

The Australian Work and Life Index 2010

Juggling work-life balance in South Australia AWALI

Natalie Skinner and Sandra Pisaniello



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Executive summary

Improving work-life outcomes in South Australia: A strategic goal

The SA Government is committed to ‘improve the quality of life of all South Australians through maintenance of a healthy work-life balance’ in its Strategic Plan (Target T2.12). Measuring improvement requires reliable benchmarks. This report sets out a 2010 benchmark for work-life outcomes in the state. It analyses these work-life outcomes by various sub-groups, compares them with Australia as a whole and contrasts them with the earlier period of 2008/09.

‘Work-life’ outcomes have attracted increasing international attention, because of simultaneous changes in workplaces and households over the past three decades. More workplaces are dependent upon the contributions of workers with caring responsibilities, especially women. More workers are living in dual earner households or in households with sole parents who work or study. International research shows that the conditions of work and household life together shape the health and well-being of citizens, and as a result many countries are making efforts to ease the pressures that arise from combining paid work with home life, over the life cycle to improve well-being. This is reflected in the South Australian Government’s strategic focus on improved quality of life through maintenance of a healthy work-life balance.

A work-life benchmark

This report establishes a 2010 benchmark for work-life outcomes in South Australia by means of the Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI). AWALI is comprised of a composite index bringing together five measures of work-life interference (a term used interchangeably with ‘outcomes’ in this report) to construct an overall work-life index that is scaled from 0 (lowest work-life interference) to 100 (highest work-life interference). The index provides an easily understood general benchmark of work-life interference.

The five items that make up AWALI include the extent to which paid work interferes with activities outside of work, community connections and time with family and friends (three items), time pressure (one item) and overall satisfaction with work-life balance (one item).

AWALI has been conducted nationally since 2007. Since 2008, the survey has been supported by SafeWork SA, the Western Australian Government, the Australian Research Council (through an ARC Linkage project) and the Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia, which conducts AWALI.

A robust South Australian benchmark

In 2010, the main national AWALI data collection included 2,803 respondents. SafeWork SA funded an additional survey of South Australian (SA) workers to take the total number of South Australian respondents to 987. The SA sample provides good representation of the SA workforce by gender, age, education, occupation, type of employment and full-time/part-time status.

A respondent group of this size supports a robust state-level analysis for SA. It permits us to compare SA with the rest of Australia and allows us to probe outcomes in relation to a range of characteristics including social-demographic and employment groups with the best and worst work-life outcomes. In this report the SA 2010 findings are compared with Australia (N = 2803) and with SA results in 2008/09 (combined N = 661).

The 2010 AWALI Benchmark for South Australia

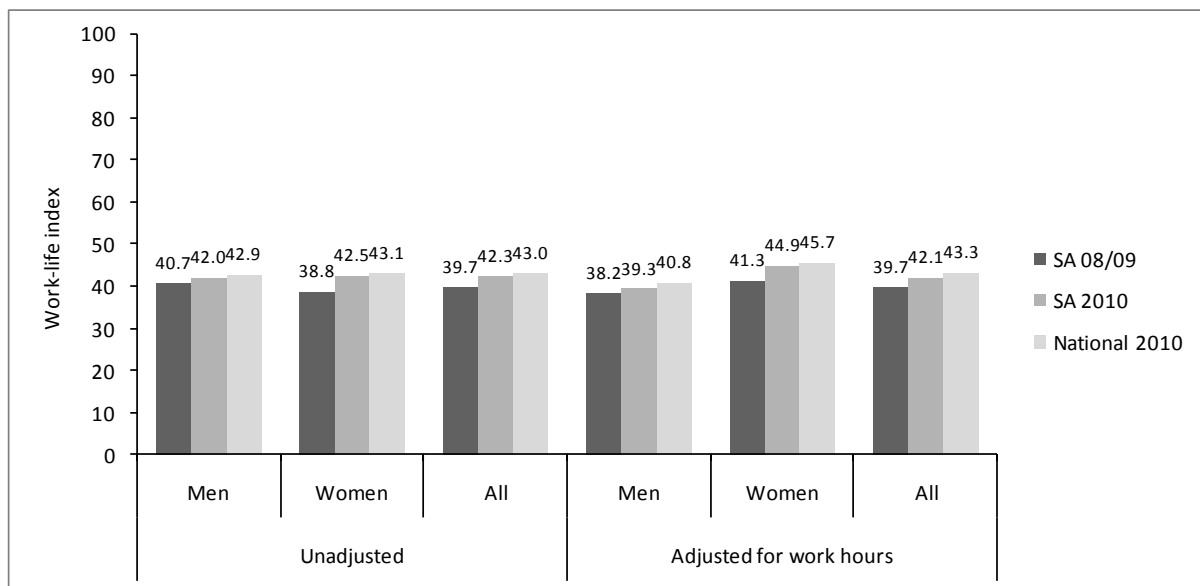
The SA work and life index (AWALI) score for South Australia was 42.3 (on a scale of 0-100 with 100 being the worst possible score).

The overall SA outcome is not significantly different from the score for all Australia: 43.3. This is not surprising as past analysis of AWALI shows the nature of the job you do, and the nature of your household is much less important than where you live. The most important sources of differences in AWALI scores relate to job characteristics (like workloads, the nature of supervision, workplace culture and hours of work) or personal characteristics (like care responsibilities). The effects of these factors tend to override differences related to geography, whether by state, or urban, regional or rural location.

Overall, SA men and women report similar work-life outcomes on the five work-life items and the composite AWALI work-life index. Gender differences are more evident within part-time and full-time work.

Change over time?

The 2010 national AWALI score is very close to that of the previous three years. The economic downturn of 2008/09 has made little difference to work-life outcomes. It seems that work-life outcomes are recession-proof and, at least in recent years, fairly stable. However, there are important differences between a range of groups, including some that are distinctive in South Australia.



Work-life index scores (unadjusted and adjusted for work hours) for all employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 2008/09

Note. National 2010 N = 2519, SA 2010 N = 993, SA 08/09 N = 630.

Adjusting for hours of work, some gender differences emerge

Hours of work play an important role in explaining work-life interference. The Figure above shows AWALI scores for SA and Australia, unadjusted and then adjusted for differences in working hours.

When hours are not adjusted for, SA men (like men nationally) have equivalent work-life scores to women. When hours are adjusted for, women's outcomes are worse than men, in SA and nationally

Work-life pressures are increasing for women, especially mothers

There is evidence that work-life outcomes are worsening over time for SA women. Controlling for hours, the work-life index for SA women shows a significant if small deterioration between 2008/09 and 2010, with scores increasing from 41.3 to 44.9. The same deterioration is evident for women nationally.

Women's work-life outcomes have deteriorated between 2008/09 to 2010, whereas there has been no significant change for men. This deterioration for women is primarily due to worsening work-life outcomes for mothers.

Work-life strains have also increased over time for women in part-time work and those working long hours (48+). In addition, more women in part-time work in 2010 are looking for more work hours compared to previous years.

Work interferes with community connections less in SA

While there are not significant differences in the overall AWALI work-life score in SA compared to nationally, there are some significant differences on some items and some sub-groups (throughout this report only statistically significant differences are referred to, unless otherwise indicated).

For example, work interferes with community connections in SA less frequently than nationally, although the difference is not large. In 2010, 15.7 per cent of South Australians said work interfered with community connections often or almost always compared with 17.9 per cent nationally.

These differences may reflect the advantages of living in a smaller city where home, work and community/social locations may be separated by shorter commutes. A sense of community connection in general may be easier to sustain in smaller rather than larger cities. The differences may also reflect the smaller proportion of managers and professionals in SA than nationally, given that these occupations have worse work-life interference than others.

Time pressures are widespread in both SA and nationally

SA workers generally share high levels of time pressure with workers nationally: such pressures affect the majority of workers in SA and Australia. They especially affect full-time women, though part-timers are far from immune. In SA in 2010, 60.3 of full-time women and 50.3 per cent of full-time men said they are often or almost always rushed and pressed from time. The proportions affected by time pressures in 2010 are very similar to 2008/09 for both women and men.

Part-time workers in SA are less likely to report frequent time constraints

Part-time work appears to be slightly more protective from some types of work-life interference in SA than nationally though the differences are small. In 2010, 14.7 per cent of part-time workers in SA said that work often or almost always restricts time with family and friends, compared with 18.0 per cent nationally.

Satisfaction with work-life balance

In 2010 the majority of workers in SA and Australia – around two-thirds - were satisfied overall with their work-life balance. SA men working full-time were more likely to be satisfied (69.6 per cent) than nationally (66.0 per cent) while there was no difference amongst full-time women.

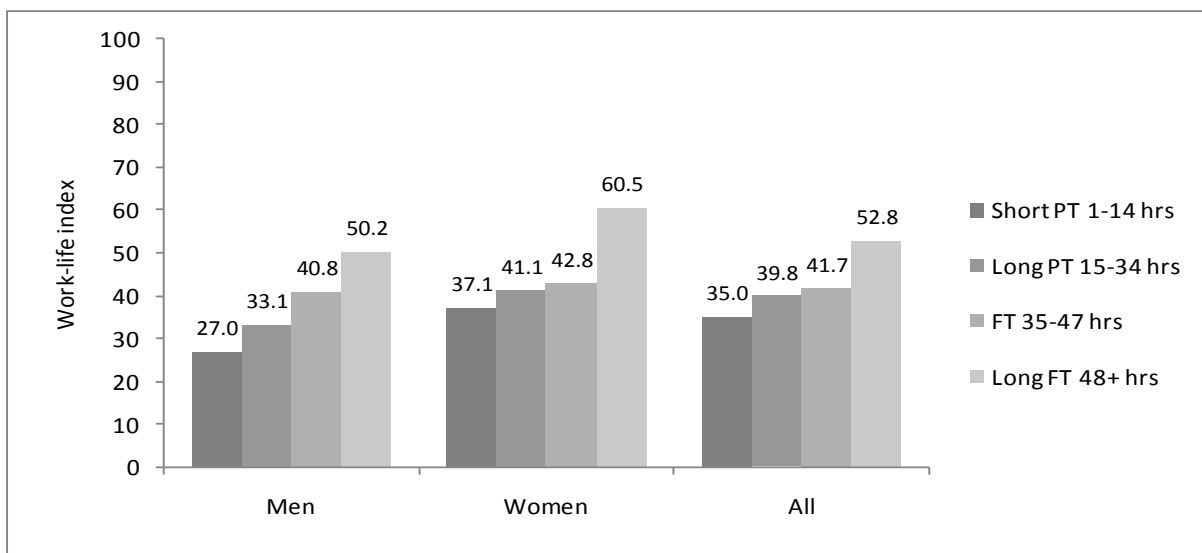
Working hours

Working hours play an important role in shaping work-life outcomes as shown in the Figure below. According to our survey, work hours in SA are comparable to the national average. Therefore, any differences in work-life outcomes between SA and Australia do not reflect differences in work hours.

In 2010, 25.7 per cent of SA men worked 48+ hours a week (only 7.8 per cent of SA women did so). This is slightly less than the proportion of men who worked long hours nationally (28.7 per cent).

Those who work long hours (48+) have much worse work-life interference than those who work around full-time hours (35-47), which are in turn worse than those of part-timers (1-34). Whether part-timers work less than 14 hours or 15-34 hours also makes a difference. SA women are particularly negatively affected by long hours of work, as they are nationally.

The Figure illustrates the greater work-life dividends that flow to SA men who work part-time, compared to women. The same pattern applies nationally.



Work-life index scores by short and long work hours and gender, SA 2010

Note. PT = part-time, FT = full-time. Hours usually worked per week used to categorise short part-time (1-15 hours), long part-time (16-34 hours), standard full-time (35-47 hours) and long full-time (48+) hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 848.

Part-timers in SA are less likely to experience work-related time restrictions than part-timers nationally. Again it may be the case that living in a smaller city provides time advantages for part-time women, who often live busy lives engaging in paid work, family, community (e.g. school) activities.

