

# INTERSECTION OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MARKET IN PRIVATE FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION COLLEGES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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## ABSTRACT

*While past literature identified that the unskilled workers tend to accept nonstandard works, the literature has not explained adequately the reasons for accepting nonstandard work by highly skilled academics. This study addresses this literature gap by examining various reasons for accepting non-standard work by academics in private further and higher education colleges in the United Kingdom. Based on self-determination motivation theory, the study categorizes different reasons according to push factors and pull factors where push factors are the controlled choices and pull factors are autonomous choices. A mixed methodology is employed in this study. The quantitative data are utilized to draw the trends and patterns of non-standard work in this context, where the qualitative data are used to give an in-depth discussion about the context. Influences of both push and pull factor have been identified as a reason for accepting non-standard contract. However, the links between push factors are stronger than pull factors. We argued that when the push factors become powerful, the pull choice intersects with push factor, and in that situation the pull factors become less important to employees. We also argued that due to strong presence of push factor, the academics in this sector have less control over different aspects of job including wages, training, employment benefits, career progression, and job security.*

**Keywords:** Nonstandard Work, Academics, Private and Further Education Colleges in the UK.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade or so, the technological advancements and globalization have transformed the labour and employment markets significantly in advanced capitalist countries. The evidence suggests that this transformation has led organizations toward extensive use of “nonstandard” employment, including part-time, fixed-term, temporary or agency staff and self-employment (Kalleberg et al, 2000). Historically, nonstandard work arrangements were only available to unskilled workers and those in non-professional occupations. However, in more recent times, nonstandard work arrangements are also available to many skilled workers and people in many professional occupations (Brown and Gold, 2007; Szabo and Negyes, 2005). Notwithstanding the positive contributions of nonstandard work arrangements, previous research has highlighted many negative impacts associated with various types of nonstandard work arrangements. For example, Conely (2003) argued that nonstandard employment has segmented

the labour and employment markets into standard (i.e. fulltime contract) and nonstandard contract (i.e. part-time or temporary contracts), leading to increased inequality within the labour market. Mentioning wage and working conditions, based on a study in public further education colleges in UK, Burchill and Kelle (2000) found that academics were working on low wages, under extreme mental pressure, and with little employment security. Additionally, Bendapudi et al. (2003) argued that nonstandard work is precarious in nature and gives the worker little opportunity to obtain training and other employment benefits, resulting in lower employee satisfaction and high employee turnover.

Reasons for accepting nonstandard work have gained significant attention from many academics. Tan and Tan (2002) and Brown and Gold (2007) tended to focus on voluntary and involuntary reasons for accepting nonstandard work. Through analysing different institutional aspects, elements of labour market, and workers personal characteristics this study aims to investigate reasons for accepting nonstandard work contracts by academics in private further and higher education colleges in the UK. Based on forty-six questionnaires and seven interviews, this study categorizes the various reasons under push and pulls factors, which led to teachers in private and further education colleges accepting nonstandard work contracts. The study also aims to compare between push and pull factors to find out the most influential reasons for accepting nonstandard work contracts.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This section reviewed existing literature on various reasons behind the growth of nonstandard work. The review focused on effects of personal reasons and labour market constraints to get involved in nonstandard work arrangements. Consequently, themes regarding labour market constraints, such as cost minimization, reduction in number of available fulltime contacts, meeting changing requirements, and personal reasons (i.e. economic incentives, self-improvement, and reduced responsibility) were examined. The study employed self-determination theory to explain an individual's reasons to engage in a nonstandard work contract in academia in a further education college. The study also explains the aspects of job control ability of the academics. Themes like control over hours, work schedules, career development, training and wage were examined.

### **Nonstandard Work**

Nonstandard work arrangements have attracted widespread attention and have become an important topic in work and employment research. Based on work arrangements, Brown and Gold (2007) defined nonstandard employment as part-time, fixed-term, temporary or agency work and self-employment. Nonstandard working arrangements are also referred to as '*atypical*', or work arrangements that are not permanent (Grip et al., 1997).

### **Nonstandard work in the UK Context**

Institutional dependency on nonstandard employment contract is increasing day by day. Szabo and Negyasi (2005) have mentioned that the era of stable labour relations has come to an end since companies are overemphasizing nonstandard form of employment to meet changing requirements. Nonstandard working arrangement such as part-time work is very common in both

private and public sectors in the UK. A report by Leyonetee et al. (2010) has shown that 29% of workers in the public sector, and 25% of the worker in the private sector are employed part-time. Historically, organizations had employed nonstandard workers for low-skilled or unskilled work, but over time the use of nonstandard workers has spread across many areas of high-skilled work.

