

Motivations For Using Non-Standard Work Arrangements: A Managerial Perspective

Jeremy Mitonga-Monga^{1*}, Wilfred Isioma Ukpere² and Nyasha Mapira³

Abstract

The study sought to identify reasons why the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard work arrangements. Nine research participants contributed to a qualitative study conducted at a global firm in Zimbabwe. Data was gathered from nine research participants, using face to face, semi-structured interviews. The study found several factors that motivate the case global firm in Zimbabwe to use non-standard work arrangements. The three main factors that stimulate the case global firm in Zimbabwe to utilize non-standard work arrangements, as identified by most of the research participants, include globalisation, quest for flexibility, and need to reduce costs. However, a few research participants indicated that the global firm in Zimbabwe uses non-standard work arrangements¹ to evaluate employee conduct and performance before offering them full-time contracts. The current study recommends that the case global firm in Zimbabwe should be aware that some non-standard work arrangements are linked to high marginal costs in the long run if several atypical workers are employed consecutively for shorter fixed periods. The study also recommends that workers should try to know and understand the reasons why organisations adopt non-standard work arrangements. Understanding these reasons will assist workers to decide whether to accept it or not.

Keywords: non-standard work, work arrangement, globalisation, global firm, flexibility.

JEL Classification: J22, L61, M54, O19

1. INTRODUCTION

Non-standard work arrangements is not a new phenomenon in industrialised, semi-industrialised and developing countries (Gunn et al., 2022; Karlstedt, 2023; Ingelsrud, 2021; Webb, 2022). The rise of Toyotism and the decline of Fordism, which lead to a shift from the standard model of permanent employment for life towards atypical forms of work, are responsible for the development of non-standard work arrangements in industrialised nations (Ingelsrud, 2021; Beynon, 2016). Moore et al. (2020) note that lean production methods were the hallmark of Toyotism, which paved the way for extensive outsourcing, downsizing, and subcontracting, with the aim of improving workplace flexibility and the destandardisation of work. Several researchers have found that the flexibilisation of production, which resulted in the destandardisation of work, led to the introduction of non-standard work (Sankaran, 2022; Gunn et al., 2022; Tanimoto et al., 2021).

Sankaran (2022) argues that non-standard labour relations is described as the opposite of the post-Fordist model of standard employment that peaked in the 1950s. Similarly, Moore and Joyce (2020) describe non-standard work arrangements as short-term employment contracts that are not permanent, offer limited social security benefits and are not unionised. In short, most non-standard work arrangements involve insecure work (Ingelsrud, 2021; Elia & Bekker, 2023). Furthermore, Gouzoulis et al. (2023) mention that non-standard work is perceived to be temporary, fixed-term contracts, casual, seasonal or part-time work in various industries, with little or no legal protection. The increase in non-standard employment is also attributed to shifts in macro- and micro-environmental dynamics that

^{1,2,3}Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

have forced companies to shift employment and labour patterns towards non-standardisation (Edgell, 2012). In addition, some authors attribute the increase in non-standard employment to globalisation, the need to reduce costs and the need to increase flexibility in labour markets (Sankaran, 2022; Reljic et al., 2023; Ingelsrud, 2021; Ilsøe et al., 2021). Similarly, Rasmussen et al. (2021) claim that a variety of factors, including changes in labour market legislation, technological advances, and the changing demographics of the workforce, have contributed to the rise of non-standard forms of work. It is noteworthy that several organisations in Zimbabwe are moving from the traditional concept of a job for life to non-standard work arrangements by filling permanent positions with non-standard workers (Fapohunda, 2022; Kalejaiye, 2021; Kholosa, 2023). Although non-standard work arrangements have become increasingly popular in Zimbabwe, there are few studies that consider reasons why global organisations in Zimbabwe are adopting non-standard work arrangements. It is also important to note that previous research on motivations for the use of non-standard labour relations has focused heavily on domestic companies; therefore, little is known about the reasons why multinational organizations in Zimbabwe use non-standard work arrangements to fill permanent positions. Hence, a study was conducted to explore reasons why a global firm in Zimbabwe resorts to non-standard work arrangements.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents theories that guide this study, as well as forms of non-standard work arrangements and drivers for the utilization of non-standard work arrangements.