SA women full-timers have better work-life outcomes

SA women working full-time are less likely to experience frequent work interference with activities outside of work and time restrictions, compared to their counterparts nationally. However, their scores on the composite work-life index are close to the national score.

This difference may reflect the lower concentration of managerial/professional women in full-time work in SA (36.6 per cent) compared to the national average (46.4 per cent).

Full-time mothers in SA more likely to prefer part-time

Part-time work is a strong preference for SA working mothers – as it is nationally. More full-time SA mothers would prefer part-time hours than nationally.

Part-time work suits SA mothers: they report a better fit between their preferred and actual hours than mothers report nationally. A good fit between preferred and actual hours is strongly related to positive work-life outcomes.

Part-time work delivers more benefits for men than women

As would be expected from a time strain perspective, full-time employees consistently report higher levels of work-life interference than part-timers and this is the case on the five individual work-life items and on the composite AWALI work-life index. There is very little difference in work-life interference reported by men and women in full-time work.

In contrast, part-time men report less work-life interference than women. They are also more likely to report satisfaction with their work-life balance in 2010 compared to previous years.

The observation that part-time work has a more beneficial effect for men than women is of significant interest, given how many Australian women seek out part-time work to relieve work-life pressures. It may be that part-time women have work and home demands that do not decline in proportion to their reduced hours, because they are expected to maintain a high level of contribution both at work and at home. A recent CWL study (Williams, Pocock and Bridge 2009) observed that flexible and reduced hours/part-time work may place some women at more risk of role overload and work-life strains, as they are seen as a resource for school, home, family and community activities. When combined with paid work, these commitments and expectations create very busy lives for many women.

One-third of SA employees would like to reduce working hours by at least half a day

Many SA workers would like to work less taking account of the effect this would have on their income: nearly forty per cent of SA men would like to reduce their hours by at least four a week and thirty per cent of SA women would like to join them. On average SA employees would like to work 2.7 hours less per week.

Full-time employees are most likely to prefer fewer hours (44.9 per cent of men; 51.0 per cent of women). On average they would prefer to work six hours less, whereas part-timers would prefer an increase of four hours per week.

Women with children under 18 years of age work the shortest hours and have the best fit between their actual and preferred hours. In contrast, men with children have the poorest fit of actual with preferred hours and on average they would like to work 4.7 hours less.

Reflecting their longer work hours, a substantial proportion of fathers (42.1 per cent) would prefer fewer hours and nearly thirty per cent (28.1) of mothers would like to join them.

Finding a good fit between actual and preferred hours matters

There is clear evidence that in addition to the length of work hours per se, the fit with preferences has a significant impact on work-life outcomes.

Employees in SA and Australia who are working four or more hours longer than they prefer have worse work-life interference than those who work close to the hours they want or those who would like to work less.

Parenting responsibilities increase the 'struggle to juggle'

Not surprisingly, parenting responsibilities have a major impact on work-life outcomes. When we do not control for gender differences in work hours, mothers and fathers have the same levels of work-life interference. However, women in SA and nationally, often work part-time hours when they have young children and when we control for differences in work hours, mothers report

worse work-life outcomes than fathers. Parenthood has a stronger negative effect on mothers' work-life interference, when parents work the same hours.

Low income women are at higher risk of poor work-life outcomes

In general, both work hours and work-life interference increase as household income rises. However, work hours are not the only factor driving worse work-life outcomes because when we control for differences in work hours the relationship between higher incomes and higher work-life interference persists. This perhaps reflects income-related differences in work intensity, in spending patterns or in household shape (e.g. breadwinner versus dual earner).

There are gender differences in the relationship between income and work-life interference. For men, higher income is associated with higher work-life interference, suggesting that stresses associated with earning more override the resources that a higher income provides. However, for women the pattern is different: women in both low income households (less than \$30,000) and in higher incomes households (\$60,000+) report higher levels of work-life conflict compared with the middle income group. Women in low income households are vulnerable to work-life strains associated with a lack of financial resources. This gender difference holds both in SA and nationally.

There is little difference in work-life outcomes between employees and the self-employed

Work hours and work-life outcomes are comparable for employees and the self-employed. In SA and nationally, self-employed men work longer hours than their employee counterparts. However, there is no difference in work-life interference between self-employed and employee men and women, regardless of work hours or parenting status in either SA or Australia.

Self-employed fathers in SA have better work-life outcomes

In SA, self-employed fathers have less work-life interference than nationally, probably reflecting their shorter work hours. Self-employed fathers in SA work 44.3 hours compared to 49.3 nationally and also report index scores around 10 points lower (indicating better work-life outcomes) compared to the national average. This is the case for index scores adjusted or unadjusted for work hours.

Casual work does not mean less work-life interference

South Australia has traditionally had a higher rate of casual employment than the national average (Kryger, 2004). Casual employees work substantially fewer hours than those on fixed-term or ongoing contracts and this translates into significantly lower work-life interference.

However, when we control for differences in work hours, there is no difference in work-life outcomes between casuals, fixed-term contract and ongoing employees. Casual work in itself is not associated with better work-life outcomes either in SA or nationally.

Managers have the worse work-life interference

Men and women in managerial occupations have the worse work-life outcomes compared to other occupations, and this is the case whether differences in work hours are controlled or not. Other occupations with above average work-life interference are community and personal service workers, professionals, sales workers and clerical and administrative workers. These occupational effects are similar for SA and nationally, except that machine operators and drivers have better work-life outcomes in SA than nationally: the SA AWALI scores for this occupation are 27.0 compared to 37.9 nationally, which is quite a large difference.

Industry differences

In SA, two industries, mining and information media and telecommunications, have the longest work hours and worse work-life outcomes. When we control for differences in work hours, worse work-life interference is reported by administrative and support services and accommodation and food services employees.

Controlling for differences in work hours, retail employees in SA have less work-life interference than nationally, whereas the opposite is the case for SA workers in administrative/support services.

What to do? Implications for policy and action

What do the above results mean for action in South Australia?

Our previous analysis of AWALI nationally shows that poor work-life outcomes are associated with poorer health, more use of prescription medications, more stress, and more dissatisfaction with close personal relationships (Pocock, Skinner and Williams 2007). This means that poor work-life outcomes negatively affect the well-being of both individuals and larger society, including the state budget. Maintaining a focus on work-life outcomes, and working to improve them is important as it is likely to positively impact upon the strategic objective of improving well-being in the state.

While there is no sign that SA is worse than the national picture on overall work-life outcomes, many citizens are affected by poor work-life outcomes and their well-being can be improved by action at state level.

Work-life outcomes are imposing high costs on individuals, families and the broader community in South Australia. However, their effects do not fall evenly.

Three sets of factors emerge through analysis of AWALI nationally and in SA as particularly important in shaping work-life outcomes:

1. **Workplace and job-related factors.** These include the quality of supervision, workplace cultures, employee access to flexibility, reasonable workloads, reasonable hours (e.g. less than 48 a week), a good fit between preferred and actual hours, and secure part-time work.
2. **Personal, household factors.** These include care responsibilities with particular challenges facing mothers and fathers. Many mothers have high levels of work-life interference and many fathers would like to reduce their hours of work;
3. **Community factors:** These include the length of commute and access to quality, accessible support for working carers, like childcare and aged care services.

Many of these issues are open to influence by the action of the South Australian Government. While state governments do not determine most aspects of labour regulation, in other areas they are very influential – for example, in their links and proximity to many employers, and their effects upon urban planning that affect the spatial alignment (or mal-alignment) of work, home and community life (Williams et al 2009).

Some issues also require action by other levels of government including both local government and the national government. The activities of employers, unions and community organisations are also important on some issues.

Recommendations

South Australia shares many features of work-life interference with Australia as a whole. This makes the recommendations we have made arising from our analysis of the 2010 national picture relevant to South Australia. Other state-based actions are also relevant. For the three sets of factors we describe above, based on the analysis in this report, we recommend:

1. Workplace and job-related action

- Improving workers' say over their working hours and flexibility arrangements through, for example, more information and support around the 'right to request' flexibility and assisting small and medium sized businesses to effectively implement this right;
- Taking steps to reduce the incidence of workers working excessive hours, through publicising the recently approved SA Code of Practice for Working Hours, and assisting workplaces to reduce the proportion of workers who work long hours;
- Assisting working mothers to more easily make transitions around their care responsibilities including through changes in the hours, location and timing of their paid work, and improvements in the quality and security of part-time work;
- Providing more support for working fathers, including encouraging access to more flexible work arrangements for men, paid paternity leave, and quality secure part-time work;
- More supportive workplace culture, practices, management and leadership through promulgation of best practice, improved management training and the development of robust Key Performance Indicators of good workplace cultures, practices, management and leadership including the modeling of good practice by leaders and managers.

Each of these might be fostered by educative efforts with employers, models of good practice and public recognition of positive examples.

2. Personal and household factors

- Relieving pressures on working mothers by encouraging the fairer sharing of unpaid domestic work and care with partners and other householders including children;
- Ensuring that education efforts in schools teach both boys and girls about domestic work and its fair sharing.

3. Community factors

- Improving the provision of key supports like quality, accessible, affordable childcare, aged care, schooling and other community services like health care will assist the work-life outcomes of many citizens;
- Previous AWALI analysis shows that long commutes are associated with poor work-life outcomes, and many long hours workers are also afflicted by long commutes. In this light careful urban planning that reduces the time and spatial 'stretches' between work, home and community life are vitally important.
- Drawing jobs out closer to urban housing developments, providing diversity of employment types, embedding educational facilities (preschool, school, post-school, adult) into housing communities will all assist (Williams et al 2009).
- This makes the nature of urban design, both in 'in-fill' and new suburban developments a critical element of improved work-life outcomes and an issue that the SA Government can directly influence.

Section 1: Introduction

Background to this report

Since 2008, SafeWork SA has been a major industry partner and funder of the Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI), as part of an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project (Work/Life Balance, Well-Being and Health: Theory, Practice and Policy, LP0776732).

The national AWALI data has been collected annually since 2007 and has examined how work-life outcomes are influenced by a range of employment (e.g. job quality, organisational culture, flexibility, unsocial work hours, occupation, industry) and social-demographic factors (e.g. gender, parenting status, age).

In 2010, in addition to the main national AWALI data collection, SafeWork SA funded a survey of 987 South Australian (SA) workers (854 employees; 115 self-employed workers; 18 undetermined status).

This SA survey contained the five work-life items that comprise the work-life index plus key social and employment demographics.

The SA data collection is designed to assess work-life outcomes in South Australia and to identify the social-demographic and employment groups with the best and worst work-life outcomes.

What AWALI measures

As described in our 2007 report (Pocock, Williams, & Skinner, 2007), AWALI contains a number of questions which directly assess respondents' perceptions of work-life interference. Given that our 2007 survey revealed that work-to-life spillover is much greater than life-to-work spillover, we refined AWALI to focus only on work-to-life spillover from 2008. AWALI measures two dimensions of work-life interference: first, the impact of work on respondents' capacity to satisfactorily engage in the activities and responsibilities of other spheres of life (which we term a 'general interference' effect) and, second, the time available to spend on activities outside work (which we term a 'time strain' effect).

AWALI measures work-life interference that includes, but is not confined to, work-family issues. Those without children also experience spillover from their working lives onto their relationships, recreation, households, health and well-being, family life and care responsibilities.

AWALI also measures the effects of work on community connections. Putting more hours into paid work affects our relationships beyond home, including our capacity to build friendship networks in the broader community, but these are generally not investigated in assessments of work-life interference.

AWALI also employs a commonly used single measure of time pressure (feeling rushed or pressed for time) in daily life, which is an indirect measure of work-life fit. Finally, AWALI includes a general assessment of satisfaction with work-life balance.

In sum, AWALI measures perceptions of work-life interference focussing on:

- 'general interference' (i.e. the frequency that work interferes with responsibilities or activities outside work)
- 'time strain' (i.e. the frequency that work restricts time with family or friends)
- work-to-community interference, measuring the frequency that work affects workers' ability to develop or maintain connections and friendships in their local community

- satisfaction with overall work-life ‘balance’
- frequency of feeling rushed or pressed for time.

