

UNEMPLOYMENT, TEMPORARY WORK, AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: THE GENDERED EFFECT OF SPOUSAL LABOR MARKET INSECURITY

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Unemployment negatively affects individuals' psychological well-being. Moreover, it also impairs the psychological well-being of spouses of the unemployed. Temporary jobs, which are increasingly replacing permanent ones due to the expansion of the gig economy, are often considered a better alternative to unemployment, providing workers with income and opportunities to connect to employers. A new study published in the *American Sociological Review* shows that temporary jobs, which are in fact highly insecure and of poor quality, are as detrimental to spouses' psychological well-being as unemployment. Using data collected throughout 18 consecutive years from the same heterosexual couples in the United Kingdom, sociologist Hande Inanc shows that when experienced by husbands, temporary work, like unemployment, has a negative effect on wives' psychological well-being and life satisfaction. However, unlike unemployment, wives' temporary employment also spills over and negatively affects husbands' psychological well-being. Furthermore, couples' well-being is most affected when men are either unemployed or temporarily employed and their wives have permanent jobs, suggesting that the negative effect is related to reversed gender roles in the household. Inanc's findings indicate that labor market policies that help people remain in or have access to stable jobs have a wider reach than previously understood. Moreover, because the well-being of coupled individuals strongly depends on men's breadwinning ability, policies that promote egalitarian gender values within the household, such as paid paternity leave and equal pay, will lessen the negative well-being effects of job instability experienced by men.