

**Job dissatisfaction encourages workers to choose temping**

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The unhappiness of being in a bad job is strongly linked to people's decision to leave permanent work for the uncertain world of temporary employment, the British Sociological Association's conference in Warwick heard today [Thursday 5 September]

An analysis of data collected from almost 69,000 British people from 1991-2009 found that higher levels of anxiety and distress were a good indicator that people in a permanent job would leave to go into temping, casual work or seasonal labour.

The research was carried out by Professor Don Webber and Dr Michail Veliziotis of the University of the West of England, Dr Chris Dawson of the University of Bath, and Dr Gail Pacheco of AUT University, New Zealand.

Dr Pacheco told the BSA conference on work, employment and society that their research was the first to examine the emotional health of people before, during and after temporary employment.

She said that preliminary analysis of the data shows that those who would, in the year after being interviewed, switch from permanent to temporary employment were 76% more likely to be suffering from increased levels of anxiety than those who stayed in permanent work through the 18-year period. They were also around 40% more likely to be suffering from heightened levels of psychological distress.

"This research fills a gap in the literature by focusing on the association between mental health status and the transition between temporary and permanent employment," Dr Pacheco told the conference.

"We found that permanent employees who would move to temporary employment in the future had levels of poor mental health relatively similar to those already working in temporary employment.

"So poor mental health is not a consequence of becoming a temporary worker, but a good predictor of workers who will move to temporary employment in the future. We also found that lying behind this poor mental health was dissatisfaction with their existing permanent job."

- Work, Employment and Society is a journal published by SAGE and the BSA.

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**Notes**

**1.** The researchers looked at data on 68,991 people collected between 1991 and 2009 by the British Household Panel Survey.

**2.** The BSA's work, employment and society conference takes place from 3 - 5 September 2013 at the University of Warwick.

**3.** The British Sociological Association's mission is to represent the intellectual and sociological interests of its members. The BSA is a company limited by guarantee, and registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 3890729. Registered Charity Number 1080235.