We bring together these five measures of work-life interference to arrive at an overall work-life index that is scaled from 0 (lowest work-life interference) to 100 (highest work-life interference). The index provides an easily understood general measure of work-life interference.

While we recognise that work-to-life and life-to-work interferences have both positive and negative effects, AWALI concentrates upon negative interactions given that these are of most immediate policy interest and that limited resources constrain what we can measure.

In this report we use the terms work-life outcomes and work-life interference interchangeably.

The AWALI SA 2010 sample and methodology

The concepts, methods, literature, measures and pilot tests underpinning AWALI are set out in Pocock, Williams and Skinner 2007 *The Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI): Concepts, Methodology & Rationale*.

AWALI surveys a randomly selected cross-section of the adult South Australian employed population by means of computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). Of those successfully contacted by phone, 62.4 per cent participated in the 2010 SA survey.

The SA AWALI 2010 is a national stratified sample of interviews conducted over four weekends in March 2010. Newspoll conducted the survey. In accord with usual Newspoll practice, respondents were selected by means of a random sample process which includes a quota set for respondents living in Adelaide city/metropolitan and SA rural/regional areas. Household telephone numbers were selected using random digit dialling and there was a random selection of an individual in each household by means of a ‘last birthday’ screening question.

The SA survey sample comprises 987 workers (including 854 employees and 115 self-employed).

Telephone surveys have strengths and weaknesses. They allow fast data collection and increased quality controls through interview controls and clarifications, and they permit data collection from individuals regardless of their reading and writing ability. A system of call backs and appointments to facilitate a higher response rate and inclusion of responses from people who do not spend a great deal of time at home means that this possible distortion is minimised in AWALI. However, the survey is likely to be biased against those who do not have a telephone at home.

Data on two separate samples is also reported. Data from the national AWALI 2010 survey is reported (N = 2803) to compare and contrast the experience of South Australian workers to the national average. Second, SA data from AWALI 2008 and 2009 data collections has been combined to provide a historical benchmark against which to assess change in SA over time. The 2008 and 2009 samples were combined to provide a sufficient sample size (N = 661) for comparison.

Complete comparative data for the national and SA 2008/09 data collection is provided in the Appendix to this report, available electronically from the Centre for Work + Life website <http://www.unisa.edu.au/hawkeinstitute/cwl/projects/awali.asp>.

Statistical conventions in this report

The following statistical conventions are used in this report unless specified otherwise.

Following Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conventions, full-time employment is defined as 35 or more work hours per week. All contrasts discussed in the text are statistically significant

(i.e. not likely to be due to chance) at $p < .05$ unless stated otherwise. The Dunn-Bonferroni correction was applied to multiple comparisons.

Work hours have a clear and consistent impact on work-life interference: as hours increase negative interference also tends to increase. Therefore, work hours are entered as a covariate in some analyses in which mean scores on the index measure are compared. This means that the effect of work hours on the index scores is statistically removed, or ‘controlled’, to observe the effect of another factor (e.g. gender) on work-life index scores. In this type of analysis we are essentially asking the ‘what if’ question of how work-life interference differs between groups (e.g. men and women) if they worked the same hours. For example ‘what if men and women worked the same hours, would there be any difference in their work-life interference?’

The dynamics of the interaction between work and life are likely to be different for self-employed persons compared to employees. Therefore, in analyses that do not directly compare self-employed persons and employees, we focus exclusively on employees. Section 6 examines differences between the self-employed and employees.

As a sample drawn from a much larger population, the estimates presented in this report like all survey data, are subject to a degree of sampling bias; that is, the estimates may be different from the figures that would have been reported had all South Australian workers been surveyed. Two strategies have been used to address this issue. All reported estimates have been weighted by Australian Bureau of Statistics data on age, highest level of schooling completed and gender to adjust for differences between the AWALI SA sample and the South Australian population on these key demographics.

We follow the threshold rule used in the HILDA study (Heady, Warren, & Harding, 2006) which sets a minimum of 20 units (i.e. respondents) that must contribute to the value of a cell for that figure to be considered reliable. Estimates that do not meet this threshold requirement are accompanied by an asterisk indicating that this figure should be interpreted with caution.

The work-life index

To arrive at the AWALI summary work-life index we average and standardise the five measures of work-life interference described above. The minimum score on the index is 0 (indicating the lowest work-life interference) and the maximum score is 100 (the worst work-life interference).

The five-item work-life index has satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .82$).

In the 2010 survey the SA average (mean) score on the index is 42.3 (43.3 nationally in 2010). Therefore, scores above the average score of around 43 indicate a work-life interference that is worse than average and scores below this level indicate a better than average work-life relationship.

Structure of this report

This report falls into six sections. Section 2 describes the AWALI SA sample and its representativeness and general characteristics. Section 3 analyses the work-life interference of SA men and women in 2010, considering five individual items and the composite work-life index. Given the significance of working hours to work-life interference, Section 4 focuses on work hours and their fit with preferences. Section 5 analyses the personal and household characteristics of respondents and their work-life interference. Section 6 considers employment characteristics and work-life interference.

Section 2: The AWALI 2010 SA sample

This section provides an overview of the SA worker sample and their general characteristics. The total sample consisted of 987 workers (854 employees and 115 self-employed; 18 undetermined status).

Table 1 shows that the SA AWALI 2010 provides a good representation of the SA labour market at the time of the survey with respect to gender, age, type of employment and part-time/full-time work hours. There are fewer people with higher and lower educational qualifications and more with TAFE/college qualifications in the sample. There is a slight under-representation of managers. Community/personal service workers are slightly over-represented.

Table 1 Overview of the AWALI 2010 SA sample (per cent)

	Men	Women	All	ABS – SA (54.3 men; 45.7 women)
All	51.3	48.7	100.0	
Age group				
18–24	14.2	14.8	14.5	16.6
25–34	20.4	19.1	19.8	20.0
35–44	21.1	20.2	20.7	22.4
45–54	23.1	23.3	23.2	22.5
55–64	15.2	20.8	17.9	15.4
65+	5.9	1.9	4.0	3.0
Highest level of education				
University degree	24.3	27.0	25.6	31.8
TAFE/college	43.9	35.3	39.7	19.0
Secondary school	31.8	37.8	34.7	48.0
Occupation				
Manager	12.7	6.5	9.7	13.7
Professional	20.4	22.5	21.4	20.4
Technician/trade	25.3	3.5	14.7	14.3
Community/personal service	4.6	20.5	12.3	9.2
Clerical and administrative	6.1	23.6	14.6	14.0
Sales	5.7	12.9	9.2	10.0
Machinery operators	10.9	1.7	6.4	6.5
Labourers	14.3	8.8	11.6	12.2
Type of employment				
Employee	83.9	92.8	88.2	87.1
Self-employed	16.1	7.2	11.8	12.9
Work status				
Full-time (35+ hrs per week)	83.4	46.3	65.1	67.2
Part-time (< 35 hrs per week)	16.6	53.7	34.6	32.8

Note. ABS data sources: ABS Cat. No. 6227.0 Education and Work Australia, May 2009; ABS Cat. No. 6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, March 2010, Time series spreadsheet Table 7, labour force status by sex – South Australia; ABS Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Mar 2010 (LM8); ABS Cat. No. 6291.0.55.003 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2010, E08_aug96 - Employed Persons by Sex, Occupation, State, Status in Employment.

Table 2 shows the household and family structure of AWALI SA respondents. Most respondents were living in a household with two or more adults (76.3 per cent) and 43.9 per cent of households contained one or more children. In households with children, most children were of school age. Of those respondents who had children, 29.9 per cent had a child aged four or younger.

Table 2 Household structure, SA 2010 (per cent)

	Persons
Adults in household	
1 adult	23.7
2 or more adults	76.3
Marital status	
Married/de facto	60.7
Divorced, separated, never married or widowed	39.4
Children in household	
No children	56.1
1 child	16.1
2–3 children	26.4
4 or more children	1.3
Ages of children^{1,2} (parents only)	
≤ 4	29.9
5–12	55.9
13–17	48.1
Type of household	
Single parent	6.3
Couple with children	33.9
Single no children	29.0
Couple no children	30.8

Note. ¹Percentage as proportion of respondents with children in the household. ²Total is greater than 100 as many respondents had children in more than one age group.

Section 3: An overview of work-life outcomes in South Australia 2010

This section provides an overview of South Australians' work-life outcomes in 2010. We particularly focus on gender differences, as gender is a major factor influencing work-life outcomes. For example, men's longer hours and women's greater responsibilities for work in the private sphere, especially domestic and caring work, significantly influence their capacities to reconcile work and activities beyond work. We start by examining men's and women's responses on each of the five items that comprise the work-life index. As work hours have a significant impact on work-life interference, we also describe responses on these individual items for full-time and part-time workers.

Analyses in this section exclude self-employed persons given that self-employment is a qualitatively different working arrangement compared to being an employee. Section 6 compares the work-life outcomes of the self-employed and employees.

Work-life interference in 2010: Analysis of individual work-life index items

As Table 3 shows, one-fifth (20.1 per cent) of SA employees report frequent work interference with activities outside of work and slightly more (24.2 per cent) report that work frequently restricts time with family and friends. Feelings of time pressure are more common: in 2010 53.7 per cent of SA employees report frequently feeling rushed or pressed for time. In contrast, only a minority of SA workers (15.7 per cent) feel that work frequently interferes with their community engagement. Overall, in 2010 the majority of employees in SA (68.0 per cent) are broadly satisfied with their work-life balance.

Looking at gender differences between SA employees in 2010, it is only on the time pressure item that statistically significant differences are evident. Women are much more likely to report time pressure: 59.3 per cent of SA (employee) women report frequent time pressure compared to 48.0 per cent of men. This pattern has also been observed across four years of national AWALI surveys.

There is also some indication that SA men may experience more restrictions on time with family and friends due to work commitments, however this gender difference is not statistically significant.

Turning to comparing SA 2010 with the national 2010 sample and SA in 08/09, we do not find statistically significant contrasts between these samples, although there are some interesting trends evident.

Work-life interference in SA 2008/09

There is evidence that work-life pressure has intensified for SA women, but not men. In 2008/2009 SA men were slightly more likely than women to report frequent interference of work with activities outside work and time with family and friends. These gender differences have narrowed over time. In 2008/2009 these gender differences were statistically significant, whereas in 2010 SA women report frequent levels of work-life interference at a similar level to that of men. A similar trend can be observed for work interference with community connections.

There is evidence of a trend toward declining satisfaction with work-life balance for SA women over time (71.7 per cent satisfied in 08/09 compared to 66.4 per cent in 2010), however this contrast is not statistically significant.

Work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

Considering employees, those in SA are slightly less likely to report frequent work interference with life activities and time spent with family and friends compared to the Australian average.

While these contrasts are not statistically significant they do indicate a trend towards better work-life outcomes in South Australia. There is very little difference between the SA and national averages for work interference with community connections, time pressure or satisfaction with work-life balance.

Table 3 Work-life interference by gender, SA 2010 (per cent)

	SA 08/09 Often/almost always	SA 2010 Often/almost always	National 2010 Often/almost always
Work interferes with activities outside work			
Men	23.9	22.1	25.2
Women	12.9	18.3	23.0
All	18.4	20.1	24.2
Work interferes with enough time with family or friends			
Men	25.1	26.9	28.2
Women	17.5	21.7	24.8
All	21.3	24.2	26.6
Work interferes with community connections			
Men	15.5	16.6	19.3
Women	11.9	14.9	16.1
All	13.7	15.7	17.9
Feel rushed or pressed for time			
Men	47.3	48.0	47.2
Women	58.9	59.3	60.8
All	53.2	53.7	53.5
Satisfaction with WLB			
	Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied
Men	70.9	69.8	67.0
Women	71.7	66.4	66.9
All	71.3	68.0	66.9

Note. Response scale on all items except satisfaction scale was never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always. Data in table is combined responses of often and almost always responses. Table excludes self-employed persons. National 08/09 N = 568. National 2010 N = 2407. SA 2010 N = 853.

