0.45	-0.13	-0.11	-0.15	0.05	-0.02	0.03	-0.03	-0.12	0.01	0.05	0.14	-0.26	0.21	1.00								
15 College/Post Grad	1090	1	0	0.52	0.50	0.18	0.16	0.21	-0.06	0.11	-0.03	0.08	0.19	-0.05	-0.06	-0.27	0.26	-0.34	-0.65	1.00							
16 Spouse	1093	1	0	0.40	0.49	0.15	0.09	0.11	-0.08	0.12	0.04	0.08	-0.07	-0.03	-0.06	-0.10	0.17	0.20	-0.03	0.03	1.00						
17 Children	1093	1	0	0.26	0.44	0.09	0.09	0.10	-0.11	0.10	0.01	0.10	-0.08	-0.03	-0.10	-0.10	0.14	0.23	0.01	-0.02	0.55	1.00					
18 Household Provider (Yes = 1)	1093	1	0	0.53	0.50	0.35	0.12	0.16	0.06	0.02	0.00	0.10	0.22	-0.07	-0.09	-0.19	0.40	0.17	-0.10	0.04	-0.18	0.01	1.00				
19 Years of Office Experience	1093	42	1	13.15	8.69	0.24	0.06	0.06	0.02	-0.05	0.07	0.00	-0.03	0.00	-0.05	-0.03	-0.05	0.68	0.21	-0.34	0.10	0.09	0.15	1.00			
20 Years Working in Office	1093	42	1	9.25	8.33	0.48	0.40	0.44	-0.11	0.05	0.08	0.12	0.11	-0.04	-0.32	-0.44	0.23	0.50	0.07	-0.15	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.51	1.00		
21 Management Position	1093	1	0	0.20	0.40	0.50	0.34	0.44	-0.07	0.11	0.05	0.22	0.21	-0.15	-0.24	-0.46	0.37	0.17	-0.10	0.16	0.16	0.13	0.25	0.20	0.43	1.00	
22 Labor Union Member	1093	1	0	0.42	0.49	0.18	0.35	0.38	-0.16	0.15	0.01	0.15	0.09	-0.03	-0.30	-0.39	0.16	-0.10	-0.09	0.11	0.03	0.05	0.03	-0.03	0.22	0.14	1.00

Note: Correlation coefficient of 0.060 or more is statistically significant at the .05 level; 0.078 or more at the .10 level; 0.108 or more at the .01 level.

Table 3. Averages and Standard Deviations

Job Quality		Employment Relationship					Employment Contract				
		3-Party Relationship		2-Party Relationship		t-test	Fixed-Term Contract		Non-Fixed Term Contract		t-test
		Average	Standard Deviation	Average	Standard Deviation	Difference between 3-Party & 2-Party Relationship	Average	Standard Deviation	Average	Standard Deviation	Difference between Fixed & Non-Fixed Term Contracts
Wages	Monthly Income	3.55	0.91	4.37	2.05	-8.57 ***	3.33	1.14	5.17	2.07	-17.07 ***
Fringe Benefits	Bonus	0.02	0.14	0.71	0.45	-38.73 ***	0.27	0.45	0.89	0.31	-25.62 ***
	Retirement Money	0.01	0.10	0.56	0.50	-30.47 ***	0.07	0.25	0.85	0.35	-41.59 ***
Job Security	Unemployment Risk	3.22	1.59	2.24	1.31	8.41 ***	2.73	1.47	2.16	1.32	6.64 ***
	Skill Development Opportunities	2.82	1.32	3.28	1.33	-4.63 ***	2.92	1.31	3.47	1.31	-6.75 ***
Job Autonomy	Discretion in Work	3.08	0.87	3.21	0.76	-2.19 *	3.17	0.81	3.21	0.75	-0.91
	Decision-Making Involvement	2.36	1.27	3.13	1.32	-7.78 ***	2.68	1.32	3.27	1.32	-7.27 ***
Flexibility of Working Hours	Weekly Work Hours	5.30	1.22	5.71	1.68	-4.05 ***	5.19	1.48	6.14	1.57	-10.05 ***
	Work-Life Balance	3.28	0.75	3.10	0.82	2.91 **	3.26	0.78	3.02	0.82	4.85 ***
N			218		875			512		523	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level

Table 4a. Impact of Employment Relationship and Employment Contract on Job Quality: Wages

