ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE WELL BEING

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ABSTRACT

One significant trend in human resource practice that dominated the 1990s was the move away from traditional, full-time employment toward a variety of different forms of alternative work arrangements. Accompanying this trend was a growing concern about the effects of alternative forms of work for well being. We first review the different forms of alternative work arrangements, which vary in terms of temporal, numerical and locational flexibility. Thereafter, the effects of different forms of alternative work arrangements (e.g. part-time employment, job-sharing, outsourcing) on psychological and physical well being, and occupational safety and health are evaluated. We conclude by noting that alternative work arrangements do not necessarily exert uniformly negative effects on well being. Instead, the importance of the volitionality with which individuals assume alternative work arrangements must be considered: When individuals choose such arrangements because they want to, any potential negative effects are minimized. In contrast, when individuals assume such work arrangements because of a lack of perceived alternatives, there is a greater risk for negative effects. Finally, the need for future research which more

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rigorously accounts for the conceptual differences across alternative work arrangements is noted.

INTRODUCTION

Researchers who focus upon the study of employment, organizations, worker-organizational relationships, and employee well being have become trapped by a stereotypical image of the world of work, assuming that "normal," "standard" or "typical" work exists in the form of a cyclical Monday through Friday work schedule, with a morning starting time, lunch break, and a late afternoon or early evening commute back home, with rest and relaxation relegated to weekends and public holidays. In contrast, the reality is that within the U.S. and Canada, less than one-third of the workforce is employed in jobs that fit the Monday through Friday, full-time, day shift stereotype (Fenwick & Tausig, 2001). Thus, frequently utilized terms like "non-standard" or "atypical" employment, which appear in the management and organizational psychology literature, are in many respects ambiguous, if not inappropriate. If less than a third of the workforce falls within the definition of traditional work arrangements, then what precisely is "standard" or "typical" employment?

More than a decade ago, Pfeffer and Baron (1988) noted that existing theories and perspectives of organizational theory are based upon bureaucratic models of organizational control. Within such models, there exists the underlying assumption of a clear delineation of manager-employee responsibilities, a relationship where satisfactory performance is rewarded by continued employment, with work being crucial to personal and social identity. More recently, Gallagher and McLean Parks (2001) raised questions concerning the extent to which such commonly accepted and tested constructs as organizational commitment, work involvement, or an identifiable employer have meaning to workers performing jobs outside standard models of employment. Given recent changes in the world of work, we believe it is now an opportune time to open the door both to theoretical and practical questions concerning the extent to which models of occupational stress and employee well being are applicable to the majority of workers and work arrangements which are outside the stereotyped and bureaucratic world of "regular" employment, and the aim of this chapter is to initiate such thinking.

We begin this chapter with a detailed overview of the many employment arrangements that exist outside of the traditional full-time, nine-to-five world of work. Attention will be given not only to the underlying structural characteristics of "atypical" work arrangements, but also, where applicable to the factors that have contributed to their increased emergence.

THE NATURE OF ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Rethinking the Image of Employment Contracts and Working Schedules

In recent years there has been a considerable focus within academic and practitioner literatures on the changing nature of employment contracts (Cooper & Burke, 2002; Kalleberg, 2000; Tetrick & Barling, 1995; Vosko, 2000; Zeytinoğlu, 1999). For the most part, writers have sought to document the decline of the "traditional" or ongoing employer – employee relationships, and the growth of alternative working arrangements. Very visible in these discussions of the new working relationships has been the increased presence and growth of "contingent," "temporary," or "fixed-term" contracts. The transition from more permanent to contingent or transitory employment contracts has been repeatedly associated with employer concerns about increasingly competitive product markets, the availability of new information technologies and managerial strategies which can minimize the fixed costs associated with people (Cappelli, 1999). For many employers, the mantra at the start of the new century has become organizational "flexibility" (Sparrow, 1998; Drucker, 2002), and in many circles "flexibility" has become a code word for employer-driven efforts to restructure the way in which work is performed and the basic characteristics of the employment contract.

From the organizational perspective, human resource flexibility can be achieved in a number of ways. At the organizational or micro level, flexibility may be numerical, functional, temporal, locational, or financial in focus (Reilly, 1998). Numerical flexibility has been frequently characterized as the ability of the employer to readily adjust the size of the workforce to meet the cyclical needs of the business. Numerical flexibility may not only be focused on the ability to adjust required levels of employment at a particular phase of operations, but could also involve large scale adjustments in the size of the organization's immediate workforce through the "outsourcing" or "subcontracting" of work previously performed within the organization (Brewster et al., 1997). Temporal flexibility also relates to organizational interests in matching staffing levels with the daily or immediate production or services schedules of the organization (Reilly, 1998). Temporal staffing flexibility is frequently achieved through shift work schedules, "flextime" arrangements (i.e. variable starting and finishing times), and compressed or flexible working weeks. Especially in service industries, temporal flexibility is often achieved through the practice of employing workers on part-time contracts. Functional flexibility is relevant in the context of how an organization internally associates labor

within the organization. Firms that are functionally flexible strive to reduce the lines of demarcation between different jobs within the organization, and improve productivity by moving employees among different tasks within the organization. Functional flexibility is also often achieved through initiatives such as cross training and skill-based pay plans. While functional flexibility is focused internally, locational flexibility is directed toward ways of using workers outside of the normal workplace (Reilly, 1998). Locational strategies may include the use of home-based workers, outworkers, and the increased use of workers on "teleworking" arrangements (Duxbury & Higgins, 2002). Finally, employers may also seek financial flexibility through variable pay systems that attempt to link labor costs with organizational performance. Through gain sharing (and also loss sharing) and other forms of performance-based pay, the goal is to place a larger share of the employee's compensation at risk.

We now turn our attention to a description of the different forms of alternative work arrangements. It is important to note that many of these arrangements are not new, but have been used for many years (see Capelli, 1999). What is more novel and under-developed is the empirical attention focused on these work arrangements.

Temporal Flexibility

Full-Time Work

From a statistical perspective, full-time work is usually indicated by holding a job, or employment with a particular organization, for between 35 to 40 hours of paid employment per week. However, being a "full-time" employee should not be mistaken for the stereotypical view of the Monday-to-Friday, nine-to-five worker. Being a full-time worker could very well include a variety of scheduling or alternative temporal work arrangements. For example, temporal flexibility has traditionally focused on employer interests concerning when the work is performed. As a function of extant technologies or customer generated demand, full-time work is often performed on a *shift work* basis. Most notably, full-time work is engaged in, but such work may be performed during nights or early morning "graveyard" shifts. To a large degree, shift work may be predictable and regular in scheduling, (i.e. an ongoing evening shift). In many respects it can be a fixed work schedule, but not necessarily the nine-to-five day shift.

Alternatively, shift work may itself be variable in terms of scheduling. Variability may exist as to whether workers remain on a selected shift, or whether they are moved or rotated between shifts. Shifts may also differ in both length and days of the week. For example, in some occupations, particularly those

associated with public safety (police, fire, health care), "normal" work schedules may well fall outside the assumed standard of eight hour shifts, and in fact may sometimes extend as long as 12–24 hours. In essence, full-time work, and nine-to-five employment are no longer synonymous.