### **Negative Consequences of Nonstandard Contracts**

The growth of nonstandard work creates job opportunities for people, but the ultimate effects of nonstandard contracts on workers are severe. Underlying the negative concerns of nonstandard work arrangements, many literatures claim that such kinds of employment only allow workers to work for a limited time in an organization. The duration of this kind of work contracts is uncertain in nature, since the organizations use “*on call workers*” as day labourer’s, along with workers on fixed-term contracts, temporary help agency employees and part-time workers in order to limit their dependence on regular employment contracts. Thus, the duration of these contracts can last from a few hours to a few months, or even for a year.

### **Self-Determination Theory**

Self-determination theory is a human motivation and personality theory that believes, both internal and external factors can influence an individual’s motivation. The theory argues that human motivation is not a unitary concept since the motives of an individual depend on the time and situation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The theory established differences between different types of human behaviour and the effects of them. In particular, the theory described the differences between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Autonomy relates to the individual’s internal choice. On the other hand, the controlled choice is related to external factors (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

### **Rationale of Nonstandard Employment**

As nonstandard contracts continue to increase over time in many geographical regions, reasons for accepting nonstandard work also vary. The following section explains some key reasons behind the growth of nonstandard work.

#### **Firm size and cost**

Houseman and Osawa (1995) conducted an empirical study based on data gathered from Japan’s bureau of statistics and found that one of the key reasons for increasing nonstandard work in Japan is firm size. They have emphasized that small firms are recruiting more nonstandard workers than large firms. They also explained that small firms are recruiting more nonstandard workers because of their lower amounts of available capital, and to save direct labour costs. In particular, Zeytinoglu and Cooke (2005) found that employers are recruiting nonstandard workers in order to reduce benefits and pension costs.

### **Role and responsibility**

Roles and responsibility is an important reason why employers are recruiting nonstandard workers. Previously, nonstandard workers were highly recruited in low-skilled jobs such as clerical and secretarial jobs. Based on the 2004 workforce survey data, Kersely et al. (2006) pointed out that 24% of employers in the UK used temporary staff in order to cover temporary replacement of permanent employees. They also described that organization such as hospital or schools where a certain level of service is strongly required employed temporary staff most. In addition, seasonal demand or to meet any changes in the marketplace is also a reason for which organizations use nonstandard worker.

### **To prepare potential employees**

A third reason for using part-time work contracts by organizations is to recruit employees on part-time contracts and, after a certain period of time, offer them fulltime contracts. Based on data from the British house panel survey from 1991-1997, Booth et al. (2002) found that for both men and women, temporary fixed-term contracts are a way to eventually earn permanent contracts. However, they also found that there is a subsequent wage penalty for both men and women, and men suffered more than women in this regard. Furthermore, Cross and Goldenberg (2003) identified that some UK universities included a semester of supervised teaching in specific graduate programs in order to prepare future faculty.

### **Poor market conditions**

Earlier research has identified the employee's difficulty in finding a permanent job as the most influential factor for selecting nonstandard work arrangement. This factor is closely related to jobs available in the labour market. Labour Force Survey (National statistics, 2011) has found that during times of recession, the number of part-time workers increased by 99,000 to 7.7 million whereas fulltime employment reduced by 113,000. These figures give a clear message that in recessionary times, cost reduction motives and uncertain market conditions led to many organizations offering part-time employment contracts rather than fulltime ones.

### **Personal preferences**

Nonstandard workers are heterogeneous in nature. An individual's preference to do nonstandard work depends on his or her own choice. Based on a questionnaire survey, Brown and Gold (2007) found that nonstandard academics in UK universities prefer this type of contract for different reasons, including partner moved, started their own business, and increased security. Among these reasons, they identified that a high proportion of academics chose nonstandard work to get a change from their previous workplace. In addition, Nollen (1996) found that people chose part-time work due to the nature of the work since people who are doing nonstandard work are keen to take less responsibility, thus enjoying greater freedom and less stress

### **Economic incentives**

Kunda et al. (2002) found that economic incentives were another reason for nonstandard work. Based upon interviewing forty-two contractors, Kunda et al. (2002) explained that

individual chose nonstandard work contracts in order to earn more money. They found that 50% of the interviewed individuals reported that they made 30% to 300% more money than they had as permanent employees. They explained that nonstandard work allows one to work more hours, and so they can earn more money. Loughlin and Barling (2001) mentioned that nonstandard work is the best option for the student to earn their own pocket money as they do not have to leave their study for this work. In addition, Casey and Alch (2004) found that temporary work can help the family to earn extra money on top of their own fixed income which is very helpful for low-income families.