Explained Variable			Monthly Income			
			Ordered Logit Regression			
Explanatory Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error
3-Party Employment Relationship	0.223	0.164			0.337	0.173
Fixed-Term Contract			-0.933 ***	0.173	-1.001 ***	0.176
Gender (Male=1)	1.201 ***	0.167	1.129 ***	0.172	1.150 ***	0.172
Age	-0.018	0.009	0.000	0.010	-0.002	0.010
(Standard: High School Grad)						
Junior/Technical College Grad	0.381 *	0.173	0.251	0.180	0.243	0.181
College/Post Grad	1.081 ***	0.169	0.867 ***	0.178	0.851 ***	0.178
Spouse	0.364 *	0.152	0.286	0.158	0.279	0.158
Children	-0.444 **	0.164	-0.413 *	0.169	-0.401 *	0.169
Household Provider (Yes = 1)	0.843 ***	0.140	0.761 ***	0.144	0.760 ***	0.144
Office Work Experience	0.036 ***	0.010	0.035 **	0.010	0.034 **	0.010
Years Working in Office	0.090 ***	0.010	0.062 ***	0.011	0.066 ***	0.011
Management Position	1.102 ***	0.179	0.906 ***	0.186	0.913 ***	0.186
Labor Union Member	0.238	0.130	-0.013	0.135	0.039	0.137
(Standard: 300-999 Employees)						
1000-2999 Employees	-0.035	0.165	0.040	0.170	0.035	0.171
3000-4999 Employees	-0.335	0.214	-0.264	0.218	-0.263	0.218
5000+ Employees	-0.021	0.150	0.128	0.155	0.100	0.155
Industry Dummy	Yes		Yes		Yes	
-2 Log Likelihood	3231.867		3040.233		3036.324	
Chi-Square	624.755 ***		628.496 ***		632.405 ***	
Pseudo R-Squared (Cox & Snell)	0.462		0.481		0.483	
N	1007		958		958	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level

Table 4b. Impact of Employment Relationship and Employment Contract on Job Quality: Fringe Benefits

Explained Variable	Bonus						Retirement Pay/Corporate Pension					
	Binomial Logit Regression						Binomial Logit Regression					
Explanatory Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error
3-Party Relationship	-4.231 ***	0.528			-4.275 ***	0.553	-3.924 ***	0.734			-3.842 ***	0.777
Fixed-Term Contract			-2.228 ***	0.225	-2.345 ***	0.273			-3.577 ***	0.280	-3.639 ***	0.307
Gender (Male=1)	0.317	0.246	0.305	0.261	0.083	0.285	0.478	0.247	0.184	0.313	0.012	0.328
Age	-0.045 **	0.014	-0.014	0.015	-0.004	0.016	-0.100 ***	0.016	-0.055 **	0.019	-0.041 *	0.020
(Standard: High School Grad)												
Junior/Technical College Grad	0.035	0.253	-0.255	0.256	-0.205	0.277	-0.051	0.284	-1.016 **	0.372	-0.975 *	0.382
College/Post Grad	0.652 **	0.245	0.069	0.250	0.167	0.275	0.790 **	0.267	-0.459	0.356	-0.357	0.366
Spouse	0.197	0.229	0.064	0.232	0.136	0.262	0.170	0.240	0.079	0.308	0.095	0.328
Children	-0.054	0.251	-0.033	0.252	-0.221	0.277	0.161	0.269	-0.047	0.331	-0.163	0.344
Household Provider (Yes = 1)	0.091	0.201	-0.016	0.204	-0.084	0.228	0.102	0.208	-0.092	0.264	-0.240	0.282
Office Work Experience	0.005	0.016	-0.005	0.016	-0.001	0.017	0.022	0.017	0.012	0.021	0.013	0.021
Years Working in Office	0.114 ***	0.017	0.099 ***	0.018	0.055 **	0.019	0.149 ***	0.017	0.096 ***	0.021	0.068 **	0.022
Management Position	1.078 ***	0.301	0.461	0.327	0.132	0.342	2.019 ***	0.307	1.214 **	0.357	1.002 **	0.360
Labor Union Member	0.885 ***	0.188	0.772 ***	0.193	0.342	0.216	1.055 ***	0.192	0.690 **	0.236	0.338	0.255
(Standard: 300-999 Employees)												
1000-2999 Employees	-0.350	0.243	-0.164	0.246	-0.178	0.275	-0.299	0.254	0.215	0.311	0.220	0.325
3000-4999 Employees	-0.679 *	0.312	-0.469	0.325	-0.585	0.348	-0.057	0.323	0.413	0.405	0.424	0.422
5000+ Employees	-0.388	0.228	-0.377	0.226	-0.251	0.257	-0.286	0.236	0.017	0.283	0.155	0.304
Industry Dummy	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
-2 Log Likelihood	841.669		854.291		699.126		783.175		586.031		530.180	
Chi-Square	647.561 ***		548.641 ***		703.807 ***		716.357 ***		840.848 ***		896.699 **	
Pseudo R-Squared (Cox & Snell)	0.448		0.412		0.494		0.482		0.557		0.580	
N	1090		1033		1033		1090		1033		1033	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level

Table 4c. Impact of Employment Relationship and Employment Contract on Job Quality: Job Security