Part-Time Work

Although differences exist between countries with regard to the legal or statistical definition, part-time employment is generally defined as scheduled work that is performed for fewer than 35 hours per week. Within many countries, part-time work represents a significant share (i.e. in excess of 20%) of all paid employment. Younger workers (16–24 years of age), middle-aged women, and older workers transitioning into retirement are disproportionately represented among part-time workers.

Part-time work has long been a scheduling mechanism used by organizations to achieve temporal flexibility. Used mainly in the service and retail trade sectors, part-time work schedules are a cost-efficient means for appropriate staffing at peak customer demand hours. From the employee's perspective, part-time work arrangements are usually undertaken on a voluntary basis, and in many circumstances represents a way for workers to balance work (income and work experience) and non-work interests (school and/or family demands, Barling & Gallagher, 1996).

Job Sharing

Job sharing represents a nexus between the worlds of full- and part-time employment. Job sharing arrangements have been promoted primarily as a means of allowing workers in career-oriented professions to maintain on-going employment within an organization, while simultaneously being placed on a reduced hour or part-time schedule. Most workers in job sharing arrangements are women with children at home, and are more likely than "regular" part-time workers to hold university degrees.

Temporary Employment

For many organizations, the employment of workers on temporary or "fixed-term" contracts provides a way of maximizing numerical flexibility within increasingly competitive environments. Under the terms of *direct-hire* temporary work arrangements, workers are recruited to the organization's own "in-house" pool of temporary employees. In situations where the organization needs to secure staffing on an unexpected basis (e.g. because of absences) or to meet expanded production or service demands, workers are drawn from the "in-house" pool. Perhaps the most commonly recognized means of

securing workers under fixed-term employment contracts, however, is through the use of temporary help staffing firms (e.g. Manpower, Adecco, Kelly Services).

Historically, temporary staffing has been associated with providing client organizations with workers for short-term assignments in the areas of office support work (i.e. clerical) and manual unskilled laborers. However, the temporary help industry has evolved to include the short-term placement of workers in a broad range of technical and professional services. This increased professionalization of skills available through temporary help firms also affords employer or client organizations access to increased functional flexibility. In particular, employers may be able to contract workers with specific skill sets that are needed only on a short term basis through temporary help firms. From the employee's perspective, being registered with and dispatched through the services of temporary help firms offers a way to transition in and out of the labor force, and a method of gaining and applying job related skills. In many cases temporary work is seen as a means of access to more permanent employment arrangements with a particular client or employer organization.

Seasonal Contracts

Within certain industries, there is a substantial need by organizations to make regular numerical adjustments in the size of their workforces. Most visible of such types of organizations are those that are highly seasonal in nature (e.g. agriculture, tourist resorts). In many respects, seasonal contracts represent a hybrid of full-time and part-time employment contracts. Employees are often employed to work full-time schedules on a weekly or monthly basis, but the contracts are simultaneous part-time in the respect that they are only for a part of the calendar year. As noted by Alder and Alder (2001), some seasonal work (e.g. service-focused resort industries) requires excessively long workdays and frequent rescheduling of work shifts to meet service and weather conditions. In other contexts, seasonal contracts may be fairly stable, for example where the employer is using workers on seasonal or short-term contracts to meet numerical staffing needs created by "regular" employees on summer vacations. Seasonal employment contracts are also exemplified in the form of migrant labor contracts that are common in large-scale agricultural business. The work involves excessive hours (often exempted from prevailing labor laws), and the contracts are of fixed duration. Most forms of seasonal employment have explicit starting and termination dates associated with the employment relationship. Although successful performance of the job may imply an expectation of a future contract, the employment deal is clearly fixed in time or task completion.

Self-Employed and Independent Contractors

Approximately 8% of the workforce is self-employed (Bregger, 1996; Gardner, 1995), and many of these workers operate as *independent contractors* or freelance workers. In the broader context of organizational downsizing, many professional workers have turned toward self-employed consulting as a means of personally restructuring and re-establishing their own careers, often after being laid off from a traditional job in an organization (Barling, 1999). For many organizations, independent contractors represent an identifiable form of functional flexibility in which they are able to secure required professional expertise without making the commitment of an on-going relationship. Most independent contractor arrangements are established on a project basis, rather than on actual hours of work. Independent contractors technically operate in a world where a single employer is replaced with multiple "client" arrangements (Gallagher & McLean Parks, 2001).

Locational Flexibility

In addition to understanding the underlying structure of employment contracts (e.g. full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal), jobs can also be viewed from the perspective of locational flexibility, i.e. where they are performed.

Home-Based Work and Teleworking

From a locational perspective, employment (at least in the context of an industrial society) has invariably been viewed as taking place in a location away from home. For an increasing number of self-employed workers or independent contractors, the home and the office are now one and the same, a trend that has increased since the 1980s (Edwards & Field-Hendrey, 1996). Although it is difficult to closely measure the number of workers who electronically commute to work via *teleworking* arrangements, telework has become an increasing prevalent form of "locational" flexibility for both employers and workers, with advantages including reduced travel time, reductions in work related costs, greater flexibility is scheduling work hours, as well as the potential for a better balance of work-family interests (Duxbury & Higgins, 2002). Teleworking can be structured in a number of different ways. Telework is not necessarily always performed from home; telework may be performed outside the home and office, but at designated "telecenters" or other "hoteling" or remote worksite arrangements. The combined growth of both self-employed independent contractor arrangements and teleworking arrangements has also been accompanied with a change in the gender profile of home-based workers, with a continued rise in the number of men electing to work from home.

A substantial number of workers are employed in "outworker" arrangements. While "outworking" is in many respects the same as "home-based" employment, the term and practice of "outworking" has long been associated with self-employed garment trade workers. Women and immigrants are disproportionately involved in telework. More technically-sophisticated "outworking" jobs with piece rate or commission-based payments now exist in the form of home-based "call-centers".

Outsourcing

Managerial decisions to *subcontract* or *outsource* certain products or services has become increasingly common in the context of organization strategies aimed at retaining direct control and responsibility over only those functional areas which represent an organization's "core competences" (Greer, Youngblood & Gray, 1999). In many cases, outsourcing is a cost-benefit based employment strategy founded on the belief that services currently performed in the organization (e.g. food services, payroll, accounting, marketing) can be performed more efficiently by "external providers".

As an increasingly popular approach to organizational re-staffing, outsourcing has the potential to change the social dynamics of the workplace. For example, in some cases, the workforce of an entire functional area may be terminated as a result of a decision to outsource the work. However, the same workforce may be hired by the new firm which provides the outsourcing service. For the discharged workers, their basic tasks and responsibilities remain the same, but their employment-contract is now with another employer. Such arrangements may be particularly perplexing to workers from a locational perspective when the job itself is performed on the premises of the past employer.