The analysis so far has considered gender differences, without taking into account the strong co-variation of gender with work hours. Men, on average, work longer hours than women and we consider work hours in more depth in Section 4. Here we expand our analysis of gender differences in responses to the individual work-life items by considering full-time and part-time workers separately.

As part-time work is relatively uncommon for men, many of the estimates for this group are based on small sample sizes and should be interpreted with caution (as indicated by * in the figures below).

Work interference with activities outside work

In SA just under one quarter (22.5 per cent) of full-time employees report frequent work interference with activities outside of work in 2010 (Figure 1). Women in SA were less likely to report frequent interference (19.3 per cent) compared to men (24.5 per cent), however, this difference is not statistically significant.

There has been little change from 2008/09 to 2010 on this measure.

Women working full-time in SA are less likely to report frequent work interference with life activities (19.3 per cent) compared to women nationally (28.8 per cent), whereas there is little difference between men in SA and the national average for male full-timers.

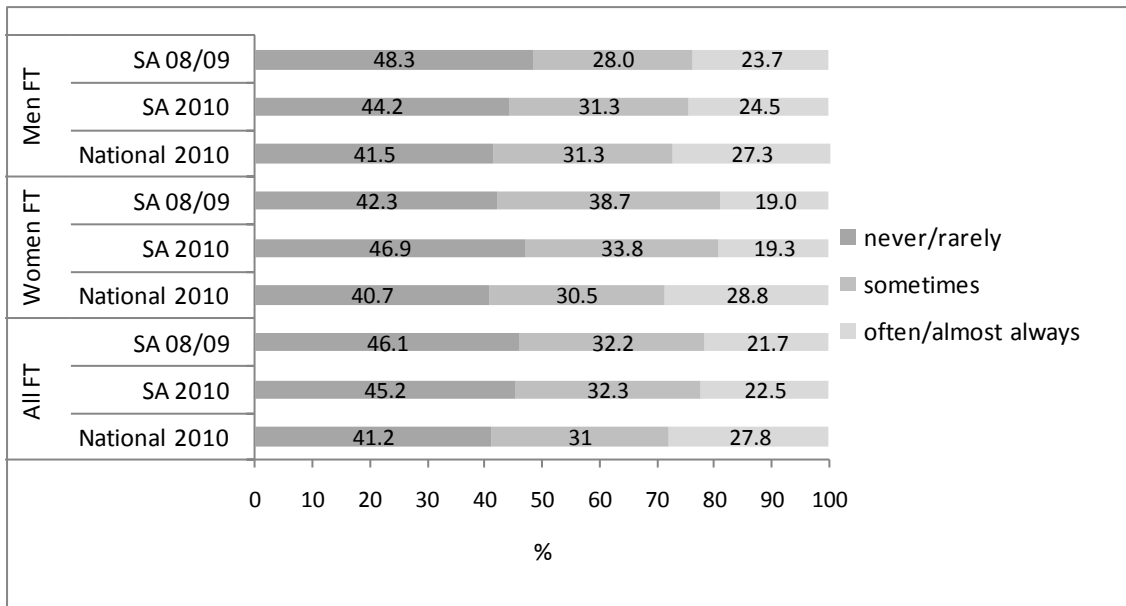


Figure 1 Work interferes with activities outside work reported by full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 & SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1651; SA 2010 N = 573, & SA 08/09 N = 369.

Part-time employees are less likely to report that work frequently interferes with activities outside work (16.4 per cent) compared to full-time employees (Figure 2). There has been little change from 2008/09 to 2010 in the frequency which work interferes with non-work activities for part-timers in SA. SA and Australian part-timers report similar levels of work interference with non-work activities.

Part-time work is not common for men. Therefore, many of the estimates for part-time men in SA must be interpreted with caution due to the low sample size.

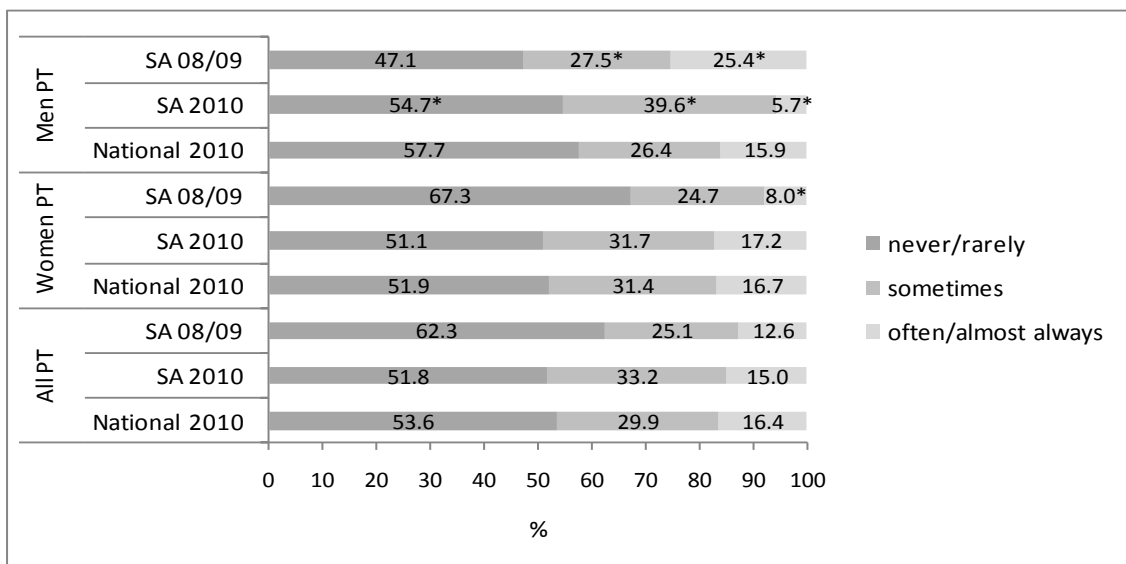


Figure 2 Work interferes with activities outside work reported by part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 755, SA 2010 N = 280, & SA 08/09 N = 199.

Work-related time restrictions with family and friends

In 2010, nearly thirty per cent (28.8 per cent) of SA full-timers report that work frequently restricts time with family and friends, with little difference between full-time women (27.4 per cent) and men (29.7 per cent). There is also evidence that work-related time restrictions for full-time employees in SA have increased between 2008/09 and 2010, and this can be observed for men and women (Figure 3).

Compared to the national average, again we see that women in SA working full-time are slightly less likely to report frequent work-related time restrictions, with little difference between full-time men in SA and their national counterparts.

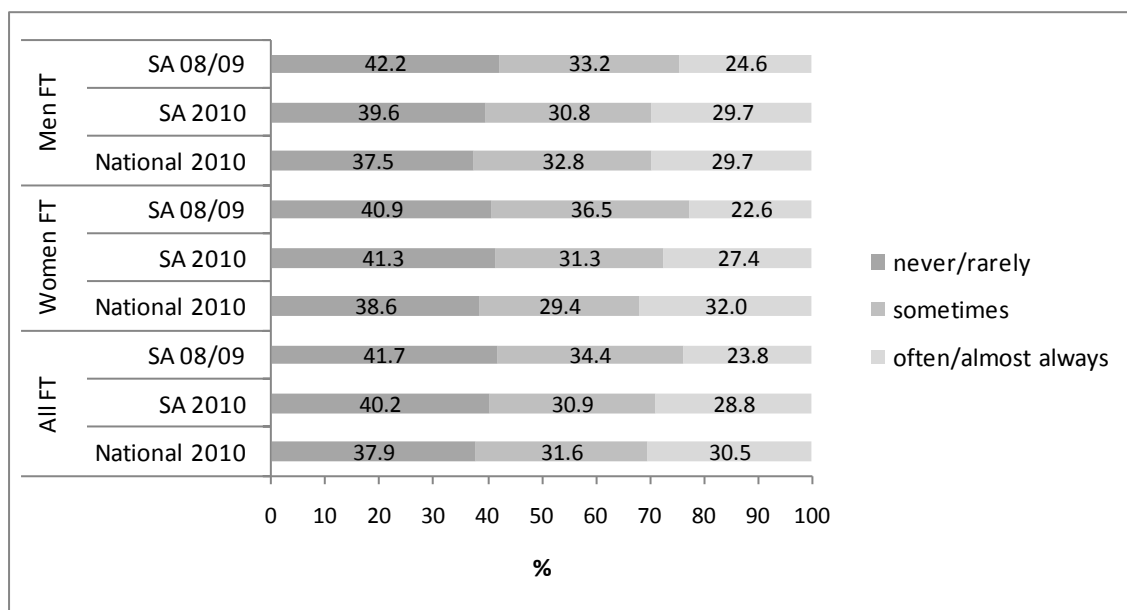


Figure 3 Work restricts time with family/friends reported by full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1648, SA 2010 N = 573, SA 08/09 N = 369.

As expected, part-time employees in SA are less likely to report frequent time constraints (14.7 per cent) compared to full-time workers (Figure 4). Overall, part-time employees in SA are less likely to report frequent time constraints compared to the national average (18.0 per cent). Further analysis is not possible due to sample size restrictions for part-time men, and part-time men and women in 2008/09 in SA.

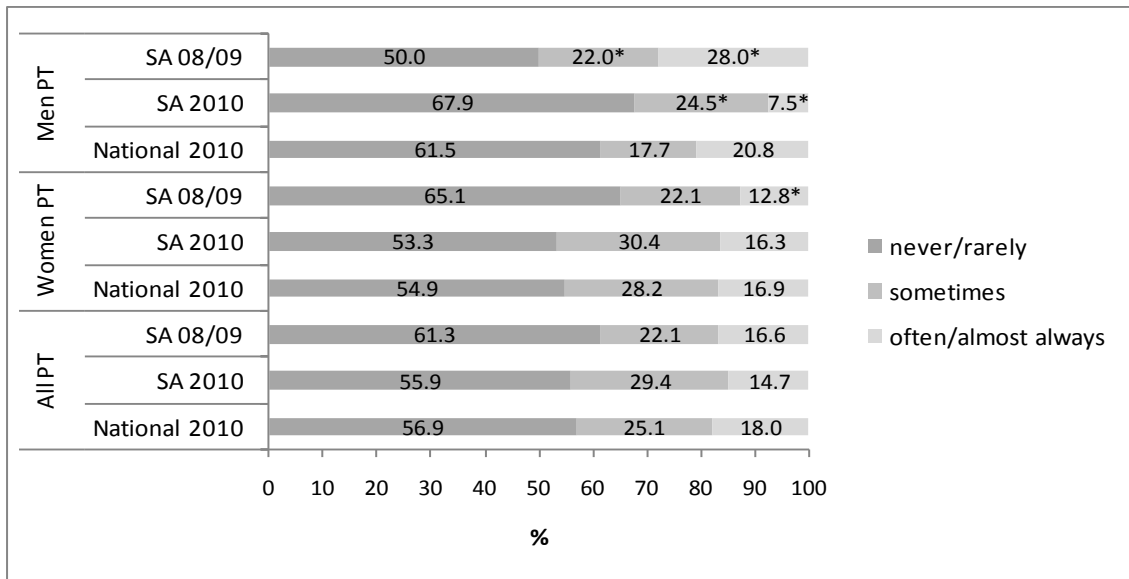


Figure 4 Work restricts time with family/friends reported by part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 755, SA 2010 N = 280, & SA 08/09 N = 199.

Work interference with community connections

Full-time work has a negative impact on employees' capacity to be connected and engaged with their communities. Figure 5 shows that in SA, 17.9 per cent of full-time employees report work frequently interferes with their capacity to develop community connections, with little difference between men and women. There is also very little change over time for SA employees on this measure.

Compared to the national average (21.0 per cent), full-time employees in SA are slightly less likely to report frequent work interference with community connections (17.9 per cent) and this is the case for both men and women in SA.