### **Skill development & road to permanent job**

Albatch (2000) suggested that many new university and college graduates do part-time job in order to develop their practical skills. He explained that employees who are new in the job market prefer nonstandard work because they think such knowledge can help them land a permanent contract and can make their theoretical knowledge strong. Tan and Tan (2002) noted that nonstandard work helps workers to achieve new skills and work experiences that could add extra value to their CV.

### **Demographic Profile of Nonstandard Worker**

#### **Age**

Age is positively associated with career choice for both men and women, hence directly related with the reason for entering nonstandard work. For example, Booth et al. (2002) found that young men, aged between twenty-four and thirty years are more likely to accept temporary contract than people who were older. Similarly, Brown and Gold (2007) have found that academics who are in part-time work, aged between forty-five and fifty-four years accepted nonstandard work due to retirement or lay-offs. In addition, Leyonetee et al. (2010) indicated that in UK women age between thirty-one and fifty years accepted nonstandard work more than other age category because this is the peak time for child bearing and rearing.

#### **Gender**

Both Booth et al. (2002) and Mckeown (2005) emphasized that women accepted nonstandard work arrangements because of family responsibilities. Perna (2001) conducted her research based upon 25,780 questionnaires and found that mothers who work fulltime face greater work-family conflict, since men take less responsibility to do family work. In order to reduce that conflict, women choose nonstandard work such as part time work as a means of employment. On the other hand, Booth et al. (2002) and Hill et al. (2004) also found that men accepted part time work for career advancement, to gain additional experience and due to retirement or lay off, where women are doing nonstandard work mainly to give extra time in child careering.

#### **Ethnicity**

It is now well documented that the labour market experiences, job sectors and position within the organizations for ethnic minority, colored skin and economic migrant groups are

different from that of white people in Britain (Jones, 1993; McDowell et al., 2009). Most of the workers within this group work in poorly paid and low status jobs, and these characteristics have remained unchanged from many years (Hart, 1999). These workers are not only coming from Non-EU countries, but also from European Union countries. Workers from the European Union states can enter into the UK more easily and as a result their presence in the nonstandard labour market is higher than those from non-EU countries. According to Salt and Millar (2006), about 5.4% of the UK workforce is foreign-born.

### **Key Literature Gaps and Research Questions**

Through analysing different past literatures on nonstandard employment, a number of research gaps are discovered. The first gap, which is identified, is that nonstandard jobs have expanded their arena. Brown and Gold (2007) and Cross and Goldenberg (2009) identified that nonstandard employment contracts are becoming more favourable in the teaching profession. The second gap that has been identified by previous researchers, including Tan and Tan (2002), is that they have broadly explained voluntary reasons or autonomous reasons for accepting nonstandard work, but they have not explained controlled or forced motivation that may have influenced workers to accept nonstandard work. Therefore, further research needs to be conducted for better understanding on the various reasons for accepting nonstandard employment contracts. The third gap that has been identified is that since most of the previous research focused on nonstandard work in UK academia is based on public sector educational institutions, so there is no research that focused especially on academics in private further and higher educational institutions in London, when there is a significant percentage of teachers who are working under nonstandard contract in different colleges. In order to address these research gaps, this study aims to investigate reasons for accepting nonstandard employment contract by academics in private further and higher education colleges in London, through analysing different institutional aspects, elements of labour market and workers' personal characteristics. The study also aims to compile and categorize reasons under push and pull factors, for which the academics in private and further educational colleges accept these nonstandard contract. This study will also try to compare between push and pull factors to find out the most influential reasons for accepting such contracts. Finally, the research examines control over different aspects of the job, including wages, training, employment benefits, career progression and job security. Therefore, the key questions for this study are:

1. What are the reasons for selecting nonstandard employment by academics in private further and higher education colleges?
2. Are nonstandard work arrangements a voluntary or autonomous choice of the academics in private further and higher education colleges, or have they been influenced by external factors?
3. How much control do they have over wages, training, employment benefits, career progression, and job security?