Numerical Flexibility

Analogous to the increasing desire of organizations to maximize different forms of flexibility, workers may also seek to contract or expand their own levels of paid work. ***Overtime work***, ***moonlighting***, and ***multiple job holding***, represent three long established approaches through which workers can expand their own paid work time. Although the availability of overtime work hours is not normally controlled by workers, individual employees may signal to the organization their interest and availability to perform such work when it is available.

Moonlighting refers to those situations in which individuals have a primary job or employer organization to which they are attached, but seek additional working time at a different organization. In contrast, ***multiple-job holding*** occurs where individual workers take on varying amounts of work at different orga-

nizations in order to construct the hourly equivalent of a full-time job. In many cases, multiple job holding may be motivated by the inability of workers to find suitable full-time employment, and are thus forced for economic reasons to construct a full-time work schedule from part-time positions. In fact, financial factors represent a major factor cited in the reasons why people seek and hold a second job (Stinson, 1990; Amirault, 1997). In contrast, there is evidence to support the counter-intuitive suggestions that people who moonlight tend to be relatively well paid and better educated than individuals who hold only one job (Amirault, 1997), and moon-lighters may seek out additional work to minimize undesirable domestic relationships (Hochschild, 1997). In both the case of moonlighting and multiple job holding, however, the structural and social aspects of work may add a degree of complexity that would be otherwise absent in a single employment relationship.

Summary

Perhaps the strongest force for alternative working arrangements is the need for employers to meet temporal or schedule-based demands, which results in increased interest in, and emphasis on shift work, part-time hours, and seasonal work by employers. For many organizations, the perceived need to become more flexible in terms adjusting staffing levels (temporal) and acquiring specific skills on short notice (functional flexibility), has contributed to a sizable increase in the number of employment relationships which not only have become more flexible in terms of when work is performed, but also changed the duration of employment from a fixed term to a temporary basis. As in the past, the home also remains a place of paid employment. In the current technological environment, the nature of the types of jobs that can be performed at home and the ability of employers to increase options in terms of where the work is performed has dramatically increased.

Employees themselves are also often seeking alternative working arrangements which more effectively fit their own needs. This search can include multiple job holding or performing work for multiple clients. The flexibility of being able to work fewer or more hours, to share a job with another worker, or to work from home are all flexibility-based considerations which are driven by worker interests and not simply imposed upon the worker.

However, as suggested above, the variety that exists in how hours can be scheduled, the duration of the workweek, the location of the work, and the permanency of the work contract, make it extremely difficult to establish clear or non-overlapping categories of "alternative" work arrangements.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEE WELL BEING

Thus far, we have presented a framework within which to understand alternative forms of employment. Before attempting an understanding of the consequences of alternative forms of employment for work stress and well being, several conceptual issues require explanation, including the use of the terms "work stress" and "psychosocial work factors", a description of psychosocial work factors, and how alternative work factors affect employee well being.

First, we explicitly choose not to use the term "work stress". Ever since Kahn et al.'s (1964) classic study on role stressors, the topic of "work stress" (or "work stressors") has received a tremendous amount of attention, from empirical researchers, practitioners and the lay public alike. On the one hand, this attention is obviously beneficial, given the body of knowledge that has been generated. However, as the topic of "work stress" has gained in popularity, it may have been used so broadly that its consensual meaning has become diffused (see Barling, 1990; Sauter, Murphy & Hurrell, 1990), with concomitant negative consequences for construct validity. For this reason, we choose to avoid the term.

Instead, we choose to focus on the subjective experience of work (Barling, 1990), or the perceived psychosocial work environment (Sauter et al., 1990) for several reasons. First, as Sauter et al. (1990, p. 1150) suggest, the term "psychosocial factors" highlights the focus on the experiences of individual workers, including the social environment at work, organizational aspects of the job, and the content ... of the tasks performed". Second, a focus on psychosocial characteristics of the workplace is gaining increasing acceptance in the organizational literature (e.g. Elovainio, Kivimäki & Vahtera, 2002; Hurrell, 2002). Third, objective events at work (e.g. a move from traditional to alternative employment arrangements) initially influence the subjective experience of work. In turn, it is the subjective experience of work that influences psychological, psychosomatic and behavioral outcomes (Barling, 1990; Pratt & Barling, 1988).

Finally, Warr (1987) notes that the relationship between work and mental health is not linear. Instead, he argues that mental health will be affected by environmental factors in the same way that vitamins affect physical health. To pursue this analogy, vitamins do not exert a uniform, linear effect on physical health. Extremely high levels of vitamins A and D, for example, may not only fail to provide benefits, but can be detrimental, and Warr (1987) argues that the same principle holds true for what we term psychosocial work factors. We suggest that control or autonomy may function similarly to vitamins A and D,

where too much control or autonomy may be detrimental. Schaubroeck, Jones and Xie's (2001) research suggests that high levels of control may be used ineffectively, and experienced as distressing, by people who have a propensity for self-blame for negative outcomes, or low self-efficacy beliefs.

Warr's (1987) vitamin model is important because it reminds us that changes in forms of employment can exert positive as well as negative effects, and that a singular focus on deficiencies in the psychosocial work environment will lead to a truncated body of knowledge. What is required instead is a focus that allows us to understand the negative consequences of changes in work arrangements, but also positive outcomes as well (Turner, Barling & Zacharatos, 2002). One example of the impact of an exclusively problem-oriented focus is illustrative. Until the mid-1980s, virtually all research on the effects of maternal employment found that it yielded negative consequences. However, the surveys that were being conducted primarily asked questions about the potentially deleterious effects of maternal employment. Only when researchers began to look for any possible benefits of maternal employment were any positive effects found (Barling, 1990).

A comprehensive description of various components of the psychosocial work environment experienced by employees in traditional and alternative forms of employment can be captured in ten different elements. Sauter et al. (1990) initially identified six of these psychosocial workplace factors (and their article contains a more comprehensive discussion of these factors), including workload and pace, work scheduling, role clarity, employment security, positive interpersonal relationships and high quality jobs.

The issue of *work load and pace* has been of interest to researchers for several decades, and recent meta-analytic findings (Sparks, Cooper, Fried & Shirom, 1997) confirm their importance. Likewise, *work scheduling* has been an issue to employees ever since the invention of electricity allowed work to take place on a 24 hour cycle. The nature, meaning, and consequences of role stressors have been recognized since Kahn et al.'s (1964) classic research (see Jackson & Schuler, 1985). Sauter et al. (1990) include "role stressors" in their conceptualization, as do we and others (Warr, 1987). However, while incorporating this idea, we focus on "*role clarity*" (rather than role stressors or role ambiguity) to reflect the positive nature of the psychosocial work factors. Next, we include *employment security*. While we accept the importance of Sauter et al.'s (1990) notion of "career" security, we focus on employment security for a number of reasons: (a) when employees are insecure, long-term career development assumes less importance than short-term aspirations for security; (b) employment security is more realistic in a market-driven economy than job security; and (c) employment security forms a major part of current

conceptualizations of high performance work systems (e.g. Pfeffer, 1998). People seek work for many reasons, and the opportunity for *positive interpersonal relationships* is one of the most important (Jahoda, 1982; Warr, 1987). Poor relationships with people at work is an important source of dissatisfaction. By contrast, social support from people at work enhances performance and well being. Lastly, Sauter et al. (1990) include job content, and note how narrow, fragmented jobs that provide little challenge and skill use are associated with dissatisfaction and diminished well being. In keeping with a positive focus on psychosocial factors, we incorporate *high quality jobs* (see Barling, Kelloway & Iverson, in press), which include skill development (e.g. training) and empowerment (e.g. skill use, autonomy).