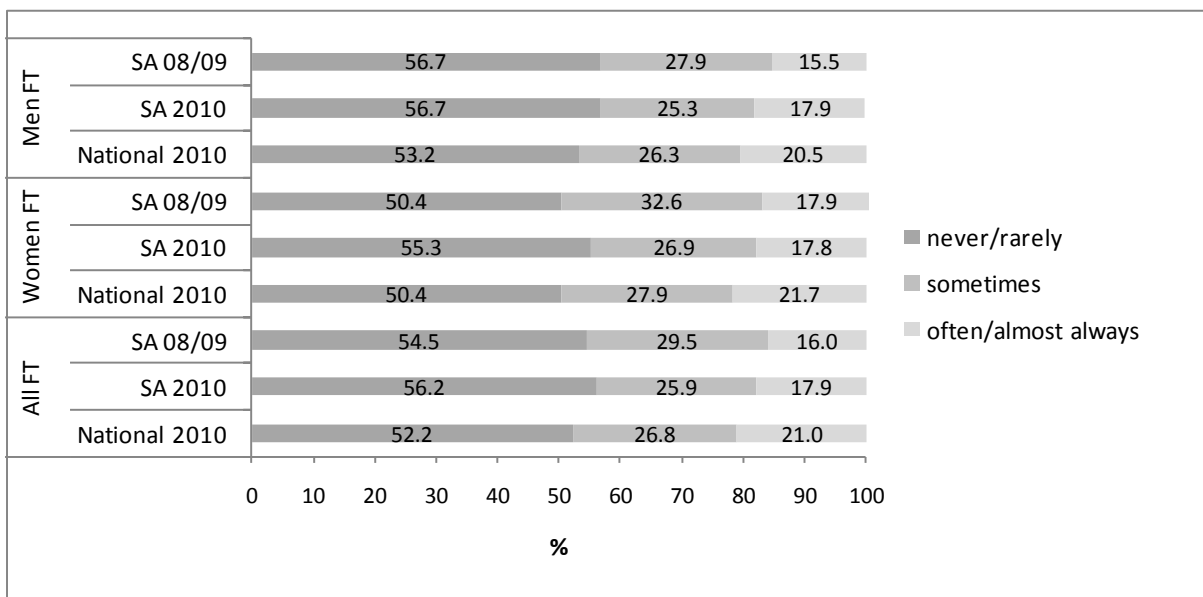


Figure 5 Work interferes with community connections reported by full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1648, SA 2010 N = 573, SA 08/09 N = 369.

Part-time employees in SA report similar work interference with their community connections (11.5 per cent) (Figure 6) compared to the national average (11.0 per cent). This was also observed for full-time employees.

Sample size restrictions prevent further analysis of this data for part-time employees.

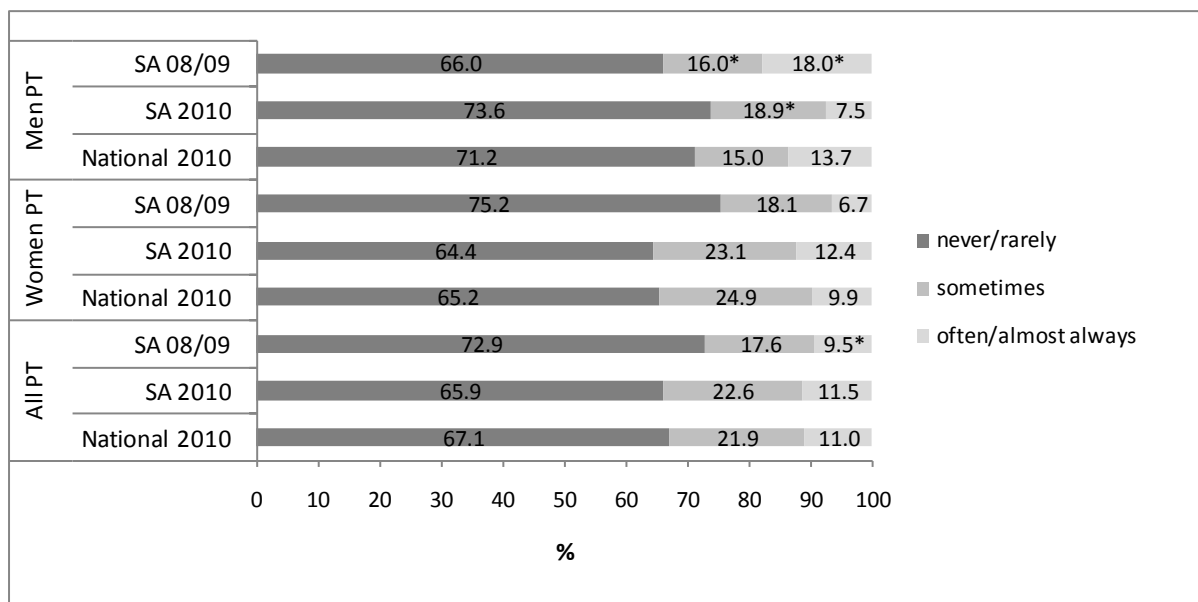


Figure 6 Work interferes with community connections reported by part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 755, SA 2010 N = 280, & SA 08/09 N = 199.

Time pressure

Time pressure is a major issue for full-time workers in SA and nationally. As Figure 7 shows, across state and national samples, full-time women are more likely to report time pressure than men. In SA, 60.3 per cent of full-time women report frequently feeling rushed or pressed for time and 50.3 per cent of full-time men agree. These high rates of time pressure in SA have remained consistent from 2008/09 to 2010 for men and women.

Looking at all employees, SA workers report comparable levels of time pressure to the national average. However, there are gender differences here: full-time women in SA are slightly less likely to report frequent time pressure (60.3 per cent) compared to the national average (64.8 per cent), whereas there is no difference between SA and national averages for men.

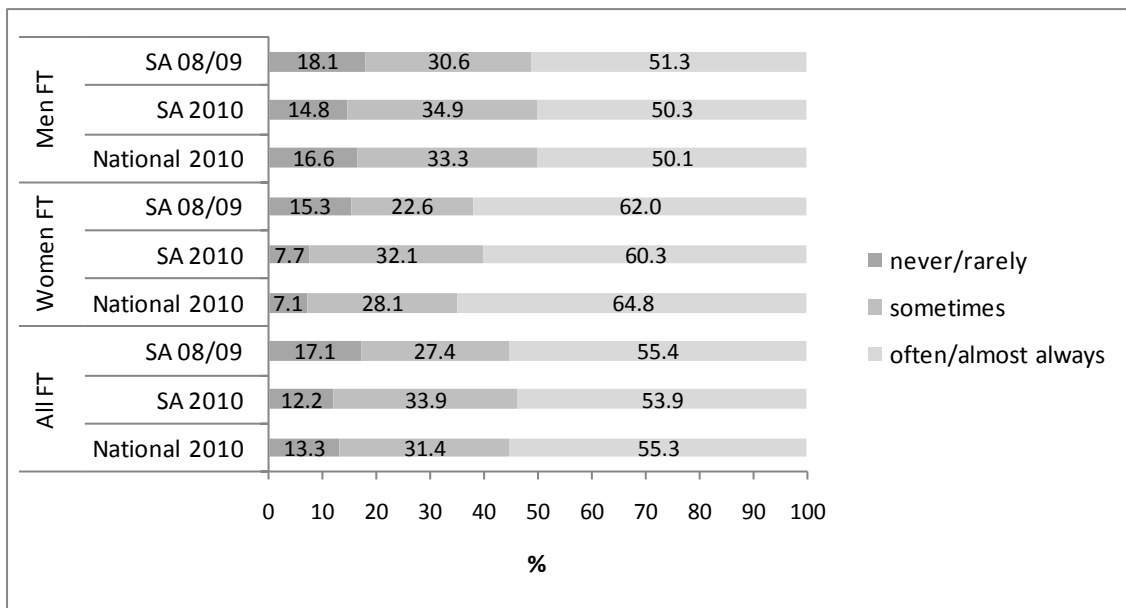


Figure 7 Feel rushed or pressed for time reported by full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1648, SA 2010 N = 573, SA 08/09 N = 369.

Figure 8 shows that time pressure is also a significant issue for part-time employees in SA and nationally. Just over half (53.6 per cent) of part-time employees in SA report frequent time pressure. As with the national data, part-time women in SA are almost twice as likely to report frequent time pressure (59.0 per cent) compared to men (32.1 per cent). There has been little change over time in time pressure for part-timers in SA.

Compared to the national average (49.5 per cent), part-time employees in SA (53.6 per cent) are slightly more likely to report frequent time pressure, which is most evident for women working part-time.

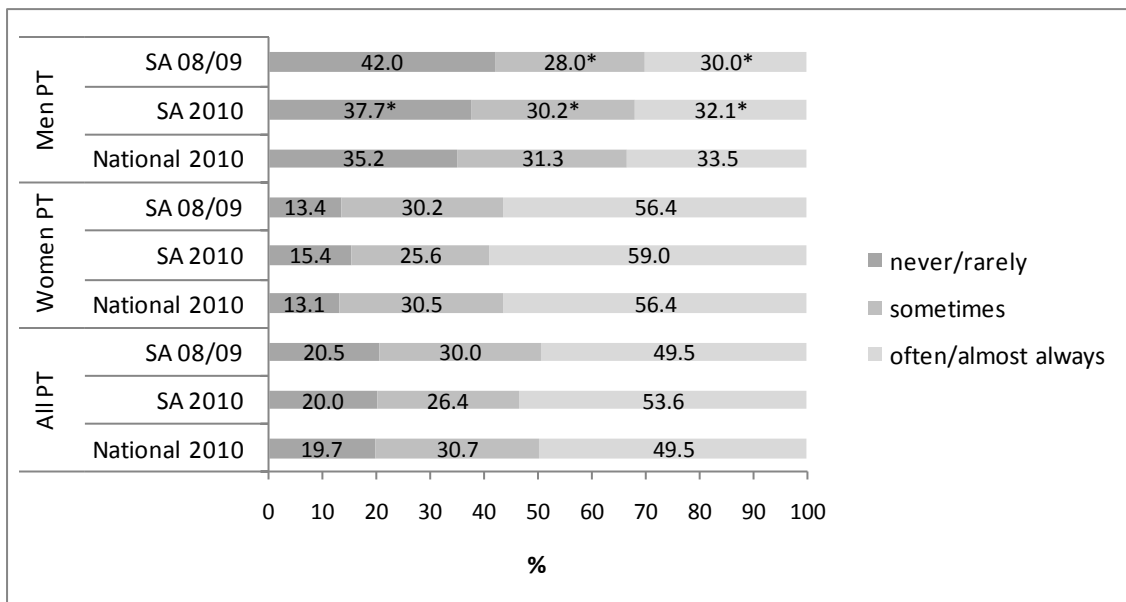


Figure 8 Feel rushed or pressed for time reported by part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 755, SA 2010 N = 280, & SA 08/09 N = 199.

Satisfaction with work-life balance

The majority of full-time employees in SA (66.3 per cent) are satisfied with their overall work-life balance (Figure 9). SA men working full-time are more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance (69.6 per cent) compared to women (60.6 per cent). This pattern is also evident in the national sample.

From 2008/09 to 2010 in SA there has been a decline in satisfaction with work-life balance from 70.6 per cent of full-timers satisfied to 66.3 per cent satisfied and this is most evident for women working full-time. In 2010, 26.4 per cent of full-time women in SA are *dissatisfied* with their work-life balance, up almost 10 per cent from 16.9 per cent in previous years. This is in line with a national change on this scale.

Overall, full-time employees in SA are slightly more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance (66.3 per cent) compared to the national average (63.9 per cent). This difference is evident for men but not women.