### **DATA AND METHOD**

Method is a crucial part of this study. Without having an appropriate method, we are unlikely to gather relevant and reliable information necessary for successful completion of the study. The study requires that we thoroughly investigate important reasons that are directly or indirectly related to entering nonstandard working arrangements in UK's private further and higher education colleges. Based upon previous literature, several reasons have been identified

that covers all reasons for accepting nonstandard work, including institutional policies, labour market conditions and personal preferences. In addition, the study also has more theoretical concentration, since it examines control over job aspects in this sector, such as hours worked, work schedule, training and pay, length of control and career progression.

## **Context**

Data for this study was collected from London-based private further educational colleges because the city is widely recognized as one of the most attractive places for study and work. However, the total numbers of colleges in London is comparatively higher than any other city in England. There are one hundred and sixty-one private further and higher education colleges in the UK, which are granting British university degrees at a convenient rate, and this has attracted the majority of students who are coming to England for higher education. These colleges are privately funded and do not get any financial support from the government or any other source. They mainly depend on the fees generated by admitting overseas students.

## **Data**

For this research, a qualitative and quantitative methodology was employed; primary and secondary methods of data were used to conduct the research. Different methods were applied throughout the study. All methods have their strengths and weaknesses; thus, using multiple methods helps to overcome the inherent weaknesses in each data collection method (Gray, 2004). Primary data were collected from in-depth interviews and structured questionnaires, whilst secondary data were collected from journals, library texts and previous research carried out in this area.

### **Primary Data**

Primary data is data that is collected from first-hand experience. From the various primary data collection methods, this study uses questionnaires and interviews to collect primary data.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data is data that has been collected by other researchers and is readily available from other sources. Common sources of secondary data are those listed in literature, and official statistical datasheets. Secondary data, such as literature review is essential for any research, especially to identify the gap within existing literature, whilst official statistical datasheets are very useful since they cover a large sample. For this study, previous literature was mainly collected from the EBSCO Business source, SSRN Social Science Research, Network Emerald Full Text and from many others. In addition, statistical data was collected from UK national statistics and higher education statistic agency (HESA).

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons of entering nonstandard employment contracts by academics in private further and higher education colleges. For this purpose, both qualitative and quantitative data is required, which can be collected through questionnaire analysis and interviews with academics who are working in this sector. In addition,

to add more value to the report, this study also aimed to take data from the colleges where the academics are currently working.

## **Sampling**

Reaching a wide sample is a prerequisite for good qualitative research, but it is very hard to reach an acceptable population sample in a limited time span. Although snowball methods are rarely used when researching nonstandard work, this study used snowball sampling technique due to limited time to gather data. The survey questionnaires were e-mailed to the respondents who are working in London and based in private further and higher education colleges. For the interviews, academics who are working in London were chosen. Moreover, colleges in London were intentionally chosen because most of the academics in London-based colleges are working under nonstandard contracts.

Seventy questionnaires were sent to six different colleges and to academics who are working under nonstandard employment contracts out of which forty were sent to different colleges and thirty were sent to individual academics. Thirteen questionnaires were returned from the former group, and twenty-four were returned from the latter pool. The total numbers of questionnaire returned from the two sources are thirty-seven, giving a response rate of 53%. Nine questionnaires were also collected from personal visit to different colleges giving a total number of fort-six questionnaires. Seven semi-structured interviews were also conducted to complete this research. For this study, four colleges were examined thoroughly and interviews of senior officials in those colleges were also completed. Out of the four colleges, three were small ones, and one college was considered to be large, based on the number of fulltime academic or administrative staff they employ.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Data from both interviews and questionnaires were collected and analysed manually. Interviews of academics were taped initially and then the tape recordings were transcribed for analysis. However, due to restrictions enforced by the colleges, interviews of the decision-makers of those colleges were analysed based on notes that were taken during these interviews. Data from questionnaire was entered into a Microsoft excel spread sheet and analysed by using different functions of Microsoft excel.

### **Data Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion of Key Findings**

The aim of this chapter is to analyse, interpret and discuss the key findings that have been collected manually from questionnaires and interviews. At the very beginning of the chapter, we focus on demographic profiles of the nonstandard workers concerned, including gender, ethnic background, age, marital status and qualifications. Secondly, we focus on the various reasons for accepting a nonstandard employment contract. The third section focuses on identifying the most influential reasons and explains how the market is acting in this sector. The final part of this section focuses on the academics' control over different job aspects in this sector.