In trying to understand the consequences of new forms of employment on psychosocial work factors, however, we go beyond the six factors identified by Sauter et al. (1990), and include four additional components of the psychosocial work environment, namely personal control at work, perceived fairness, financial compensation and status volition.

Currently, a tremendous amount of empirical attention is focused on the nature and amount of *personal control* that employees can exert on their jobs, with findings consistently showing its positive effects on performance and well being (e.g. Ganster, Fox & Dwyer, 2001), and personal control forms a central part of several theories of "healthy work" (e.g. Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Warr, 1987). Personal control also assumes considerable importance in a workplace environment experiencing changes. *Perceived justice* is an issue that had attracted considerable attention in the last two decades, and exerts widespread and robust effects on different organizational attitudes and behaviors (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter & Ng, 2001). With changes in the nature of employment, perceived justice (especially procedural and interpersonal justice) assumes considerable importance in the perceptions of the workplace environment. Next, we agree that there is some debate about the merits of financial compensation as a motivating factor (Pfeffer, 1999). Nonetheless, we believe that the specific nature of changing employment conditions mandates the inclusion of *pay and benefits* as one of the core psychosocial work factors, because changing employment conditions can mean a decrease (e.g. a move to part-time employment) or an increase (e.g. moonlighting) in financial compensation. The importance of compensation is also supported by Warr (1987), who includes the "availability of money" as one of the critical features in the psychosocial work environment. Lastly, we include *volition*, which reflects the extent to which individuals have been free to choose their particular employment type. This is different from job control, which reflects the control *within* one's job. In contrast, volition reflects the degree of control over the work arrangements

about the job. In an environment of changing employment characteristics, volition assumes considerable importance.

Because work is a central activity for most adults, the various psychosocial experiences employees have at work can exert critical implications for their well being (Tausig, 1999). Empirical examinations of the impact of work experiences on employee well being have focused on three central themes: Psychological well being, physical well being, and the physical safety of employees. Several observations in the literature on occupational influences on well being are relevant. First, both mental and physical *wellness* have typically been defined in 'negative' terms, whereby general well being is defined as the absence of negative physical or psychological symptoms (Jamal, Baba & Tourigny, 1998). Second, psychological and physical well being are often related, and may be reciprocally caused (Jamal, 1999). Third, and most importantly from our perspective in this chapter, most theoretical formulations on the impact of work on well being are based almost entirely on data gathered from employees involved in traditional work arrangements (e.g. Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Hackman & Oldham, 1976), only extending to other forms of employment more recently. Given the variety of forms of alternative employment and their corresponding psychosocial experiences, each form of alternative employment may have a unique set of consequences for the general well being of employees.

We now turn our attention to a review of the research on well being associated with many of the forms of alternative employment. Specifically, we will now consider the consequences of the different alternative work arrangements for psychological and physical health, and occupational safety. In doing so, however, it will become apparent that there is a paucity of empirical data relating to many of the alternative work arrangements. As such, this discussion is grounded both on available empirical data on alternative work arrangements, as well as results of research generated on employees in traditional work arrangements.

Part-time Employment

Part-time work has attracted considerable empirical attention (Barling & Gallagher, 1996), a situation that was probably stimulated initially by calls to focus on part-time employees, who had been described as the "missing persons of organizational research" (Rotchford & Roberts, 1982). However, part-time workers no longer warrant the title of the "missing persons". Part-time employment is probably the most prevalent of the different forms of alternative work arrangements, and has attracted perhaps more attention than any of the other alternative work arrangements.

Psychological Well Being

The research that followed Rotchford and Roberts' early challenge to the omission of part-time workers in empirical examinations can be divided into several phases. In the first phase, numerous studies were conducted that focused on potential differences between full-time and part-time employees' job attitudes (e.g. job satisfaction, organizational commitment). The results of these studies either yielded no substantial differences in job attitudes between these groups, or inconsistent findings, with some showing that part-time employees manifested more or less positive job attitudes (see Barling & Gallagher, 1996; Lee & Johnson, 1991). With the exception of the finding that part-time employees manifest higher levels of turnover than their full-time counterparts, most studies that focused on job-related behaviors (absenteeism, turnover and job performance) did not yield significant differences between these two groups. Overall, with a few exceptions (see for e.g. Dubinsky & Skinner, 1984; Steffy & Jones, 1990), much literature suggests that being employed on a part-time basis may have few unique implications for employees' subjective well being (Barling & Gallagher, 1996).

As a consequence of these findings, Barling and Gallagher (1996) suggested that the next logical question is whether there are meaningful differences *within* part-time employees. To answer this question they turned to a large body of research focusing mainly on the quantity of work performed by teenagers who are employed on a part-time basis while still at high school. Initial hypotheses suggested that the number of hours these teenagers worked was critical to diverse aspects of their well being (Steinberg, Fegley & Dornbusch, 1993), and this is important to a discussion of part-time workers given that number of hours worked is the most obvious factor on which part-time and full-time workers differ. Subsequent findings, however, suggest no consistent differences between part-time and full-time employment. Research on teenage part-time employees shows that the quantity of employment (and by extension, employment status) is an insufficient explanation of any subsequent effects, and that the quality of employment is much more important (Barling, Rogers & Kelloway, 1995; Loughlin & Barling, 1998). Part-time employees exposed to high quality work react in much the same way as do full-time employees. Similarly, full-time employees exposed to poor quality jobs can be expected to respond in the same manner as their part-time counterparts. Thus, these results suggest that specific temporal characteristics of alternative work arrangements may be less important than the quality of the job.

What appears to be more critical to part-time employees' well being is whether their involvement in part-time employment is voluntary. Voluntary part-time employment may not only pose little threat to well being, but may even

offer certain lifestyle benefits over full-time employment. Enjoying a preferred work schedule, and a sense of control over personal scheduling may increase part-time workers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and general well being, relative to full-time employees (Krausz, Sagie & Biderman, 2000). Voluntary part-time employment may be particularly beneficial for certain groups of workers such as women and elderly workers. These data also showed that part-time workers experienced less stress or depression than the other two groups, and that married couples in which the wife was employed on a part-time basis reported less marital conflict and lesser reductions in intimacy compared with couples in which the wife worked full-time (Olds, Schwartz, Eisen & Betcher, 1993). Hock and DeMeis' (1990) examined the issue of maternal employment status and showed that employed and non-employed mothers did not differ in terms of depressive symptomatology. However, women who would have preferred to be employed but remained at home manifested higher levels of depressive symptomatology. Similarly, Barling, Fullagar and Marchl-Dingle (1987) showed that mothers' employment status preference moderated the effects of employment status on their children's behaviors.