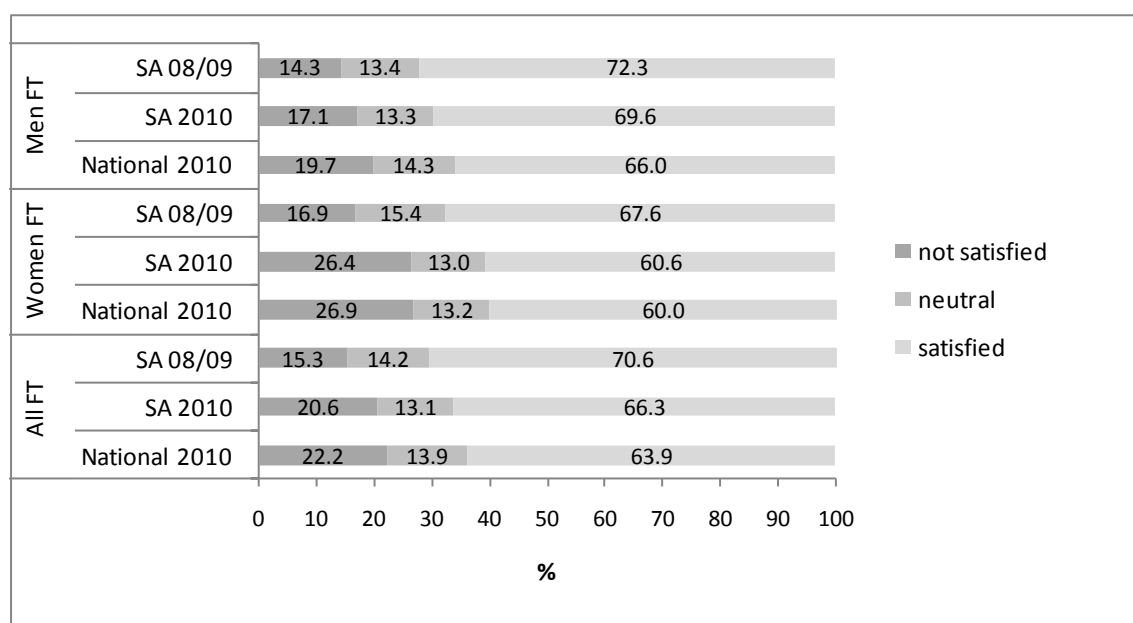


Figure 9 Somewhat/very satisfied with work-life balance reported by full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1648, SA 2010 N = 573, SA 08/09 N = 369.

Figure 10 shows that the majority of part-time employees (71.5 per cent in SA; 73.5 per cent nationally) are satisfied with their work-life balance, with very little difference between part-time men and women.

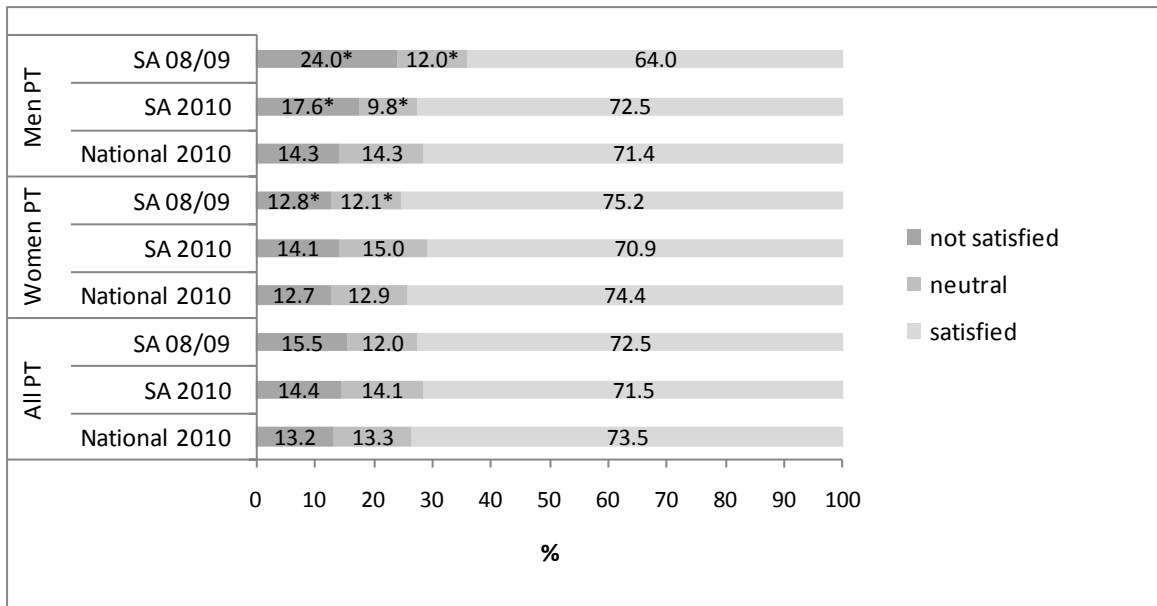


Figure 10 Somewhat/very satisfied with work-life balance reported by part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 755, SA 2010 N = 280, & SA 08/09 N = 199.

South Australians' work-life interference in 2008/2009 and 2010

Figure 11 shows work-life index scores unadjusted and adjusted for work hours. Starting with unadjusted scores, SA men and women have an index score of 42.3, while the national average is 43.0. SA women's unadjusted index score has increased slightly from 2008/2009 to 2010.

When the effects of work hours are controlled (adjusted scores), a similar picture is evident, with gender differences more apparent. SA women's adjusted index scores increased from 2008/2009 to 2010, whereas there is little change in the SA men's adjusted index score. As observed in the national sample, SA women in 2010 have higher work-life interference (44.9) compared to men (39.3), when differences in work hours are statistically controlled. Overall, the adjusted index scores for SA employees are similar to the national average.

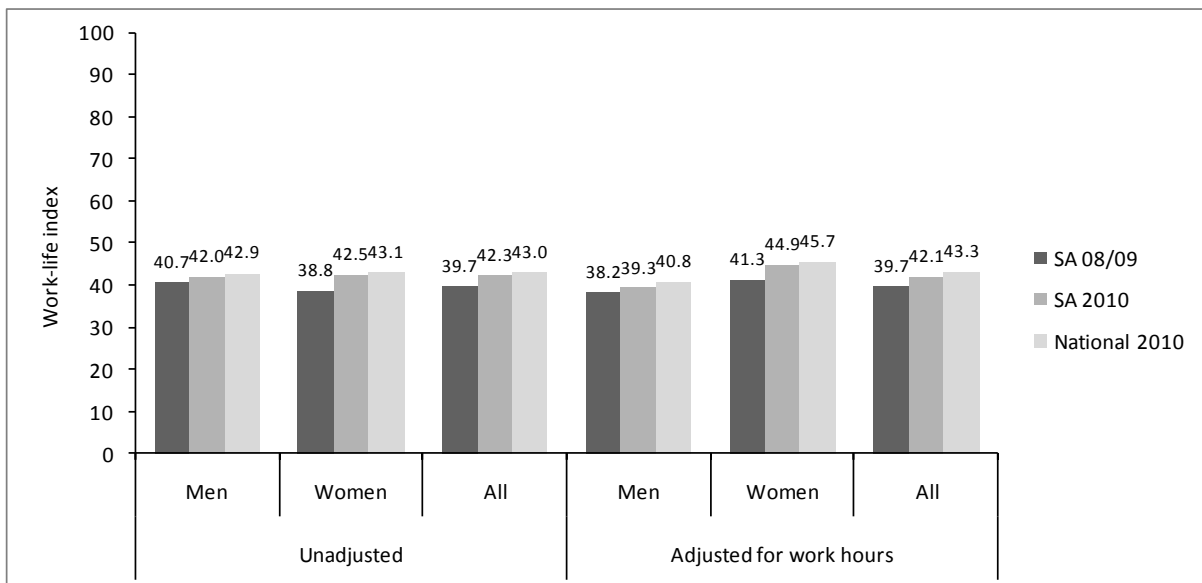


Figure 11 Work-life index scores (unadjusted and adjusted for work hours) for all employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 2008/09

Note. National 2010 N = 2519, SA 2010 N = 993, SA 08/09 N = 630.

As demonstrated by the earlier analysis of part-time and full-time employees' responses on the individual work-life index items, work hours have a major impact on work-life interference. These differences between part-timers and full-timers on the individual work-life items are also evident for the composite scale. Gender differences are particularly notable within part-time work.

As shown in Figure 12, in 2010 full-time employees have a work-life index score of 44.5 in SA, which is comparable to the national average of 45.7. There has been a small increase in work-life interference for full-time men and women in SA from 2008/09 to 2010. It is important to acknowledge that this increase is minor in the context of a 100 point scale.

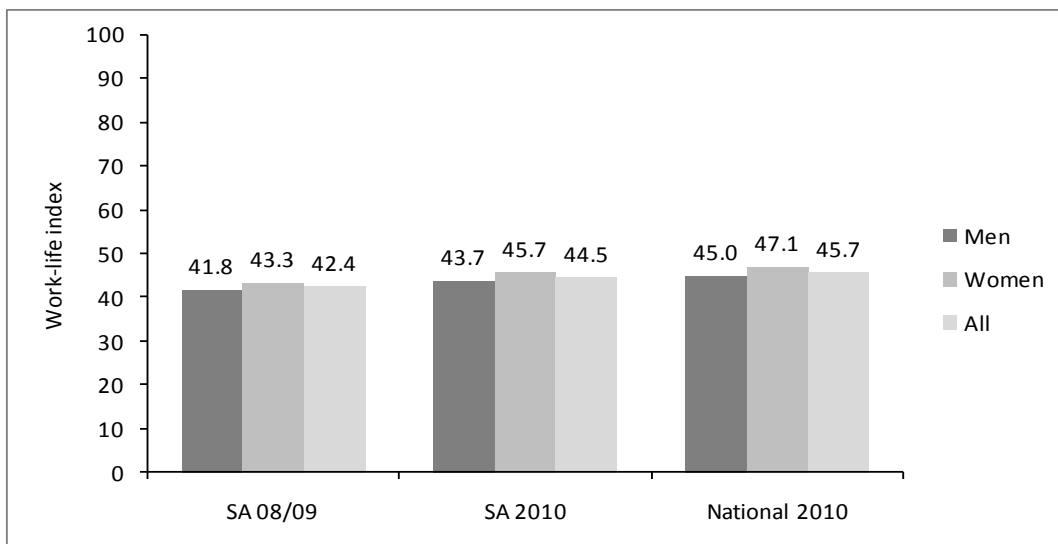


Figure 12 Work-life index scores for full-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 N = 1736, SA 2010 N = 658, SA 08/09 N = 410.

As expected, the work-life index scores for full-time employees are much higher than their part-time counterparts (SA: 44.5 for full-time employees, 37.9 for part-time employees. SA women working part-time report higher work-life index scores (i.e. worse work-life interference) compared to part-time men (40.0 for part-time women; 30.3 for part-time men) (Figure 13).

There are some changes over time in work-life interference for part-time workers in SA. Although these contrasts are not statistically significant, they do indicate trends in the data. Compared to 2008/2009, part-time women's work-life interference has increased (by 5.5 points on the index), whereas part-time men's index score has decreased by 5.6 points indicating an improvement in work-life outcomes. There is very little difference on the index between SA part-timers and the national average, and this is the case for both men and women.

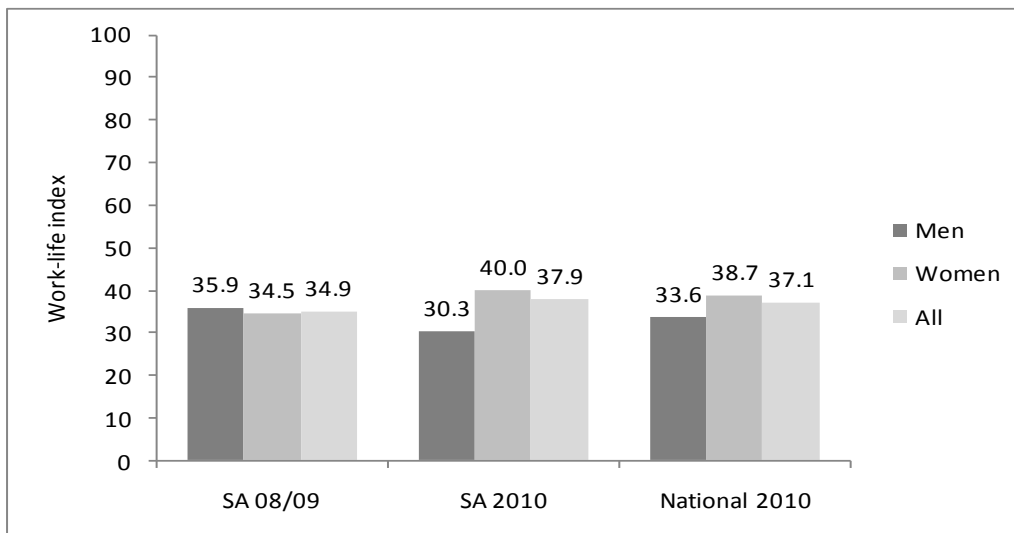


Figure 13 Work-life index scores for part-time employees by gender, AWALI National 2010, SA 2010 and SA 08/09

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. National 2010 = 798, SA 2010 N = 333, SA 08/09 N = 218.