## **Respondent's Profiles**

The respondents in this study were selected from the same occupational group, even though the study has been identified considerable differences in many aspects of personal detail. The research has identified that of the forty-six respondents, twenty-seven (58%) were employed as part-time teachers on nonstandard contracts, thirteen (28%) were employed on temporary contracts, and six (14%) were employed on fixed-term contracts. Surprisingly, only three women respondents have taken place in this study, resulting in male respondents at 93% far outweighing their female colleagues at just 7%. However, the ethnic background of over two-thirds of all the respondents was Asian (69%), with the others being British (21 percent) and African (10%). The age distribution of respondents was concentrated in the 25-30 (72%) and 30-39 age groups (28%), an indication that most respondents are relatively young in age. The age of the respondents may influence their willingness to engage in nonstandard employment contracts. Previous research by (Albatch, 2000; Tan and Tan, 2002) indicated that young men aged twenty-five to thirty years tend to accept nonstandard work arrangement in order to improve their skills that could help them land a good job in the near future. Three-quarters of the respondents had a master's degree (75%). Only four respondents (9%) had a doctorate, with the remainder (16%) holding a bachelor's degree.

## **Reasons for Accepting Nonstandard Contract**

In order to understand the reasons for accepting nonstandard work arrangements, respondents were asked to choose from different reasons that were listed in the questionnaire. All participants in the sample were also asked to rank their reasons, where a mark of 1 was the most influential reason. Responses were compared by push and pull factors as significant differences were found in the pilot study when data were disaggregated in this way. The pull factors involve choice or autonomous motivation, while push factors involve pressure or controlled motivation. The findings of these reasons are presented in two main categories below; autonomous motivation for accepting nonstandard work, and controlled motivation.

## **Pull Factors or Autonomous Motivation for Accepting Nonstandard**

Pull factors or autonomous motivation for accepting nonstandard employment contracts are the academics' personal choices, satisfaction or preferences for which they have selected nonstandard employment contract. There were different types of pull factors in the questionnaire, which could influence academics to except a nonstandard employment contract. Amongst the different types of pull factors or autonomous motivations, Increased Security was identified as the most influential factor for accepting a nonstandard employment contract. Sixteen (36%) of the respondents marked this as the single most striking factor for accepting a nonstandard employment contract. This result contradicts previous research as most of that, including Grip et al. (1997) and Plovika (1996) indicated that nonstandard work is an insecure type of contract due to uncertain duration. Increased Security, is very important to those who are working as self-employed, who do not have any secure employment contract with any organization and who are working in small colleges.

*“Since 2009 I started my career as a part time lecturer in different colleges. For two reasons I chose this type of employment contract: the first reason is I do not have any secure*

*employment contract for which I am still trying. Secondly, the vulnerability of the colleges I am working with. Some of the colleges where I worked last year have lost their license and shut down due to strict rules and regulation set by the government. If I worked there in a permanent full-time position may be this time I could be an unemployed person. As I am involved with 4 different colleges, shutting down of one college does not affect my income and employment”.*

Another important reason that pulls academics into nonstandard work is *wanted change*. Twelve (26%) academics have selected wanted change as a key reason for entering into nonstandard work. This result finds support in other studies that used academics as a sample. For example, Brown and Gold (2007) highlighted in their study that academics want to do nonstandard work because they wanted change. In the interview, two respondents also stated that they were in this contract because they wanted change. This reason was part especially mentioned by those academics who were involved with full time employment in some other sector and who particularly wanted to change colleges for higher hourly rates of pay and also for a secure job.

*“I started my career at fifteen pounds per hour. I was looking for more payment, but that college did not agree to pay me more, even after the six-month initial period. I changed the college and became involve with other colleges that offered me a lot more money. However, the first college was a “B” rated college on the UKBA college list. The college where I am working now are all “A” rated colleges, which means they have less chance to close down.”*

*“I have a full time permanent job in an accounting firm. I took this part-time lecturing position as I get a taste of change from my regular job.”*

Very few respondents across the sample accept that they earn *more money* in nonstandard employment contract. Only seven (15%) respondents said that they can earn more money in this kind of contract. These findings are also supported in Kunda et al. (2002) explaining that some highly skilled professionals preferred to work under nonstandard employment contracts because they can earn more money. Respondents who have a secure fulltime employment contract with another organization or have their own business marked more money as one of the important factors for accepting a nonstandard employment contract.