Research comparing full-time and part-time employees has extended these findings, showing that status congruence (i.e. preference to be employed part-time vs. full-time) is a significant predictor of work attitudes (e.g. Keil, Armstrong-Stassen, Cameron & Horsburgh, 2000; Holtom, Lee & Tidd, in press; Krausz, Sagie & Biderman, 2000; Morrow, McElroy & Elliott, 1994). Holtom et al. (in press) have extended these findings to show that work status congruence is also associated with employee retention and performance.

Thus, part-time employment per se would appear to be of minimal significance with respect to the psychosocial work environment, and well being. Instead, the research findings to date suggest that it is the quality of one's employment, and the degree of volition in choosing the work status, that makes a difference. Given observations that increases in part-time employment mostly occur during recessionary periods, and can often be assumed to be involuntary, is of some concern regarding the psychosocial work environment encountered by part-time employees and their well being (Barling, 1999; Nardone, 1995). Future research, however, should address further whether there are meaningful differences within groups of part-time employees more directly. In addition, issues related to employment security, positive interpersonal relationships and personal control may be especially salient given the nature of part-time employment.

Physical Well Being

There are several reasons why part-time employment may be both positively and negatively associated with physical well being. With respect to a positive

impact of part-time employment on well being, many work-related illnesses result from cumulative exposure to a dangerous or unhealthy work environment. The reduced working hours that define part-time employment correspond with less exposure to illness-inducing agents, and may therefore act as a buffer against such illnesses (Castillo, Davis & Wegman, 1999). However, part-time employees may suffer other vulnerabilities. For instance, within part-time employees as a group, two subgroups of workers who may have an above average vulnerability for health problems are young employees and shift workers (Furnham & Hughes, 1999). While there is a growing literature on the psychosocial experiences of teenagers who are employed on a part-time basis (Barling & Kelloway, 1999), little is known about the extent to which youth may suffer physical symptoms or illness as a result of work-related exposure. It is of interest, however, that for young people, part-time work has been associated with alcohol and drug use, at least partially because holding a part-time job provides access to financial resources with which to acquire these substances (Frone, 1999). Second, though shift workers can be full or part-time, many part-time employees are also shift workers, and shiftwork may be particularly threatening to employee health. Some research has suggested that within two to three years of commencing employment, as many as 20 to 30% of shift workers quit because of health concerns (Mykletun & Mykletun, 1999), and for workers with rotating shifts, the negative health effects may be even more pronounced (Jamal & Baba, 1992, 1997; Martens, Nijhuis, Van Boxtel & Knottnerus, 1999). These negative effects may be especially pronounced for backward rotating shifts (Sauter et al., 1990).

A number of factors may mediate the relationship between shift work and health, including the quality of the employee's social life, family relationships, the employee's adjustment to shift work, and the employee's initial physical fitness. Despite these seemingly bleak data on part-time employee's physical well being, it remains difficult to ascertain the direction of causality of the relationship between part-time work and illness, as some people may choose part-time employment because of the presence of a pre-existing health condition (Mykletun & Mykletun, 1999). In such cases, the ability to work part-time would in itself be a critical consideration for subsequent well being.

Occupational Safety

There is very little research addressing the occupational safety of part-time employees, and no studies providing a direct comparison of full and part-time employees' occupational safety (e.g. Sherer & Coakley, 1999). However, one potential threat to part-time worker health and safety is that part-time workers are less likely to have received occupational health and safety training

(Barker, 1995; Sherer & Coakley, 1999), and are therefore less familiar with the safety and operating procedures in their work, as compared to their counterparts in more traditional employment relationships. As such, their lesser understanding of safety procedures may not only pose a threat to the safety of themselves, but also to their coworkers (Sverke, Gallagher & Hellgren, 1999).

Other characteristics of part-time work may exacerbate occupational safety problems. First, part-time workers who do shift work late at night and in small numbers may be particularly vulnerable to violent assaults (Castillo, 1998). Second, the reduced work hours of part-time employees may hamper their socialization, and hence, communication with coworkers about work-related topics, including issues of health and safety (cf. Goodman & Garber, 1988). Finally, injuries caused from reduced attention associated with boredom may be especially problematic for part-time adolescent workers (Frone, 1998).

Temporary Employment

There is considerable debate surrounding the issue of whether the number of people involved in temporary employment has increased in recent years. Irrespective of the nature of this debate, we do not believe that temporary employment will diminish in the near future given the flexibility offered to both employers (with practices such as just-in-time production) and employees alike. Accordingly, an understanding of the psychosocial work environment encountered by temporary workers is necessary.

Psychological Well Being

Initial attempts to understand the nature of temporary employment have treated temporary employment as a homogeneous experience (see Ellingson, Gruys & Sackette, 1998). Subsequent research, however, has challenged this view. Like part-time employment, a major factor in the way in which temporary employment is experienced is whether it is assumed on a voluntary or involuntary basis (Ellingson et al., 1998). Research suggests that voluntary temporary employees rated their opportunities for learning and personal development, and the quality of their physical work more highly than did either involuntary temporary workers or permanent workers (Kraus, Brandenwein & Fox, 1995). Moreover, although voluntary temporary employees were less satisfied with the extrinsic rewards of their job, they were also lower in their desire for extrinsic rewards than either of the other two groups, and had higher levels of intrinsic reward. Also like part-time work, temporary work offers short-term, flexible employment, which may be particularly attractive to certain groups of people such as mothers and older workers who, for lifestyle reasons, do not choose to

hold permanent or consistent employment (Feldman, Doepinghaus & Turnley, 1995).

However, not all people who accept temporary employment do so to accommodate lifestyle needs or develop new skills. People also enter temporary employment if permanent employment is unavailable to them. U.S. data suggest that 63% of temporary workers indicated that they would prefer more traditional employment, and 40% were actively seeking full-time employment (Cohany, 1996). That temporary employment may be considered for some a less desirable alternative is also evidenced by the demographics of temporary workers who are younger than their counterparts in more permanent forms of employment, less educated, and more likely to be members of minority groups. Temporary workers also typically garner lower wages, receive fewer benefits, and lack job security relative to permanent workers, and have a more difficult time qualifying for unemployment benefits or workers' compensation (Chen, Popovich & Kogan, 1999).

When individuals have little choice but to accept temporary employment, they may enjoy little control over either the type of work they are asked to perform or the conditions of their work environment. Temporary workers may feel compelled to tolerate unsatisfactory job experiences including abusive work situations to maintain their chances of being hired again in the future (Rogers, 1995). Importantly, labor legislation designed to protect the interests of workers often does not extend to temporary employment, and temporary employees may find it difficult to gain a voice in order to express health and safety concerns to the organization (Aronsson, 1999).