2.1. Real Option Theory

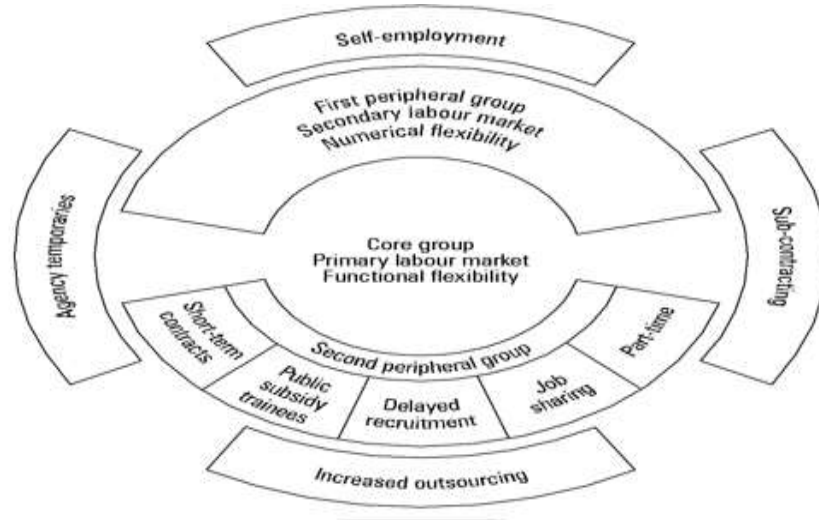
The concept of uncertainty serves as a basis for the real options theory (Trigeorgis & Reuer, 2017; Esders et al., 2016). Reiver (2017) explains that the real options theory assumes that options exist in uncertain situations. Furthermore, the real options theory suggests that companies should try to minimise their spending until more information is available and uncertainties are resolved (Brady, 2017; Foote & Folta, 2020; Folta & Miller, 2019). Miller (2020) argues that since the future is unpredictable and irreversible, organisations should reduce and eliminate ambiguity. Berk (2019) compares irreversibility to irretrievable sunk costs. Berk (2021) further states that the real options theory provides flexible insights into how firms can change their initial operating strategy to take advantage of favourable future opportunities or to react to limit losses. Similarly, Foote and Folta (2020) claim that flexibility in the option chain occurs when firms can postpone a decision or abandon a project until the risks are reduced. Furthermore, Bowman and Hurry (2012) aver that an organisation can identify and pursue an alternative by using the real options chain architecture. According to the real options framework, as new information becomes available, a decision is made on whether to pursue or abandon the option (Folta, 2020; Chou, 2011). Similarly, Malos and Campion (2020) posit that the real options theory can be used as a basis for strategic decisions in the field of human resource management. To avoid an irrevocable decision, an organisation can offer a new employee a non-standard employment contract (Folta, 2020; Janney & Dess, 2014). Reuer (2017) further states that if additional details about behaviour and performance become known over time, the company will have the choice to end the above option quickly or extend the offer to the employee permanently.

Numerous studies have considered non-standard employment arrangements from a real options perspective (Brady, 2017; Foote & Folta, 2020; Folta & Miller, 2019; McGrath & Nerkar, 2018). According to Badders et al. (2017), the use of non-standard work arrangements is the exercise of a real option that provides flexibility to reduce uncertainty. Furthermore, Foote and Folta (2012) argue that firms are encouraged to use non-standard work arrangements because full-time contracts are irreversible owing to the rigidity of the labour market. Similarly, Wright (2015) postulates that the use of non-standard employment relationships is motivated by the attractiveness of terminating or renewing them when new information about the worker becomes available.

2.2 Atkinson's (1984) Flexible Firm Model

The basis of the Flexible Firm Model is the market uncertainty triggered by the oil price shocks of the mid-1970s, characterised by a decline in economic activity and a downturn

in the economy (Reich et al., 2015). In response to fluctuations in the product market and uncertainty in the market, companies need the flexibility to adjust their labour force (Allan, 1999). This means that the flexible firm model envisages that organisations should adopt more flexible staffing practises to make short-term adjustments quickly, easily and cost-effectively. As shown in Figure 1 below, the flexible firm model divides employees into core and peripheral groups.