Summary

This section provided an overview of work-life outcomes in South Australia, comparing men and women and contrasting the experience of part-time and full-time employees.

Overall, frequent work interference with activities outside of work and restriction of time with family and friends is reported by 20 per cent of SA employees.

Frequent time pressure is much more common: nearly 60 per cent of working women in SA report frequently feeling rushed or pressed for time and 48 per cent of men agree. Part-time work does little to ease time pressure for SA employees and this is especially the case for women.

Although time pressure is a common experience, the majority of SA employees (68 per cent) are generally satisfied with their work-life balance.

It is a consistent observation across four years of national AWALI data collection that full-time workers are more likely to report work-life interference. This is also the case in SA on each of the individual measures of work-life interference and the composite work-life index.

Overall, on the work-life index SA women have slightly higher work-life interference compared to men. This gender difference is not evident for full-time employees: men and women report equivalent levels of work-life interference. In contrast, SA men's work-life interference in part-time employment is lower than women's, indicating that part-time work is more likely to benefit men's work-life outcomes. These patterns are also evident in the national data.

The observation that part-time work has a more beneficial effect in reducing work-life interference for men than women is of significant interest. Most likely this reflects gender imbalances in the time spent in unpaid domestic and care work (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009), which creates the common experience of a 'double shift' of paid and unpaid work in employment and unpaid work in the household and community (Grimshaw & Murphy, 2005; Hochschild, 1989)

The SA 2010 findings are benchmarked against national averages (AWALI 2010) and also the combined average for SA in AWALI 2008 and 2009 data collections.

Overall, there is little evidence of change over time in the level or pattern of work-life interference for SA employees. On most work-life measures SA results in 2010 are comparable to the national average. There are a few exceptions which are summarised below.

Comparison with SA 2008/09

There is evidence of intensification of work-life pressures for SA women between 2008/09 and 2010.

In 2008/09 men were more likely to report frequent work-life interference, but in 2010 this gender gap narrowed because of a higher proportion of SA women reporting frequent work-life interference.

This intensification of work-life pressures is also evident for full-time employees: SA men and women working full-time are more likely to report frequent time restrictions in 2010 compared to 2008/09.

Full-time women in SA are also less likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance in 2010 compared to 2008/09, a trend that is also evident for part-time women. In contrast, SA men working part-time are more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance in 2010 compared to previous years.

Comparison to the national average - AWALI 2010

SA employees' work-life index score is equivalent to the national average.

Compared to the national average there is evidence that SA women working full-time are less likely to experience frequent work interference with activities outside work and less likely to report frequent time restrictions.

Full-timers and part-timers in SA are also less likely to report work interference with community connections compared to the national average.

Part-time workers in SA are less likely to report frequent time restrictions compared to the national average, although the frequency of work restricting non-work activities is equivalent.

Satisfaction with work-life balance in SA is comparable to the national average with one exception: full-time men in SA are slightly more likely to be satisfied compared to their national counterparts.

Section 4: Work hours and the ‘fit’ between actual and preferred hours

As observed in Section 3, length of work hours has a major impact on work-life outcomes. Full-time workers are more likely to experience work-life interference compared to part-timers. Underneath these broad categories of full-time and part-time work are important distinctions between longer and shorter hours, which have implications for work-life outcomes. Here we describe longer and shorter part-time and full-time hours, identifying who works these hours and the associated work-life outcomes.

Whether work hours are considered reasonable, too long or too short, differs between individuals, depending on their particular needs, commitments and lifestyle. Therefore, in this section we also consider the fit between actual and preferred work hours.

The focus continues to be on employees, with a separate analysis of self-employed workers presented in Section 6.

Employees’ work hours – shorter and longer part-time and full-time hours

In 2010 SA employees worked an average of 36.2 hours a week (including paid and unpaid overtime). This is very similar to the national average of 36.5 hours. In SA men work 12 hours longer each week (42.2 hours), than women (30.4 hours). This is a slightly larger gender gap compared to the 2010 national average of 10 more paid work hours for men compared to women.

Underneath these averages there are significant gender differences in whether longer or shorter hours are worked in part-time and full-time employment.

In 2010 nearly half of all employees in SA worked a full time week of 35 to 47 hours (50.6 per cent) (Figure 14). These full-time hours are more common for men (61.6 per cent) compared to women (40.1 per cent). Longer full-time hours (48+) are worked by a quarter of SA men (25.7 per cent) compared to 28.7 per cent nationally, but are rare for women (7.8 per cent).

Over 50 per cent of employee women (52.8) work part-time compared to just 12.8 of employee men in SA. There is a marked gender difference in longer part-time (16 to 34) hours between women and men, one-third of women work these hours compared to only 7.0 per cent of men. One-fifth of SA women work short part-time (1 to 15) hours, a working arrangement that is rare for SA men (5.8 per cent).

Work hours in SA 2008/09

A similar pattern of work hours is evident for SA employees in 2008/09 with one exception. SA men in 2010 are more likely to be working 35 to 47 full-time hours (61.6 per cent) compared to 2008/09 (54.4 per cent) and less likely to be working part-time (12.8 per cent in 2010; 17.7 per cent in 2008/09).

National average work hours AWALI 2010

This distribution of SA men and women across part-time and full-time employment is very similar to the national distribution. The largest difference is evident for men working part-time, a work arrangement less common for SA men (12.8 per cent) than nationally (17.6 per cent).

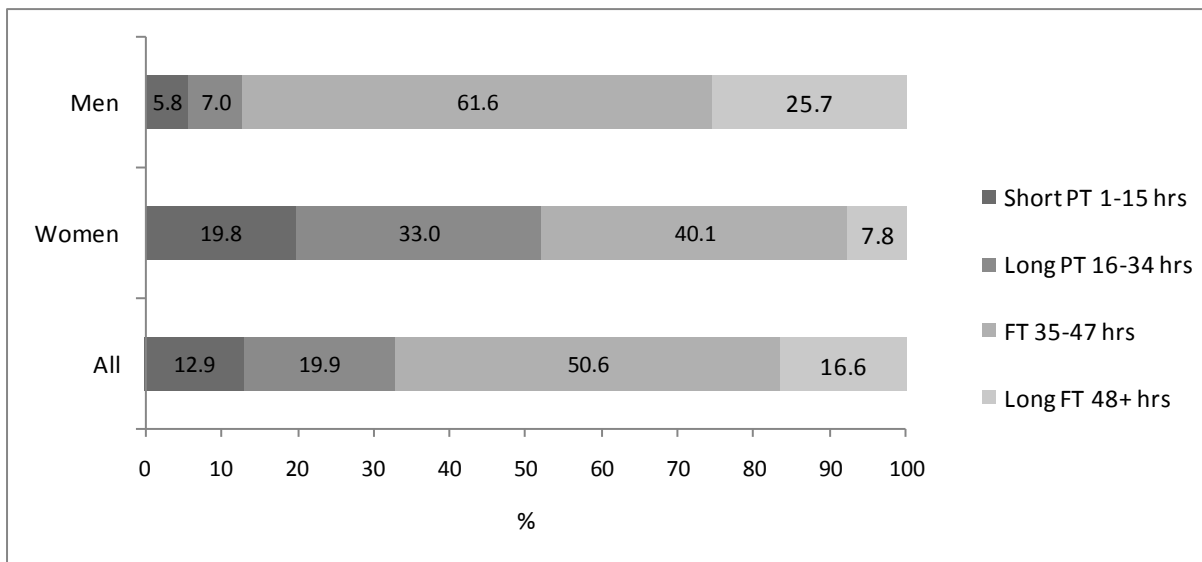


Figure 14 Short and long work hours by gender, AWALI SA 2010 (per cent)

Note. PT = part-time, FT = full-time. Hours usually worked per week used to categorise short part-time (1-15 hours), long part-time (16-34 hours), full-time (35-47 hours) and long full-time (48+) hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 851.

Differentiating between shorter and longer hours within part-time and full-time employment is important from a work-life perspective. As Figure 15 shows, the work-life interference of SA employees worsens as work hours lengthen, with statistically significant differences between each category of work hours. The largest increase on the work-life index is evident in the movement from working 35 to 47 hours to 48+ hours a week. As expected, very long full-time hours are associated with the worst work-life interference. These patterns are evident for men and women.

It also noteworthy that SA women consistently report higher work-life interference in each category of work hours. The highest work-life interference is reported by women working longer full-time hours in SA (60.5). As observed in Section 3, part-time work is more beneficial for men's compared to women's work-life outcomes, as evident in the composite work-life index scores reported in Figure 15. These patterns indicate that women's work-life interference is more sensitive to work hours.

One explanation for this is the persistent gender inequities in domestic, child care and elder care work in Australia that see women more likely to spend more time on this unpaid work (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009; Craig, 2007; Craig & Mullan, 2009), hence intensifying their 'struggle to juggle' particularly in full-time work.

Work-life index scores in shorter and longer work hours SA 2008/09

There is some evidence to suggest that in 2010, SA women in part-time work, and those working longer full-time hours (48+), have worse work-life outcomes compared to previous years. Women in 2008/09 report lower work-life interference in short (32.9) and long part-time (35.6) work compared to women in 2010 (37.1 and 41.1, respectively). Women working long full-time hours in 2010 have worse work-life interference (60.5) compared to 2008/09 (50.8).

National 2010 index scores by short and long work hours

The index scores for SA employees are comparable to the national averages for 2010 in each category of work hours.

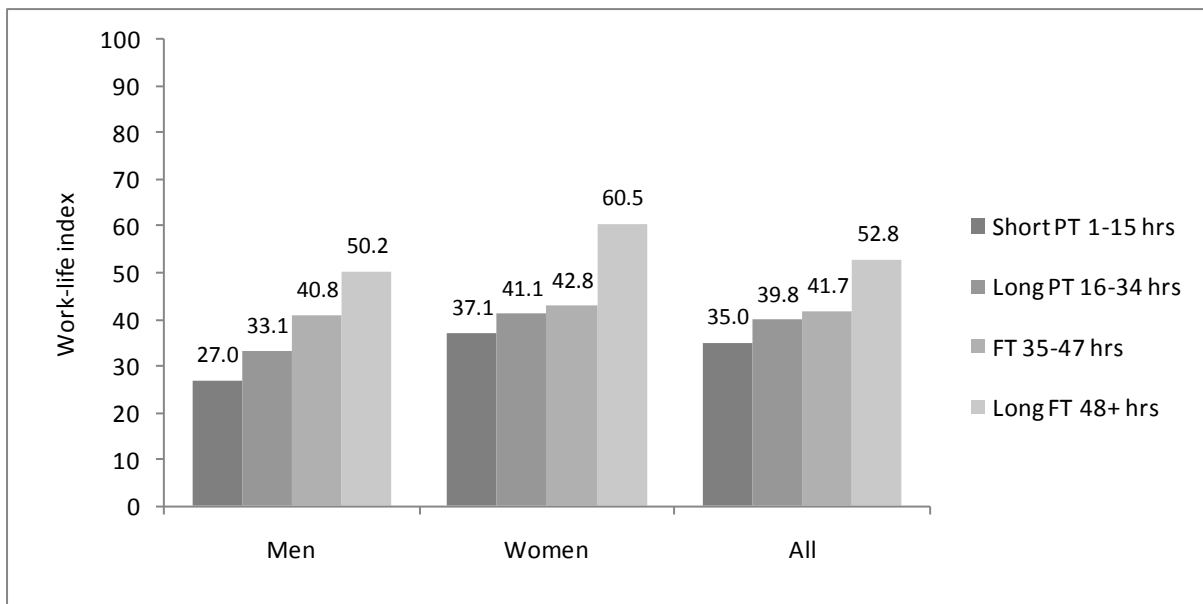


Figure 15 Work-life index scores by short and long work hours and gender, SA 2010

Note. PT = part-time, FT = full-time. Hours usually worked per week used to categorise short part-time (1-15 hours), long part-time (16-34 hours), standard full-time (35-47 hours) and long full-time (48+) hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 848.