Explained Variable	Unemployment Risk						Skill Development Opportunities					
	Ordered Logit Regression						Ordered Logit Regression					
Explanatory Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error
3-Party Relationship	1.084 ***	0.158			1.010 ***	0.165	-0.390 *	0.156			-0.377 *	0.163
Fixed-Term Contract			0.705 ***	0.164	0.550 **	0.167			-0.405 *	0.161	-0.343 *	0.163
Gender (Male = 1)	0.752 ***	0.159	0.815 ***	0.165	0.866 ***	0.166	0.579 ***	0.157	0.647 ***	0.163	0.634 ***	0.163
Age	0.031 **	0.009	0.028 **	0.010	0.027 **	0.010	-0.030 **	0.009	-0.028 **	0.010	-0.026 **	0.010
(Standard: High School Grad)												
Junior/Technical College Grad	-0.019	0.164	0.018	0.171	0.009	0.171	0.450 **	0.162	0.336 *	0.169	0.344 *	0.169
College/Post Grad	-0.197	0.159	-0.113	0.168	-0.128	0.168	0.378 *	0.157	0.255	0.166	0.269	0.166
Spouse	-0.163	0.146	-0.180	0.152	-0.192	0.152	0.361 *	0.144	0.305 *	0.150	0.312 *	0.150
Children	-0.432 **	0.159	-0.469 **	0.164	-0.424 *	0.164	0.146	0.156	0.164	0.160	0.145	0.160
Household Provider (Yes = 1)	-0.038	0.133	-0.062	0.138	-0.074	0.138	-0.077	0.131	-0.153	0.136	-0.156	0.136
Office Work Experience	-0.004	0.009	-0.003	0.010	-0.005	0.010	0.010	0.009	0.009	0.010	0.009	0.010
Years Working in Office	-0.022 *	0.010	-0.022 *	0.010	-0.010	0.010	-0.003	0.009	-0.006	0.010	-0.011	0.010
Management Position	-0.028	0.170	0.104	0.178	0.123	0.178	0.113	0.166	0.003	0.173	-0.004	0.174
Labor Union Member	-0.247	0.126	-0.307 *	0.131	-0.165	0.133	0.301 *	0.124	0.265 *	0.129	0.216	0.131
(Standard: 300-999 Employees)												
1000-2999 Employees	-0.181	0.159	-0.215	0.165	-0.238	0.165	-0.086	0.156	-0.050	0.162	-0.052	0.162
3000-4999 Employees	-0.358	0.210	-0.440 *	0.215	-0.447 *	0.215	0.114	0.205	0.138	0.209	0.130	0.209
5000+ Employees	-0.012	0.143	0.020	0.148	-0.048	0.149	0.176	0.142	0.156	0.146	0.182	0.147
Industry Dummy	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
-2 Log Likelihood	3264.730		3117.164		3080.167		3459.079		3269.265		3264.083	
Chi-Square	167.868 ***		142.191 ***		179.188 ***		124.610 ***		122.979 ***		128.161 ***	
Pseudo R-Squared (Cox & Snell)	0.143		0.129		0.159		0.108		0.112		0.117	
N	1090		1033		1033		1090		1033		1033	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level

Table 4d. Impact of Employment Relationship and Employment Contract on Job Quality: Job Autonomy