Source: Atkinson's (1984)

Figure 1: Atkinson's (1984) Flexible Firm Model

As indicated in Figure 1 above, the workforce is divided into core and peripheral areas. The core group is characterized by functional flexibility, which is necessary when new technologies emerge or when manufacturing methods change (Atkinson, 1984). Employees who perform routine tasks and are only hired temporarily during high operational demands, are referred to as the "peripheral workforce" (Atkinson, 1984). Atkinson (1984) claims that peripheral workers provide the organisation with numerical flexibility. The ability of the organisation to change the size of the workforce when needed is embodied in numerical flexibility (Atkinson, 1989). Sankaran (2022) states that numerical flexibility allows organisations to rapidly expand and reduce the workforce by utilising peripheral labour. More specifically, numerical flexibility refers to the ability of a firm to use a contingent or non-standardised workforce to adjust its workforce in response to changing demand patterns (Atkinson, 1984). As employers are freed from the responsibility of retaining support staff in the long term, the flexible firm model can be seen as a cost-cutting measure as it reduces the need for fixed compensation and other employment benefits (Reljic et al., 2023; Ingelsrud, 2021). As they are easy to remove, employers are spared the cost of maintaining labour during low demand (Ilsøe et al., 2021; Rasmussen et al., 2021). In addition, Tailby (2015) postulates that marginalised workers are less expensive because they are not entitled to social benefits and are not part of the core workforce.

2.3. Conceptualization of Non-standard Work

It is well known that non-standard work is the opposite of standard employment (Glăveanu, & Beghetto, 2021; Imdorf et al., 2017; Walker, 2011). Researchers have enumerated several terms, including atypical, contingent and precarious employment, which are synonymous with non-standard work arrangements. (Jara et al., 2021; Gouzoulis et al., 2023; Imdorf et al., 2017). It is noteworthy that the above terms describe non-standard employment relationships. Non-standard work is also characterised by precarious employment, income and health and safety at work (Tumino, 2021; Galanis, 2023; Schoukens & Barrio, 2017). Working outside of a fixed schedule and temporary or short-term employment are some of the characteristics of non-standard employment that Imdorf et al. (2017) identify.

2.4. Forms of Non-standard Work Arrangements

Non-standard work arrangements include all part-time employment and unclear employment relationships. Table 1 below shows legal forms of non-standard work arrangements.

Table 1: Forms of Non-standard Work Arrangements

Type	Description
Casual work	-Involves short periods of employment based on work demand -No regular pattern of work hours or days -No guarantee of ongoing work
Fixed term work	-Specific end date - Fixed-term agreements can either be written or oral -Used for specific projects or events
Part-time work	- Working less than regular working hours - Workers usually work less than 30 or 35 hours per week - Common in seasonal industries, hospitality and education
Temporary agency work	-Triangular employment relationship -Workers employed by an agency and work for another employer -Intermittent work with multiple assignments

Source: Authors' compilation

2.5. Reasons why Organizations Utilize Non-standard Work Arrangements

The increased use of non-standard work arrangements by businesses can be attributed to several factors. Mitlacher (2008) mentions that demand side drivers are elements that persuade businesses to adopt non-standard labor arrangements. Factors that contribute to an increase in the utilization of non-standard work arrangements are presented below.

2.5.1. Globalisation

The speed at which global economies and societies are integrating shows clearly that a global market is emerging (Marica, 2020; Dada, 2004). Adei (2014) defines globalisation as the process by which discrete national markets merge into a single, vast global market.

Reljic et al. (2023) state that the capitalist economic system has gradually replaced command economies during globalisation. The rise of multinational and transnational

corporations in the global economy is evidence of the dominance of the capitalist economic system (Gunderson, 2020). Torp and Reiersen (2020) note that the intense global competition of the capitalist economic system forces companies to change their organisational structures, work patterns, means of production and economic structures. Simutina and Venediktov (2021) assert that organizations can adapt to changes in the environment and maintain their competitiveness on a global scale by restructuring their work formations and organisational frameworks. Similarly, Reiersen (2020) claims that non-standardised working arrangements have their origins in changing work structures, which are exacerbated by global competition and uncertainty. Furthermore, Venediktov (2021) argues that globalisation has led to the use of non-standard work arrangements and just-in-time (JIT) systems in production. Furthermore, Kalleberg (2016) notes that many companies have resorted to non-standard forms of employment in the wake of trade liberalisation and globalisation to reduce costs, whilst remaining competitive in the global

market.