*“I have my own business where I spend most of my time, so a part-time job in this college helps me to earn some extra money”.*

*“I am currently working in a bank at a permanent position, for this reason I am working as a part-time lecturer in this college to earn some extra money”.* However, I do not have to pay any income tax for this part-time lecturing position, as this college pay me in cash. So, I can earn tax-free extra money which encourages me to except this kind of contract”.

Other than *increased security, more money* and *wanted change*, there are other personal reasons that influenced academics to engage in nonstandard employment contracts. Six (12%) respondents around the sample have selected *stress* as a reason for entering into nonstandard employment contracts. This finding was also highlighted in Nollen’s (1996) research. However, in the interview, one respondent did emphasize stress at work as a key reason for entering into nonstandard contract.

*“After completing my MSc I was desperately looking for a job, my primary choice was to get a fulltime permanent job. I joined there as a fulltime lecturer, but after one month the administration requested me to do some administrative job as well. The bad part of that movement was, they paid me the same wage but I worked more hours for more responsibility. That disappoints me a lot, and insisted me to start working as a part-time lecturer. Now I am*

*working with three colleges as a part-time lecturer. I take only classes, and I have more time for my life and obviously less work stress”.*

Another reason that was rarely mentioned by the respondents was “*study*”, where two (4%) respondents had selected study as a reason for accepting nonstandard working arrangements. Although previous research by Loughlin and Barling (2001) highlighted that study is a reason for doing part-time work. In this study, the percentage of people that selected it as a reason was very low because most of them have already achieved higher education. This particular reason is selected by those respondents who are PhD student or applying for PhD admission.

*“I have just completed my MPhil. I had a fulltime job offer from a couple of universities, but I choose part-time lecturing position because I want to spend more time for the PhD admission process. I am happy to accept it as I get plenty of time to search and apply for PhD admission, and at the same time I can increase my teaching experience”.*

In addition, some respondents also selected skill development as a reason for accepting nonstandard employment contract. Three (7%) of the respondents selected skill development as a main reason for accepting nonstandard employment contract. This reason was also highlighted in studies by Albatch (2000) and Tan and Tan (2002). This reason is particularly selected by academics that have recently finished their masters or bachelor’s degree. This reason is also selected by those academics unable to find a permanent or temporary job in other sectors.

*“I have completed my MSc in financial economics in 2010, I applied for so many jobs after my master’s degree but I could not find a single job related to my field. I had no intention to do jobs which are completely out of my specialization. After two months of continuous searching I applied for a part-time lecturing position at a college. And I got that job; I started my career as a teacher which was not a bad start for me. At least I can add this experience in my CV and the most important thing is that I can practice my learning and skills, which probably would not be possible for me if I was involved in an odd job”.*

### **Push Factors or Controlled Motivation for Accepting Nonstandard Contract**

Respondents across the sample pool were asked to select potential factors that could push them or control them to engage in nonstandard employment contracts. From six different potential reasons, respondents selected four reasons that push them into accepting nonstandard employment contracts. Twenty-seven (59%) academics have selected “*no other contract available in this organization*” as a push factor for selecting nonstandard employment contracts. Brown & Gold (2007): in their study, also found that academics, working in British universities are in nonstandard employment contracts because there was no permanent contract available in that university. In the interview respondents also mentioned this reason as a key reason.

*“I was always passionate about building a teaching career, and at the beginning I tried to get involved in fulltime teaching. But when I applied to these colleges, no college actually offered me a fulltime position. Right now I am involved with three colleges; in one college I am working as a part-time lecturer and in the other two colleges I have three-month fixed-term contract.”*

In other reasons, nine (19%) of respondents had also selected redundancy as a push factor that motivated them to select nonstandard working arrangements. In line with this statement Lyonette et al. (2010) found that during recessions, numbers of men redundant from job is higher than number of women and hence more men enter into part-time or other non-standard

employment contract. During recession, organizations give many employees compulsory redundancy to cut down overall expenditures, and hence employees who have been made redundant involve themselves with colleges to obtain immediate work.

