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as a journal opinion  
article and address  
an economics issue  
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Module Journal Opinion Article: Unemployment and Part-Time Jobs With unemployment rates still high, the US economy is struggling to cope with low spending and a decline in fluidity. However, there is one specific area that is causing jitters among economists and government planners. The number of temporary workers has increased considerably in the past year. This category has been forgotten by successive policies in successive governments because the government seems to view part-time work as full-time work (International Labor Organization 19). The logic is that work is work, whether permanent or temporary. However, this is a flawed concept that does not apply in the current scheme of things. This increase is a concern because of a number of reasons. Firstly, since they cannot get permanent jobs, part-timers are unable to access the stability and benefits accorded by fulltime jobs.

Overall, unemployment declined sharply in the last 12 months – it fell from 7.2% in October last year to 5.8% the same time this year – but there are too many sections of the population that can only find temporary slots. More concerning is the fact that the number of part-time workers doing involuntary shifts is more than 50% higher than at the beginning of the recession (International Labor Organization 20). There was an identical increase in temporary workers in previous recessions, but it fell quickly. This time it is not dropping, making economists wonder what the outlook will be next year. In fact, during the recovery, some states have witnessed increases of people wallowing in part-time employment who want more. People working part-time are 5 times more likely to live in poverty compared

to permanent workers.

Currently, about 75% of part-time workers in the country either live in low income or poverty. This is according to government sources and industry experts. In addition, there is a strong positive correlation between unemployment and temporary work; part-time jobs do not often last long. Many temporary workers go through lengthy periods without work. About 30% of involuntary temporary workers are often out of work for more than 3 months or longer annually. According to the International Labor Organization (19), while they are always glad to be working, the reality is that part-time jobs, especially involuntary ones, are just “subtle unemployment.” For example, if someone works 20 hours each week but needs 40 hours to meet his needs, those unfulfilled hours (20) are spent out of work. The person is therefore half-employed or half-unemployed, depending on how optimistic someone looks at it.

Part-time work is just pseudo-employment that is not considered by official statistics. In addition to this, wages are unequal. Part-time workers get paid less than permanent employees for performing the same duties. Part-time workers also receive no paid vacation days, sick leaves or on-the-job training that significantly improves their careers. Many part-time workers also lack health insurance or fund it out of their pockets. In 2015, Obamacare will require employers to offer health insurance to staff working 30 or more hours per week (International Labor Organization 22). This will lock out even more part-time workers from getting health insurance, meaning they have to use the meager salaries they receive to fund health insurance and remain

without much foundation going forward.

#### Work Cited

International Labor Organization. Global Employment Trends 2014 Risk of a Jobless Recovery? Geneva: International Labor Office, 2014. Print.