2.5.2. Need for Flexibility

It is assumed that organisations are moving from the Fordist to the post-Fordist regime owing to the dangers posed by significant environmental changes, which require continuous transformation (Webb, 2022; Tanimoto et al., 2021). Karlstedt (2023) states that companies have created labour structures that allow them to respond flexibly to changes in the macro environment and remain globally competitive in spite of economic fluctuations. Similarly, Kalleberg (2011) claims that organisations have adopted flexible hiring policies to avoid overstaffing during periods of lower demand owing to market volatility and fierce global competition. Cheadle (2016) avers that labour market flexibility gives the firm functional, wage and numerical flexibility. Atkinson (1984) distinguishes between four main categories of flexibility: functional, temporal, financial and numerical flexibility. Numerical flexibility is the ability of a company to control fluctuating product markets by hiring and firing employees as needed (Bamidele, 2017). Similarly, Aloisi and Gramano (2020) mention numerical flexibility as the ability to increase or decrease headcount in response to economic fluctuations, new technologies or changing consumer preferences. According to Sarantino (2017), financial flexibility is the ability of a company to control labour costs. Furthermore, Pavlova (2019) states that non-standardised work arrangements provide the company with both financial and time flexibility.

2.5.3. Cost Reduction

Many organisations are forced by global competition to look for cost-cutting measures to remain competitive (Okafor, 2017; Reljic et al., 2020; Cetrulo et al., 2023; Onyeonoru, 2013). To reduce organisational costs, employers fill permanent positions with non-standard workers (Kalleberg, 2021; Abraham et al., 2020; Basso, 2022). The wage gap theory states that non-standard workers have a lower cost advantage than permanent workers. Similarly, Webb (2022) claims that non-standard workers are more cost-effective because they only receive a low salary, while the company saves money on benefits such as social security and other insurances. Since atypical employment has fewer overheads such as payroll taxes and benefits, it is considered more economical (Reljic, 2020). A study conducted in the United States by Gunderson (2019) found that fixed-term employees are a desirable alternative as there are no costs associated with terminating them. Hellgren and Sverke (2021) concur, stating that owing to a rapidly changing labour market, companies are often forced to make a more flexible choice than permanent employment to reduce the cost of permanent employment. Basso (2022) identified several employment costs, including housing allowances, employer-paid health insurance premiums, employer-paid pension contributions and redundancy costs. Nonetheless, the use of non-standard work arrangement regulations has failed in Greece, justifying a reduction in costs (Voudouris, 2019). Kandel and Pearson (2020), who contend that atypical work arrangements are more costly for a company owing to increasing marginal costs, support the claims. According to Coveri (2023), non-standard labour relations are associated with significant long-term expenses, especially when several workers are hired consecutively for shorter fixed-term contracts.

2.5.4. Technological Change

New work patterns and structures have emerged through technological innovation and the use of ICT (Niesel, 2021). As technology frees workers from fixed work locations, it is known to promote flexibility in the workplace (Wooden, 2020). According to Nili (2021), ICT is forcing employers to downsize as technology replaces human labour. Technology promotes the simplification of tasks, eliminating the need to hire permanent staff as less trained, non-standardised workers can perform the tasks (Laß & Wooden, 2020; ILO, 2016). Standardisation and cutting-edge technology are now forcing companies to use non-standard labour to reduce uncertainty and adapt to changes in demand (Meszmann et al., 2020). According to Kahancová et al. (2021), advanced technology and fluctuations in demand necessitate the use of non-standard work arrangements.