However, there are other aspects of temporary employment that are relevant to the psychological experience of work. First, irrespective of choice to enter temporary employment, temporary employees are often paid lower wages, and routinely receive fewer benefits, than employees who enjoy traditional work arrangements (e.g. Nollen, 1996). This might have considerable implications for pay and benefits, and perceptions of justice (especially distributive justice), both of which are core aspects of the psychosocial work environment. Second, temporary workers may be marginalized (Feldman et al., 1994) and alienated from traditional workers (Rogers, 1995). Chattopadhyay and George (2001), for example, showed the internal workers who find themselves in groups dominated by temporary employees experience lower levels of work-based self-esteem, trust, attraction and altruism, but the same is not true for temporary employees who find themselves in groups dominated by traditional internal employees. This may well make it more difficult for temporary employees to derive the benefits of positive interpersonal and social relationships at work.

Physical Well Being

There have been no research studies of which we are aware addressing the physical well being of temporary employees. One experience common to temporary employees, however, will be the bouts of unemployment experienced between temporary work assignments. We suggest that an understanding of whether employees assume this work arrangement voluntarily or not will predict their response to being without work. When individuals choose temporary employment, periods with no work between jobs will more likely be seen as respite. In contrast, individuals engaged in temporary employment because of a lack of alternatives, may be more likely to experience the time between jobs as unemployment, and under such conditions, we would predict that physical well being would be threatened.

Occupational Safety

Because temporary workers are likely to change their work environments more frequently than people in most other kinds of work relationships, they may be more likely to lack familiarity with the job, and be unaware of potential work hazards. This is important because research on full-time employees has shown that familiarity with the job and with coworkers is an important predictor of safety (Goodman & Garber, 1988), and as such, it is reasonable to suggest that temporary employees may be prone to more workplace injuries. Efforts to reduce such injuries must include educating new or inexperienced workers about the hazards associated with the job, and training them to negotiate these environments (Cooke & Blumenstock, 1979). Unfortunately, however, just as with part-time workers, temporary employees may be less likely to receive adequate safety training as compared to permanent employees (Aronsson, 1999), and research suggests that temporary workers have more exposure to poor working conditions (Benavides, Benach, Diez-Roux & Roman, 2000).

In addition, the ease with which temporary employees can be replaced (Barker, 1995; Beard & Edwards, 1995), and employee concerns about missing the possibility of obtaining employment in the future, may encourage employees to behave in more dangerous ways. Employees may be motivated to increase their productivity by working quickly, less carefully, and by taking less time to attend to personal protection (Aronsson, 1999; Collinson, 1999), and may fear that registering safety complaints could harm their chances of future employment with the organization (Aronsson, 1999). Thus, while there is no direct research evidence available, we suggest that the extent to which temporary employment is engaged in by choice or not will strongly moderate any effects on well being.

Self-employed Workers

Psychological and Physical Well Being

One defining characteristic of self-employment is the amount of discretion inherent in the work. Self-employed individuals can exert relatively more control over the type of work activities that are performed, when the work is performed, and the pace at which the work is done, all of which are factors associated with mental health (Ettner & Grzywacz, 2001). Steptoe, Evans and Fieldman's (1997) experimental study is instructive in providing some indication of the subjective meaning of self-employment. They assigned 132 individuals aged between 30 and 65 either to a self-paced or an externally-paced experimental condition. Both systolic blood pressure and electrodermal activity were higher in the externally than the self-paced group, despite the fact that the pace was identical in the two groups. While no differences were yielded with respect to diastolic blood pressure, or heart rate, these findings do indicate that if anything, self-employment may have some beneficial consequences, presumably because of increases in work-based and personal control associated with self-employment.

A second defining characteristic of self-employment, however, is the high level of demands (Bleach, 1997) and increased numbers of hours of work per week encountered by self-employed individuals (Barling, 1999; Personick & Windau, 1995). Other concerns salient to self-employed workers are economic uncertainty, market fluctuations, and the threat of loss of assets, all of which can impose considerable stress and encourage behaviors detrimental to health (Lewin-Epstein & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1991). Consequently, we predict that while the increased amount of work engaged in by self-employed individuals might be associated with negative outcomes (Sparks et al., 1997), the enhanced control offered by self-employment might well buffer any negative effects. Aside from the frequent loss of benefits associated with a move from regular, full-time employment to self-employment, one other noticeable demographic aspect that characterizes self-employment is the marked increase in work hours (Gardner, 1995). This is important because of the link between longer work hours and physical and psychological well being (Sparks et al., 1997).

Occupational Safety

While there is little research on the psychological and physical well being associated with self-employment, Personick and Windau (1995) reviewed the incidence of injuries among self-employed workers, and compared these rates to that of wage and salary workers. Data indicate that self-employed workers represent one in every five fatal injuries at work. Several factors might account

for this. While self-employed workers may confront the same health and safety challenges as other workers in similar occupations, many self-employed workers lack the protection of government oversight and safety regulations. In addition, self-employed individuals may not have the resources to afford safety training and protective equipment. Further, the longer working hours characteristic of self-employment and the concomitant physical fatigue may increase the likelihood of injuries at work, while simultaneously increasing the duration with which the employee is exposed to these hazards.

Home-based Employment

Traditionally, employment has taken place in a location away from the home. One of the substantive changes in employment arrangements has been the growth in the U.S. in the number of home-based workers since the early 1980s, which reversed the pattern of the previous two decades in which the number of home-based workers had declined (Edwards & Field-Hendrey, 1996). Given advances in computing and communications technology, Edwards and Field-Hendrey (1996) predict that the growth in home-based workers is likely to continue, leaving it important to understand the subjective work experience of these workers.

Psychological Well Being

For some, home-based work offers the benefits of enhanced flexibility over the number and hours of work, the time of day in which to work, autonomy over the tasks of work, and freedom from supervision. For others, home-based work may have been an undesirable but more easily obtainable alternative for employment. This points to a major variation between different types of home-based employment. Both highly paid, well-qualified consultants and poorly paid, relatively powerless employees may choose to work from home, often for different reasons and with different outcomes.

The nature of working from home is such that it may have meaningful effects on the perceived psychosocial work environment. The normal protections that are available to employees within a traditional workplace (such as the accessibility of social support, geographic closeness to a supervisor, physical safety) are not as readily accessible when working from home (Barling, Rogers & Kelloway, 2001). In addition, Standen, Daniels and Lamond (1999) point both to potentially positive aspects associated with home-based work (specifically, telework) such as temporal flexibility, and family support, as well as negative aspects, for example the loss of valued social contacts, which is critical for well being (Jahoda, 1982). This points to the diverse way in which home-based work

is experienced, and the need for further research to understand this heterogeneous phenomenon.

There are differential predictions about the subjective experience of home-based work. On the one hand, home-based work is seen as emancipatory, in as much as it can provide employees with greater opportunities for autonomy and flexibility. At the same time, there is equal concern about the possibility for exploitation associated with home-based work, because home-based work could increase job insecurity and result in a lower standard of living (see Jurik, 1998). We add to these concerns the possibility for greater work-family conflict.

