

# Protecting *the Weak*

Entangled Processes of Framing, Mobilization and Institutionalization in East Asia

## Are Temporary Agency Jobs Bad Employment Contracts or Bad Employment Relationships?

### Evidence from Japan

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This research explores why temporary agency jobs are regarded as bad jobs in Japan, by distinguishing the impact of a fixed-term employment *contract* from the impact of triangular employment *relationships* (i.e., non-direct employment relationships) of temporary agency workers on their job qualities. We conducted our employee survey by translating questionnaires of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS, 2010) and collected rich quantitative data on five dimensions of job qualities namely the pay, fringe benefits, work autonomy, work time flexibility and employment security of three types of Japanese workers: regular workers, non-regular workers, and temporary agency workers. As the results of our statistical analysis demonstrate, there is hardly any difference between the impact of temporary agency jobs and the impact of non-regular jobs on job qualities. However, there are several differences between the impact of a fixed-term employment contract and the impact of a non-direct employment relationship on job qualities. Therefore, future research needs to distinguish the impact of employment *contract* characteristics from the impact of employment *relationships* characteristics on job quality.

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**Campus Westend, SH 1.105 (seminar house)**

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