*“I was made redundant from my last job, where I was in a management position. After that compulsory redundancy I applied for many jobs but due to the recession I could not find any. In July 2009 I applied for this lecturing job and within one week I got a response and started my new career as a lecturer”.*

Finally, participants in this study also gave some responses with the reason *“in order to find a permanent contract in this institution”* as a reason for accepting nonstandard employment contracts. Earlier research by Albach (2000) and Tan and Tan (2002) mentioned that people accept nonstandard work voluntarily in order to gain entry in the job market that will help them secure a permanent contract within that institution. Four (8%) respondents currently working in large colleges have selected this reason as a means to get a permanent position in that college.

### **Evaluation of the Main Reasons for Accepting Nonstandard Contract**

Following the analysis of reasons for entering into nonstandard employment contracts, the survey tried to find out the most striking factor that influenced academics to accept nonstandard contracts. Respondents in this study were asked to rank the reason with the most influential reason marked as 1. The reason in which most respondents agreed as the most influential reason is no other contract available in this organization. When interviewed, the principal of one college was asked the reason for employing so many academic staff under nonstandard employment contract. He highlighted that reducing overall institutional expenditure and size of the college as the main motivation to recruit academics under nonstandard contracts.

*“The main motives for recruiting part-time academic staff is to reduce direct staff cost. Our organisation is very small in size. We do not have enough capital and infrastructure to run this college by employing fulltime faculty members. However, we are new in this area. We started this college in 2009 so we are still in a growth stage for which we need to invest more on infrastructure development rather than on fulltime teachers.”*

In addition, all of these colleges are privately funded, so they do not receive any funding from the government or from any other sources, which also motivates them to recruit academics on nonstandard contracts, especially to save money from direct labour costs. Another principal of a small college mentioned that they only recruit a very limited number of fulltime staff and that is only to cover clerical duties. However, they have some fulltime staff but they are the investors in that college. They do both administrative work and also teach classes. They have strongly mentioned that they do not recruit any academic staff under fulltime contracts. Furthermore, a registrar of a college mentioned that they recruit all of their academic staff under nonstandard contracts because they can increase or decrease the number of academics based on the number of students.

*“We largely depend on overseas students; as a result the number of student in each year fluctuates a lot. For example, this year the government implemented very strict rules about student visas which means we will get fewer students this year. If we recruit fulltime academic staff we have to give them salary every month, where under nonstandard contracts we don't have to do that”.*

The second factor in which academics agreed most, is increased security. As mentioned earlier sixteen (36%) respondents highlighted this factor as an influential factor but twelve (26%)

academics have selected this factor as the most influential matter. This finding is an unexpected result, while every researcher mentioned nonstandard work as an unsecured employment contract (Grip et al., 1997; Conley, 2003). Furthermore, the respondents were also asked about the level of control they have over the length of contract. Surprisingly, they responded that they have no control over the length of contract. In addition, principals of different colleges also mentioned that they do not convert part-time or temporary teachers into fulltime ones. Therefore, the overall administrative control over the length of contract and less opportunity to become a fulltime faculty member motivated academics to hold part-time lecturing position in different colleges. Another possible explanation of these findings is that the colleges where the academics are working are vulnerable in nature. The first reason is that these colleges mostly depend on overseas students, so strict rules in student visa procedures may close down the college or can cause fluctuations in the number of students registering to take classes. Since the colleges are in vulnerable position, they can only offer nonstandard employment contract to recruit academics, and as the academics try to secure their income and employment they hold part-time lecturing position across a number of colleges.

Apart from these two main reasons, respondents in this survey also mentioned other reasons that influence them to enter nonstandard work. Nine (19%) respondents mentioned wanted change as an influential factor. The reason they selected this reason can be linked to the uncertainty that exists around the colleges. The academics may want to change to a more stable college which is not vulnerable due to changes occurring in education policy, thus enabling them to secure a future position even if it is on a nonstandard employment contract. Moreover, as respondents mentioned earlier that the colleges have full control over the rate of pay, thus motivating academics to change colleges for higher wages. A very nominal percentage of people mentioned more money as an influential factor. Only five (10%) people marked it as the most influential factor. In addition, only two (4%) people have selected skill development as an influential factor. This finding underlies that academics are working in nonstandard contracts in this sector for neither money nor skill development.

The study does not find any link between family and nonstandard work. The reason for this finding is because of the age of the respondents. Most of the respondents in this study were in the 20-30 age brackets and it is also found that most of them were not married. Therefore, negative links between family and nonstandard work is obvious.