Explained Variable	Discretion in Work Ordered Logit Regression						Decision-Making Involvement Ordered Logit Regression					
Explanatory Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error
3-Party Relationship	-0.425 *	0.168			-0.481 **	0.177	-0.758 ***	0.157			-0.714 ***	0.164
Fixed-Term Contract			-0.078	0.173	0.008	0.176			-0.278	0.160	-0.162	0.162
Gender (Male = 1)	-0.791 ***	0.170	-0.730 ***	0.176	-0.763 ***	0.176	0.630 ***	0.156	0.694 ***	0.162	0.655 ***	0.162
Age	-0.007	0.010	-0.006	0.010	-0.005	0.010	-0.022 *	0.009	-0.020 *	0.010	-0.018	0.010
(Standard: High School Grad)												
Junior/Technical College Grad	-0.010	0.176	0.036	0.183	0.045	0.183	0.262	0.162	0.210	0.168	0.218	0.169
College/Post Grad	0.032	0.170	0.055	0.179	0.071	0.180	0.077	0.157	-0.017	0.166	-0.013	0.166
Spouse	0.210	0.156	0.160	0.162	0.182	0.162	0.101	0.144	0.065	0.149	0.078	0.150
Children	-0.024	0.168	0.020	0.173	-0.013	0.173	0.260	0.155	0.275	0.159	0.250	0.160
Household Provider (Yes = 1)	0.145	0.141	0.132	0.146	0.140	0.147	0.054	0.130	-0.010	0.135	0.002	0.135
Office Work Experience	0.011	0.010	0.008	0.010	0.008	0.010	0.009	0.009	0.006	0.010	0.005	0.010
Years Working in Office	0.007	0.010	0.009	0.011	0.004	0.011	-0.002	0.009	0.002	0.010	-0.005	0.010
Management Position	0.287	0.180	0.298	0.187	0.291	0.188	0.600 ***	0.166	0.573 **	0.173	0.571 **	0.173
Labor Union Member	-0.118	0.134	-0.022	0.138	-0.093	0.141	0.193	0.123	0.238	0.128	0.142	0.130
(Standard: 300-999 Employees)												
1000-2999 Employees	0.336 *	0.170	0.343	0.176	0.348 *	0.176	-0.078	0.156	-0.098	0.162	-0.095	0.162
3000-4999 Employees	0.134	0.221	0.151	0.225	0.142	0.225	-0.012	0.205	0.006	0.208	0.003	0.208
5000+ Employees	0.370 *	0.153	0.360 *	0.158	0.390 *	0.159	0.149	0.141	0.105	0.146	0.153	0.146
Industry Dummy	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
-2 Log Likelihood	2250.494		2137.899		2130.632		3438.832		3284.395		3265.706	
Chi-Square	82.692 ***		68.079 ***		75.346 ***		152.145 ***		126.411 ***		145.099 ***	
Pseudo R-Squared (Cox & Snell)	0.073		0.064		0.070		0.130		0.115		0.131	
N	1090		1033		1033		1090		1033		1033	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level

Table 4e. Impact of Employment Relationship and Employment Contract on Job Quality: Flexibility of Working Hours

Explained Variable	Weekly Work Hours Ordered Logit Regression						Work-Life Balance Ordered Logit Regression					
Explanatory Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error
3-Party Relationship	-0.233	0.157			-0.162	0.165	0.248	0.164			0.174	0.173
Fixed-Term Contract			-0.879 ***	0.164	-0.849 ***	0.167			0.510 **	0.169	0.480 **	0.172
Gender (Male = 1)	0.523 **	0.157	0.527 **	0.163	0.519 **	0.163	-0.156	0.163	-0.172	0.169	-0.162	0.169
Age	-0.032 ***	0.009	-0.020 *	0.010	-0.020 *	0.010	0.002	0.009	-0.007	0.010	-0.007	0.010
(Standard: High School Grad)												
Junior/Technical College Grad	0.233	0.164	0.118	0.171	0.123	0.171	-0.165	0.171	-0.066	0.178	-0.070	0.178
College/Post Grad	0.673 ***	0.159	0.472 **	0.169	0.478 **	0.169	-0.172	0.165	-0.061	0.175	-0.066	0.175
Spouse	-0.064	0.145	-0.126	0.152	-0.117	0.152	-0.040	0.151	0.089	0.158	0.086	0.158
Children	-0.459 **	0.157	-0.448 **	0.162	-0.460 **	0.162	-0.034	0.163	-0.075	0.168	-0.066	0.168
Household Provider (Yes = 1)	0.541 ***	0.133	0.429 **	0.138	0.432 **	0.138	-0.141	0.137	-0.100	0.143	-0.100	0.143
Office Work Experience	0.004	0.009	0.001	0.010	0.001	0.010	-0.001	0.010	0.003	0.010	0.003	0.010
Years Working in Office	0.025 **	0.010	0.006	0.010	0.004	0.010	0.008	0.010	0.016	0.011	0.018	0.011
Management Position	0.475 **	0.167	0.267	0.174	0.264	0.174	-0.579 **	0.174	-0.484 **	0.181	-0.481 **	0.181
Labor Union Member	0.033	0.124	-0.124	0.129	-0.145	0.131	-0.002	0.129	0.110	0.135	0.136	0.137
(Standard: 300-999 Employees)												
1000-2999 Employees	-0.251	0.158	-0.148	0.164	-0.148	0.164	0.008	0.164	-0.032	0.171	-0.034	0.171
3000-4999 Employees	0.041	0.207	0.159	0.211	0.156	0.211	0.046	0.216	-0.053	0.220	-0.049	0.220
5000+ Employees	0.064	0.143	0.176	0.148	0.185	0.148	-0.051	0.149	-0.133	0.154	-0.144	0.155
Industry Dummy	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
-2 Log Likelihood	3697.774		3457.413		3456.412		2439.247		2299.459		2298.445	
Chi-Square	205.276 ***		221.750 ***		222.750 ***		48.713 *		57.064 **		58.078 **	
Pseudo R-Squared (Cox & Snell)	0.172		0.193		0.194		0.044		0.054		0.055	
N	1090		1033		1033		1090		1033		1033	

*Statistically significant at the .10 level; ** at the .05 level; *** at the .01 level