Several qualitative studies have been reported that focused on the subjective experience of home-based employment. Home-based workers who see clients in their home experience frequent intrusions at home in terms of daily telephone-calls (Fitzgerald & Winter, 2001). In addition, data derived from qualitative studies suggest that working at home also makes maintaining a separation between home and work more difficult (Fitzgerald & Winter, 2001; Steward, 2000). In contrast, data from quantitative research do not replicate this phenomenon: Using a quasi-experimental design and qualitative analyses, neither Hill, Miller, Weiner and Colihan's (1998) qualitative nor quantitative analyses showed any effects of telework on work/life balance. Both sets of analyses in the Hill et al. (1998) study, however, suggested that teleworkers experience greater flexibility than traditional office workers, and this is consistent with Frone and Yardley's (1996) finding that the perceived importance of work-at-home policies are associated with the extent to which family affects work, but not the extent to which work interferes with family. Drawing broad conclusions from these studies, therefore, would be premature, difficult and hazardous.

Nonetheless, we believe that research will continue to focus on home-based workers, and particularly on certain groups of home-based workers. One particular group of home-based workers that have received attention in recent years is that of 'teleworkers' or 'telecommuters.' Teleworkers are typically more highly skilled employees, frequently professionals, who work from home (Schneider de Villegas, 1990). While empirical findings suggest that telecommuting may have a positive impact on worker productivity, job performance, work morale, and flexibility (Hill et al., 1998), the impact of telecommuting on job satisfaction yields more mixed findings. One study that directly compared the job satisfaction of telecommuters to that of a control group found no differences between these groups on job satisfaction (Kraut, 1987). In addition, despite the fact that many people enter into various kinds of home-based work to balance work and family life, research suggests that these roles often become more blurred than balanced (Jones, 1997).

Physical Well Being and Occupational Safety

There does not appear to be any data pertaining to the physical health and occupational safety of homeworkers. However, the dominant feature of homework is that it takes place outside the formal workplace. This is important, because when work takes place in a private setting, such as an individual's residence, there is less monitoring for health and safety standards, and few, if any health and safety inspections by external regulators (see Barling et al., 2001). Indeed, it is not even certain that all workplace standards and requirements apply to home offices and workplaces. As a result, we would predict that there is an increased risk for health problems and injuries, especially for those homeworkers who have not chosen this option voluntarily.

"Moonlighting"

Psychological Well Being

The data suggest that there may be something of a demographic profile associated with the decision to moonlight. First, financial obligations represent a major factor cited in the reason for seeking and holding a second job, a situation that has not abated recently (Stinson, 1990; Amirault, 1997). It does not follow from this, however, that the majority of people holding second jobs, earn relatively less in their primary jobs. Instead, recent data show that moonlighters are more likely to be relatively well paid and better educated than individuals who hold one job only (Amirault, 1997). What this indicates is that it may be more likely that individuals choose to engage in moonlighting, rather than feel compelled to do so, and differential consequences follow from each of these two possibilities. Negative consequences would be associated with moonlighting in those situations where individuals felt compelled to accept this arrangement, while more positive outcomes would ensue if individuals engaged in moonlighting more freely.

Studies conducted in both Canada and the United States have contrasted the "job stress", or psychosocial work factors, experienced by moonlighters and single job holders. Sinclair, Martin and Michel's (1999) study revealed no differences between moonlighters and those holding down a single, full-time job with respect to job satisfaction, a valuable proxy for the psychosocial work environment. Sinclair et al. (1999) also assessed pay equity (which reflected both pay satisfaction and fairness), and again revealed no between group differences. Their study provides initial support for the notion that moonlighters do not experience the psychosocial work environment differently from employees who enjoy traditional employment arrangements.

Research conducted in Canada replicates and extends these findings. Jamal and Baba (1992) showed that despite their greater time investment in work, moonlighters were more active participants in social and voluntary organizations. In a subsequent study, Jamal, Baba and Rivière (1998) showed that moonlighters experienced significantly less burnout and job stress than non-moonlighters. They ascribe an energic/opportunity hypothesis to account for these findings, suggesting that moonlighters are "a special breed" (p. 196) who experience more energy and higher social expectations. We suggest that an alternative explanation is equally plausible. Specifically, in the extent to which moonlighters choose employment arrangement, they exert volition which would protect their well being, and this hypothesis awaits explicit empirical scrutiny.

Future research on moonlighters' job experiences should focus on an additional issue. The studies reported here focus on a single work environment (presumably their primary job) for moonlighters, and contrast moonlighters and non-moonlighters. This strategy does not make it possible to compare the psychosocial work environment of the two different jobs held by the same person. It is possible, however, that moonlighters do not experience their different jobs the same, and several research questions are raised. For example, one possibility that emerges is whether there are additive effects with respect to the psychosocial environment if both jobs are experienced very positively, or very negatively. Perhaps even more interestingly, there could be differential consequences for well being if perceptions of the psychosocial work environment are markedly different across the two jobs.

Physical Well Being and Occupational Safety

We know of only a few studies that have examined the physical health of moonlighters, and are aware of no studies examining the physical safety of this population. Based on the findings that suggest that moonlighters may enjoy superior energy levels than average, it is not likely that the longer hours worked by moonlighters will render them more fatigued or stressed than the average single job holder. As such it may not be reasonable to expect differences in illness or injury between moonlighters and workers in traditional employment relationships. Research that has directly compared the health of moonlighters with that of single job holders suggests that there are no detrimental health or safety consequences for people who moonlight (Jamal et al., 1998), presumably because of their greater energy.

Job Sharing

The last two decades saw management being exhorted and even expected to do whatever is feasible to help employees balance work and family responsibilities (Barling, 1990). Job sharing was introduced and promoted within this environment as one way by which two employees could share the responsibilities associated with one full-time job. Job sharing is recognized by many administrators as one of the more complex forms of flexible work options (Solomon, 1994). As such, while organizations that have introduced job sharing arrangements may be viewed as model employers, the move in this direction is more often demand-driven (Stanworth, 1999).

Psychological Well Being

There remains very little empirical data on job-sharing. What is known is that the perceived importance of job sharing is significantly associated with the degree to which family responsibilities conflict with work demands (but not the degree to which work demands conflict with family responsibilities (Frone & Yardley, 1996). Seib and Muller's (1999) analysis of 44 employed mothers suggests that job-sharing was more effective than either part-time employment, or flextime in balancing work and family demands. These results should perhaps be expected, because job-sharing would result in a dramatic reduction in hours of work. Perhaps more importantly, though, job-sharing would almost always be engaged in on a voluntary basis, which itself would be expected to exert a positive effect on the psychosocial workplace environment and well being.