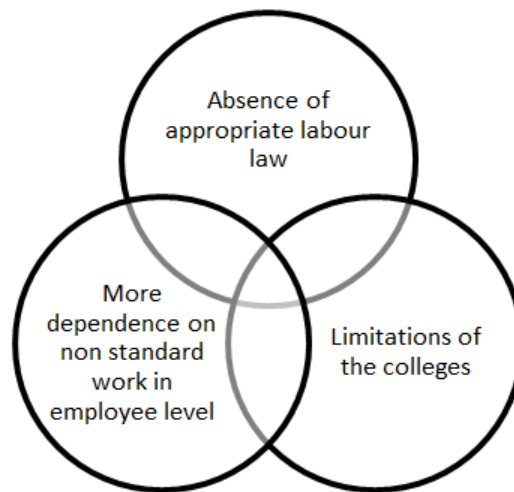
### **Intersection of Labour and Employment Markets**

If we put together the above analysis, it can be said that developments with respect to nonstandard work at college level observed in this study clearly influenced from the push factors most. The growing awareness of the costs of labour and motivation for reducing these costs by employing academics only under nonstandard contracts developed nonstandard contract in this sector. The reasons colleges gave, matched with some old reason such as fluctuations in number of students or seasonal impacts, or just to reduce fixed costs and, firm size. However, some of those reasons are also new, such as the vulnerable situation of the college due to frequent changes of student visa rules and regulation. In addition, sluggish UK labour laws regarding nonstandard employment contracts also give individual colleges more room to employ academics under nonstandard contracts. This is particularly the case with laws regarding unfair dismissal, redundancy, sick payment or other employment benefits. In general, the absence of appropriate law and different limitations faced by the colleges in running the institution

motivated colleges to employ academics only under nonstandard contract. As a result, more academics had no choice other than to accept nonstandard contracts in this sector. Since there is little commitment about contract duration and continuous employment, academics become involved with more than one college, in order to secure their income and employment?

### **Intersection and Some Consequences of Nonstandard Employment Contract**

Survey participants were asked the extent of control they had over hours worked, timetabling, training, pay, and length of their contract. They were asked to mark whether or not they had any control over these issues. The issues over which respondents felt they had the least control are training, length of contract, and pay. Forty (87%) respondents had no control over pay. This finding represents that most academics in this sector have volatile and unstable income. This insecurity of income may lead towards dissatisfaction as it decreases the academics' standard of living and purchasing power (Kalleberg, 2009). Moreover, most of the academics mentioned that they are not involved with any union activities. Since the majority of academics are not involved in union activity they cannot collectively negotiate for better pay which is also a major reason for less control over pay in this sector.



**FIGURE 1**  
**INTERSECTION OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT MARKETS**

In terms of length of contract, all respondents responded that they have no control over length of contract. Training is another issue over which respondents felt they had less power. Only 17% of the respondents in this study mentioned that they received some training from the colleges, but the training consisted of only basic knowledge. One of the main reasons to employ workers under nonstandard contracts is to get trained workers without major investment for training. Additionally, organizations do not want to invest on nonstandard worker for training as they come to work for a limited period of time in the organization (Szabo and Negyasi, 2005). Therefore, it is unsurprising that colleges do not provide any training to their academics, but due to not getting training from colleges, the academics have to spend more of their income on training that could increase debt and stress for the academics.

## CONCLUSION

One of the main aims of this study is to identify potential reasons for nonstandard employment contracts in private further and higher education colleges. The study has successfully identified various reasons that are closely related to entering into nonstandard employment contracts and pointed out the most important reasons for accepting nonstandard contracts by comparing push and pull factors. The study has also successfully identified the negative consequences of non-standard work in this sector. The study particularly examines control over different aspects of job including wages, training, employment benefits, career progression, job security, working hours, and timetabling. The study has found that the reasons for accepting nonstandard work do not depend on academics since the choice has been imposed on them. The study has identified different reasons in two different categories. In the push factor or controlled factor category the study identified different reasons including no other contract available, redundancy and end of contract and in order to find a permanent contract. In the pull factor or autonomous factor category the study identified some other reasons including increased security, wanted change, more money, stress health, study and skill development. Among all these reasons the study has found two most important ones in two categories. From push or autonomous category, the study has found no other contract available as the most important reason. From pull factor category, the study has found increased security as the most important reason. Other important reasons included wanted change, more money, and skill development.

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