2.5.5. Evaluating Workers for Future Employment

Organisations can assess employees' behaviour and performance through non-standard work arrangements before offering them full-time employment (Filomena & Picchio, 2021; Austin-Egole et al., 2020). This means that an organisation offers a non-standard employment contract and only later offers a permanent contract when further details about the employee's performance become known (Picchio, 2021; Drishti & Carmichael, 2023). Non-standardised contracts are less irreversible than permanent contracts as they can be terminated at a lower cost (Campbell et al., 2020). Walker (2020) argues that non-standard work arrangements are seen as viable solutions that companies use to transfer risk from the company to the employee. The Bridge theory also states that employers use non-standard employment to assess workers on a trial basis before giving them a full-time contract (Gramano, 2020). Similarly, performance management theory states that employers use non-standard workers to assess the employee's performance (Nwokorie, 2020). This is especially the case when the employer wants to be satisfied with the employee's performance before giving them a permanent position (Gramano, 2020).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Philosophy

Interpretivism was found to be the most suitable research paradigm for this study. According to Davies and Fisher (2018), interpretative philosophy entails describing, investigating, and comprehending participants' experiences. Likewise, according to Neuman (2014), the interpretative paradigm tries to provide a thorough explanation and interpretation of people's inner subjective realities so that others can share and comprehend their experiences of the events.

3.2. Research Site and Selection Criteria

A multi-ethnic global firm in Zimbabwe acted as the research site. Research participants were drawn from managers and union representatives at the case global firm in Zimbabwe. Research participants had to be employed by the case global firm in Zimbabwe for at least three years for them to be included in the study.

3.3. Sampling and Sample Size

Managers and union representatives who were deemed to be suitable to participate in this study were selected, using the purposive sampling method. Campbell et al. (2020) reason that purposive sampling allows researchers to choose representative participants who have relevant expertise of the topic that is studied. The researchers used the sample saturation concept to select nine research participants.

3.4. Data Collection Method

The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews to collect data from the research participants. Kallio (2016) states that semi-structured interviews are flexible and allow for follow-up questions. The interview questions were designed around the research question to elicit information about the reasons why the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard work arrangements.

3.5. Data Analysis

The researchers used the thematic data analysis method to analyze the data, whilst employing the ATLAS.ti software during thematic data analysis. The researchers used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six stages of data analysis, namely becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing a report.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Table 2 below summarizes ethical issues, which the researchers observed.

Table 2: Ethical Issues Observed by the Researchers

Ethical issue	Strategy used by researchers
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Privacy and confidentiality	Pseudonyms were used
Consent	Participants signed consent forms and were informed about the research aims
Voluntary	Participants were told that their participation is voluntary

Source: Authors' compilation

3.7. Profiles of Research Participants

The letter "D" was used as a pseudonym for the study's research participants to ensure their privacy and to maintain their confidentiality. Their profile characteristics are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Participants' Characteristics

No.	Pseudonyms	Age	Sex	Experience	Highest Qualification	Interview time
1	D1	28	F	3years	Bachelor's degree	11mins
2	D2	29	M	3years	Bachelor's degree	13mins
3	D3	33	F	4years	Master's degree	15mins
4	D4	35	M	6years	Master's degree	13mins
5	D5	39	M	5years	Master's degree	15mins
6	D6	46	M	8years	Master's degree	14mins
7	D7	43	F	7years	Master's degree	15mins
8	D8	50	M	10years	Master's degree	12mins
9	D9	37	M	6years	Master's degree	10mins

Source: Authors' fieldwork

4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following study question was posed to the research participants: "What drives an organization to utilize non-standard work arrangements?" The research participants identified numerous reasons why companies use non-standard workers. The researchers organized the study's findings into themes and sub-themes. Table 4 below provides a summary of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study in this respect.

Table 4: Emerging Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Globalization	-International competition -Changes brought about by being one global market
Cost reduction	-Reduce payroll taxes -Reduce future dismissal costs -Lower wage and non-wage costs

Need for flexibility	-Reduce uncertainty -Enjoying numerical flexibility
Evaluating employee performance	-For probation purposes -Bridge to full-time contract

Source: Authors' fieldwork

4.1. Data Frequency

The study's findings show several drivers, which induce organizations to adopt non-standard arrangements. The research participants' response rates are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Themes and Data Frequency

Themes	Frequency
Globalization	6
Cost reduction	5
Need for flexibility	4
Evaluating employee performance	3

Source: Authors' fieldwork

Table 5 above shows several factors, namely globalization, cost reduction motive, the need for flexibility, and evaluating employee performance, which motivate the case organization to adopt non-standard forms of work arrangements. Themes that emerged from the study and participants' transcript are presented below.