Physical Well Being and Occupational Safety

We are not aware of research examining the impact of job sharing on physical health and safety. To the extent that the work environment of people participating in a job sharing program is the same as people in traditional work arrangements, no unique threats to health and safety should be expected. However, it is possible that when job sharing entails different work hours from one day to the next, any changes in sleep patterns from day to day, as well as social and domestic disruptions may increase the likelihood of chronic health problems (Smith, Robie, Folkard, Barton, McDonald, Smith, Spelten, Tollerdell & Costa, 1999). An additional factor for consideration is that job sharing could result in less familiarity between workers, which could heighten safety risks (Goodman & Garber, 1988).

Outsourced Employment

As organizations continue to emphasize cost containment, which includes an attempt to retain as few permanent employees as possible, and to reduce costs such as employee benefits, outsourcing will continue to remain a perceived competitive advantage to employers. Despite the prevalence of this alternative form of employment, there remains little behavioral research on the psychosocial work environment experienced by people employed on an outsourcing basis. This is important, because with the potential loss of pay and benefits, and power and control that would accompany outsourcing, it is possible to suggest that there would be negative effects for the psychosocial work environment.

Psychological and Physical Well Being

Another area in which research on alternative work arrangements and well being is relatively sparse is in the effects of outsourcing on physical and mental well being. This issue was examined in one study that directly compared the psychosocial and physiological outcomes of outsourced and direct-hire bus drivers (Netterstrom & Hansen, 2000). Despite equivalent baseline levels of physical and mental health, after a year of work, the outsourced workers could be distinguished from the direct-hire workers on the basis of seeing the job as having low levels of predictability and meaningfulness, low colleague support and low job satisfaction as compared to the direct-hire workers. Physiological measures indicated that as compared to direct-hire workers, outsourced workers showed higher levels of biological responses to increased stress including increased cortisol levels in urine, blood pressure, and HDL/cholesterol ratios.

Another finding of some significance is that within eight months of the outsourcing, seven of the 20 bus drivers in Netterstrom and Hansen's (2000) outsourced group were no longer with the new organization due to dissatisfaction with their working conditions. While it is not possible to make large inferences based on such small numbers, this finding should at least alert researchers to the possibility of a potentially negative workplace environment associated with the practice of outsourcing.

Occupational Safety

For several reasons, one specific group of outsourced workers, subcontracted workers, tend to receive inadequate on-site safety training (Rebitzer, 1995). First, in the absence of a clearly identifiable sole employer, the issue of who bears responsibility for safety training is often unclear. Second, although subcontracted workers have typically had some general occupational health and safety training, they may not receive *site-specific* health and safety training (O'Brien,

1999). This is important, because specific safety training raises employees' safety awareness, teaches skills for coping with work related hazards, and establishes opportunities for an open flow of communication about safety issues (Rebitzer, 1995; Roughton, 1995). Not surprisingly, therefore, while research suggests that subcontractors have higher accident rates than do direct hires, this difference may be especially pronounced for employees with less than one year of experience (Rebitzer, 1995), perhaps highlighting the long-term benefits of on-the-job learning when more formal opportunities such as training are not available.

Seasonal and Migrant Employment

Our focus on new forms of employment arrangements would be incomplete without some examination of the psychosocial work environment of individuals employed on a seasonal basis. This task is complicated, however, because of the paucity of behavioral research on seasonal employment. Ball (1988) addressed the stereotype that seasonal workers represent the "poorest cousins" of the entire workforce, given the precarious nature of their employment, and the relatively poor benefits they receive. We add to this the lack of control associated with seasonal and migrant work. While there is some support for this notion, Ball (1988) also notes that this only represents part of the picture, with many individuals choosing voluntarily to be employed on a seasonal basis. Seasonal or migrant employment, therefore, would by no means be a homogenous experience. As is the case with many other forms of employment, the individual employee's volition in choosing seasonal employment may have important implications for their subsequent well being.

Psychological Well Being

Much of the literature on seasonal and migrant workers focuses on shifting trends in seasonal and migrant work over time (e.g. Rydzewski, Deming & Rones, 1993), the deleterious behavioral choices on the part of many seasonal and migrant workers (Weatherby, McCoy, Metsch, Beltzer, McCoy & de la Rosa, 1996), and the cultural disadvantages this group may confront (Sharma, 2001). In contrast, there is very little research on their psychological well being. Traditionally, seasonal and/or migrant work have been considered to be among the least desirable forms of employment, marked by poorer working conditions, lower-status jobs, and subsequent and inevitable unemployment. Further, migrant workers in particular may be perceived negatively by locals who see them as 'taking' jobs from local people (Weatherby et al., 1996). Other types of seasonal employment however, such as those in the tourism industry were

considered higher-status (Bell, 1988). As with most other forms of alternative employment, workers who enter their employment voluntarily may have relatively more positive psychosocial outcomes than people who enter employment involuntarily.

Physical Well Being and Occupational Safety

The physical health and safety of seasonal and migrant workers has been given some empirical attention. A fairly substantial amount of literature suggests that, as compared to other groups of workers, the behavioral choices and lifestyles of migrant workers are more likely to include a greater propensity for narcotics use (Weatherby et al., 1996), alcohol use (Morales, 1986), and a lack of HIV/AIDS awareness and education among this group (Beltzer, 1995), raising the likelihood of physical and safety problems.

ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE WELL BEING: SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We conclude this chapter by highlighting three concerns that have emerged consistently in our examination of the effects of alternative work arrangements on employee well being. First, in any future research, more complexity is required in the conceptualization and operationalization of alternative work arrangements. As one example, research on the emergence of contingent and alternative work arrangements has suffered from simplistic categorizations that have reinforced outdated stereotypes. The perspective that contingent workers have limited control over how their work is performed, and operate under purely "transactional" contracts (Beard & Edwards, 1995) may in fact be the antitheses of the work experience for many independent contractors who have highly sought-after technical skills. In addition, it is worth pointing to the fact that research on moonlighting has focused more on the people involved in this phenomenon, rather than the work experiences in both jobs. Conceptual understandings will no longer be advanced by simply trying to fit different forms of alternative working arrangements into arbitrary and inherently overlapping categories (e.g. full-time, telecommuter, temporary, self-employed).

Second, from a methodological perspective, it is noteworthy that research on alternative work arrangements and employee well being has relied almost exclusively on correlational data and non-experimental designs. Clearly, any advances in refinement in the conceptualization of alternative work arrangements must now be accompanied by more sophisticated research designs in order to move toward causal inferences.

Last, but by no means least, the research reviewed to date allows two important conclusions. First, the nature of the alternative work arrangement may be substantially less important for subsequent well being than the quality of the employment experience. Second, the nature of the alternative work arrangement is substantially less important for employee well being than the issue of whether employees enter the specific work arrangement by choice or not. These two conclusions have considerable conceptual and managerial implications. Conceptually, an understanding on the nature and consequences of alternative work arrangements may be achieved by diverting primary attention to the psychosocial work experiences; and this represents a viable challenge for future research. From a managerial perspective, organizations might be better served by ensuring that employees benefit from positive work experiences, irrespective of the type of work arrangements in which they find themselves.

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