4.2. Theme 1: Globalisation

The aim of the study was to identify reasons why the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard work arrangements. The research participants indicated that globalisation has stimulated the case organization to use non-standard work arrangements. Table 6 below illustrates participants' quotes in this respect.

Table 6: Participants' Quotes on Globalisation as a Push Factor

Pseudonym	Quotes
D1	'Remember we are now a global family, so global competition is forcing our organization to use non-standard work arrangements'
D2	'Use of atypical forms of work emanates largely from the issue of globalization'
D4	'I feel that it's because of globalisation'
D5	'You can't separate precarious nature of contracts from globalisation'

D7	'Changes in the global world is forcing our organization to also move away from job for life concept to non-standard work arrangements'
D9	'My brother, let me put it this way, Globalization is equal to non-standard work arrangements'

Source: Authors' fieldwork

4.3. Theme 2: Cost Reduction Strategy

In total, five of the nine research participants indicated that the case organisation utilizes non-standard work arrangements in a bid to reduce costs. Their related responses are presented below.

- 'Companies utilize non-standard work arrangements as a cost reduction strategy' (D2).
- "Do you know that non-standard workers are cheaper compared to full-time employees, and this justifies that use of non-standard workers" (D3).
- "Using non-standard work arrangements means that you are likely to reduce both wage and non-wage costs" (D5).
- 'Companies go for atypical forms of work because they reduce labour related costs like pension and other contributions like medical aid cover' (D6).
- "The need to reduce future dismissal costs justifies the reason why organizations use non-standard work arrangements" (D8).

4.4. Theme 3: Need for Flexibility

The need to enjoy numerical flexibility was popular amongst the research participants. They stated that non-standard work arrangements enabled the firm to adjust the workforce's quantity and quality easily. In this regard, D2 said:

"With non-standard forms of work, the company can quickly respond to environmental changes."

Similarly, D4 stated:

"You can easily reduce or increase the quantity of staff if you utilize non-standard workers."

This trend continued with D7 and D9. D9 declared:

"They use temporary, fixed term contracts and other forms of non-standard work because they want to enjoy flexibility in appointing and dismissing workers."

4.5. Theme 4: Evaluating Employee Performance

Apart from globalisation, the need for flexibility and cost reduction, a few research participants indicated that their organization adopted non-standard forms of work in the short run as a way of evaluating worker performances before awarding them a fulltime contract.

The following transcripts indicate participants' responses in this regard.

- "Non-standard work arrangements are used when an employee is on probation" (D3),
- "Organizations use these forms of contracts initially to check and measure employee performance before giving them full-time contracts" (D4).
- "Non-standard work arrangements reduce the uncertainty and risk of giving an employee a full-time contract before assessing his/her performance" (D8).

4.6. Discussion of the Findings

The objective of the study was to identify reasons why the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard forms of work arrangements. Research participants' responses

generated certain themes, which are discussed below.

4.6.1. Globalisation

Most of the research participants indicated that globalisation has forced the case organization to utilize non-standard workers. Hence, D1 remarked: ‘Remember we are now a global family, so global competition is forcing our organization to use non-standard work arrangements’. Torp and Reiersen (2020) concur with the viewpoint, stating that intense global competition that characterizes the capitalist economic system compels businesses to modify their organizational structures, work patterns and forms of work. Similarly, Simutina and Venediktov (2021) posit that globalization forces organizations to restructure their organizational formations, whilst adopting flexible forms of work to maintain their competitiveness on a global scale. In a similar vein, Reiersen (2020) asserts that non-standard work arrangements originated from changing work structures made worse by global rivalry and uncertainty. In addition, Venediktov (2021) states that globalization resulted in the use of non-standard work arrangements and just-in-time (JIT) systems for production.

4.6.2. Need to Reduce Costs

The second theme that emerged from the study was the organisation’s need to reduce labour costs. The research participants indicated that the case organization uses non-standard work arrangements in a bid to reduce wage and non-wage labour costs. In this respect, D6 said: “Companies go for atypical forms of work because they reduce labour related costs like pension and other contributions like medical aid cover’.

The wage differential theory supports the above quotes. The said theory provides that non-standard workers have a lower cost advantage than hiring workers on a permanent basis. Similarly, Webb (2022) contends that non-standard workers are less expensive since they are **paid meagre** salaries, while the company saves money on perks like social security and other insurance. A study conducted in the United States of America by Gunderson (2019) also revealed that non-standard workers are a desirable alternative because there are no expenses associated with terminating them. Nonetheless, in Greece, utilisation of non-standard work arrangements failed to justify cost reduction (Voudouris, 2019). Kandel and Pearson (2020) concur, saying that non-standard work arrangements are more costly to an organization owing to increasing marginal costs. In addition, Coveri (2023) postulates that non-standard work arrangements are linked to significant long-term expenditures, particularly when employing several employees consecutively for shorter fixed-term contracts.

4.6.3. Need for Flexibility

Since non-standard work arrangements are likened to flexibility, a few of the research participants indicated that the case organization utilizes non-standard workers to enjoy numerical flexibility. Hence, D4 stated: “You can easily reduce or increase the quantity of staff if you utilize non-standard workers.”

The flexible firm model supports the above-mentioned viewpoints. The flexible firm model states that non-standard forms of work allow an organization to enjoy numerical and financial flexibility (Atkinson, 1989). Aloisi and Gramano (2020) claim that numerical flexibility allows the firm the capacity to increase or decrease the workforce in reaction to fluctuations in the economy, novel technologies, or shifts in consumer preferences. Financial flexibility, according to Sarantino (2017), gives an organisation the capacity to **control labour** costs. Similarly, Pavlova (2019) states that non-standard work arrangements give the company flexibility in terms of both money and time.

4.6.4. Evaluating Employee Performance

A few of the research participants indicated that atypical forms of work allow the global firm in Zimbabwe to assess and evaluate employee performance before appointing them on a permanent basis. Hence, D4 stated: ‘Organizations use these forms of contracts initially to check and measure employee performance before giving them a full-time contract’.

The real option theory supports D4’s sentiments because according to the theory, an organisation first offers a non-standard work contract and then later a permanent contract

once additional details about the employee's performance become known. Similarly, the bridge theory provides that employers utilize non-standard employment to assess workers on probation before giving them a full-time contract. In addition, the performance management theory also supports D4's viewpoints. Performance management theory provides that employers use non-standard workers to assess the employee's performance before offering them a full-time contract.

4.7. Contribution of the Study

By providing up-to-date information on the rationale behind the utilisation of non-standard work arrangements by organisations in the global south, this study makes a theoretical contribution. From a methodological perspective, this study's qualitative methodology will offer new perspectives because most previous research on the subject used a quantitative research strategy. The study will also be beneficial to other actors in human resources management. Human resource experts can benefit from the study, which makes them aware of the rationale for using non-standard work arrangements by global firms in the global south. Additionally, the study will assist experts in the field to conduct related research with other global and local organisations in Zimbabwe.

4.8. Limitations and Direction for Future Studies

The research was restricted. The study's small sample size does not make generalization possible. Even with using the sample saturation principle, a larger sample might have helped by offering fresh perspectives. The second flaw stems from research being conducted at a single multinational company in Zimbabwe, which makes it challenging to extrapolate the results to other local and foreign companies that operate in Zimbabwe. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews that the study used, have certain drawbacks. The problem may have been mitigated by using multiple data gathering methods. Researchers should conduct future, similar studies at global and local firms so that comparisons can be made.

CONCLUSION

Organizations seem to be moving away from the doctrine of a job for life towards the notion of non-standard work arrangements. Reasons for the above-mentioned trend were not known among global firms in Zimbabwe, which prompted the researchers to conduct this study. The study found that the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard workers owing to several reasons, which include globalisation, the need for flexibility, a desire to reduce labour costs, and evaluating employee performance. The three main reasons identified by most of the participants in this regard include globalisation, need for flexibility and desire to reduce costs. Only a few research participants indicated that the case global firm in Zimbabwe utilizes non-standard workers with the aim of assessing and evaluating employee performance before appointing them as permanent workers. The study recommends that workers should try to know and understand the reasons why organisations adopt non-standard work arrangements, as this will enable workers to make an informed decision.

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Author's Contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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