The 'fit' between actual and preferred work hours

The previous analyses demonstrate that the length of work hours has a significant impact on work-life interference. Very long full-time hours (48+) in particular are associated with high levels of work-life interference.

Another important dimension of working time is the degree to which work hours fit in with an individual's non-work activities (i.e. family and caring responsibilities, community engagements, social life and personal interests). There is evidence that work hours and schedules that do not fit well with preferences, particularly working longer hours than preferred, are detrimental to wellbeing (Barnett, 2006; Wooden, Warren, & Drago, 2009). Indeed, the International Labour Office's concept of 'decent working time' includes both the hours worked and their fit with workers' preferences (i.e. whether too few or too many hours are worked) (Boulin, Lallement, Messenger, & Michon, 2006).

Here we report on the extent to which SA employees' work hours fit with their preferences and examine the implications for work-life outcomes. In the AWALI survey we asked employees about their preferred hours, taking into account how a change in work hours would affect their income.

Overall, SA workers would prefer to work 2.7 hours less per week, which is comparable to the national average reduction sought (2.6 hours) (Table 4).

Full-time employees in SA would prefer to reduce their working week by an average of 6.0 hours, which is about three quarters of a day, consistent with the 5.6 hour average reported by full-time employees nationally.

SA women would like a slightly larger reduction in their full-time hours (6.5) compared to men (5.7), even though men work longer full-time hours (46.0) compared to women (42.4). SA women would prefer a 36 hour full-time week and men a 40 hour week, consistent with the national data (35.9 hours for women and 40.6 hours for men).

Table 4 Actual and preferred work hours by gender, SA 2010

	Actual work hours	Preferred work hours	Work hours mismatch	Work-life index
Men				
Part-time	18.6	26.4	-7.5	30.3
Full-time	46.0	40.2	5.7	43.7
Total	42.4	38.4	4.0	42.0
Women				
Part-time	19.7	22.7	-3.3	40.0
Full-time	42.4	36.0	6.5	45.7
Total	30.4	29.1	1.4	42.5
All				
Part-time	19.5	23.4	-4.0	37.9
Full-time	44.7	38.6	6.0	44.5
Total	36.1	33.5	2.7	42.3

Note. The work hour gap for those who prefer more hours is negative reflecting the number of extra hours desired to work (i.e. actual hours minus preferred hours). Table excludes self-employed persons. Index scores not adjusted for work hours. National sample: N = 2939. SA sample: N= 852.

It is notable that even though SA women work shorter full-time hours compared to men, their level of work-life interference is equivalent. A similar pattern is evident in the national data. Again we see evidence that women's work-life outcomes are more strongly affected by work hours.

On average, part-time workers in SA would prefer more hours – around four hours per week for all part-time employees. There is a significant gender difference here: SA men working part-time would prefer to work 7.5 hours – one full-time day – longer. Whereas part-time women in SA would prefer only 3.3 more hours.

Again, with part-time work it is evident that work hours have a stronger impact on women's compared to men's work-life outcomes. Even though men and women working part-time report similar hours, women working part-time have higher work-life interference compared to their male co-workers. Women's greater role in unpaid care and domestic work is also likely to account for this pattern and also their preference not to increase their part-time work hours by more than three hours per week.

Actual and preferred hours in SA 2008/09

The SA 2010 findings are also similar to SA 2008/09 with a few exceptions. There has been a slight increase in the extent to which full-time employees are working longer hours than they prefer from 2008/09 (4.6 hours for men; 5.3 hours for women) to 2010 (5.7 hours for men; 6.5 hours for women). In contrast, part-time women in 2010 would prefer to increase their work hours by a greater degree (3.3 hours) compared to previous years (1.4 hours).

Actual and preferred hours – national AWALI 2010

There is very little difference between the SA 2010 data and national averages for each group reported in Table 4.

The 'fit' between actual and preferred hours – employees overall

As in previous AWALI reports, we define a poor hours fit as a gap of four or more hours (about half a day) between actual and preferred hours. On this basis, in 2010 just over half (51.5 per

cent) of SA employees did not have a good fit between their actual and preferred hours (Figure 16).

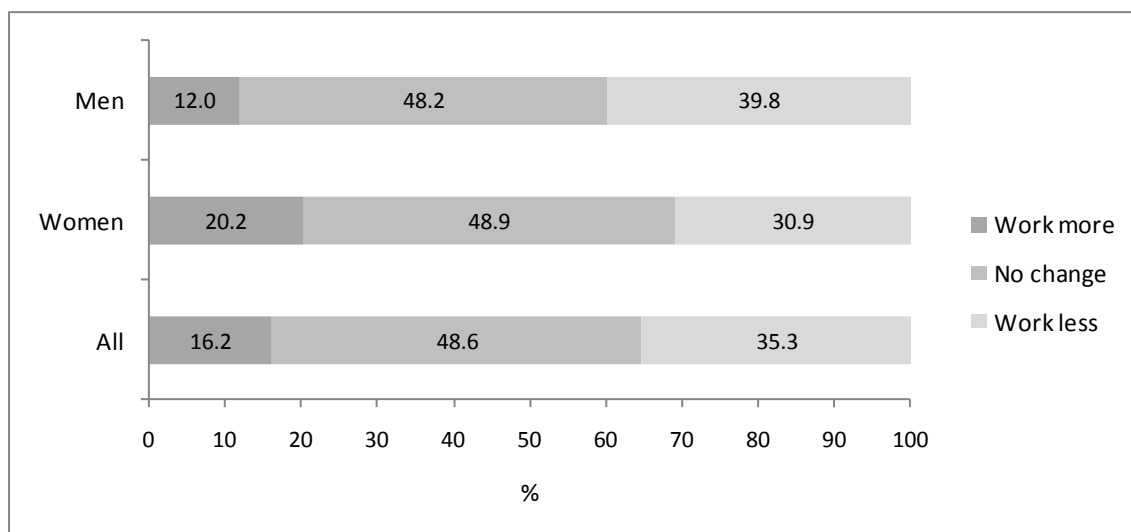


Figure 16 Work hours fit with preferences by gender, SA 2010 (per cent)

Note. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 828.

Working more hours than preferred is the most common form of mismatch. In 2010 just over one-third (35.3 per cent) of SA employees would prefer fewer hours.

Just under fifty per cent of men and women report a good match (within four hours) between their actual and preferred hours. Reflecting their longer work hours, SA men are more likely to prefer to work fewer hours (39.8 per cent) compared to women (30.9 per cent). Only a minority of SA employees (16.2 per cent) would like to work more hours, with women more likely to prefer more hours (20.2 per cent) compared to men (12.0 per cent).

Work hours fit in SA 2008/09

The proportion of SA employees with a good hours fit with preferences has changed little for men from 2008/09 to 2010, whereas there are some changes evident for women. There is evidence that SA women’s satisfaction with their work hours has declined from 2008/09 to 2010. Just under fifty per cent (48.9 per cent) of SA women in 2010 are satisfied (within four hours) with their work hours, a significant reduction from nearly sixty per cent (58.9) of women in 2008/09. Most of this difference is due to an increase in SA women’s preferences for more hours in 2010 (20.2 per cent) compared to 2008/09 (12.5 per cent).

Work hours fit - national AWALI 2010

Overall, there is little difference in work hours fit with preference between SA employees and their national counterparts. There are a few exceptions. Compared to the national average, SA men are slightly more likely to have a good fit between their actual and preferred work hours (48.2 per cent in SA; 44.2 per cent nationally), and are less likely to prefer to work longer hours (12.0 per cent in SA; 15.4 per cent in SA). This latter finding most likely reflects the higher proportion of SA men in full-time employment compared to the national average. Women in SA are slightly more likely to prefer to work longer hours (20.2 per cent) compared to the national average (17.2 per cent).

The ‘fit’ between actual and preferred hours – comparing part-time and full-time employees

We previously observed that the magnitude and direction of the mismatch between actual and preferred hours differs for part-time and full-time employees. Here we continue our focus on differences between part-timers and full-timers, and the experiences of men and women.

As Figure 17 shows, for all SA employees those working part-time are most likely to have a good hours fit (50.6 per cent). About half (55.0 per cent) of those working a 35 to 47 hour full-time week have a good hours fit. However, a substantial proportion (39.9 per cent) of those working a 35-47 hour week would prefer fewer hours.

Those working longer full-time hours (48+) in SA are most likely to prefer shorter hours. Only a quarter (25.0 per cent) of SA employees working long full-time hours, are working their preferred hours. Indeed, nearly three quarters of these long hours workers (69.9) would prefer shorter hours.

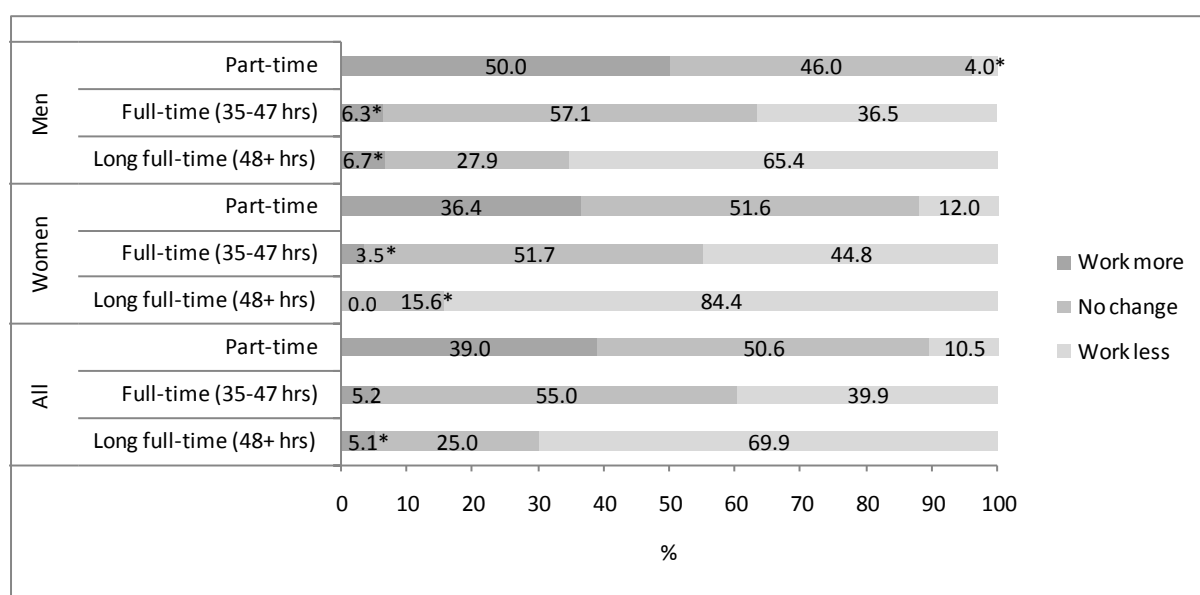


Figure 17 Work hours fit with preferences by gender and work hours, SA 2010 (per cent)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 827.

Comparisons of men and women continue to highlight gender differences in the experience of work hours, particularly very long hours. In SA women working long full-time hours are most likely to want to reduce their work hours (84.4 per cent) and 65.4 per cent of their male co-workers would like to join them.

SA women working full-time hours (35 to 47) are also more likely to prefer a reduction in their hours (44.8 per cent) compared to men in this group (36.5 per cent).

Part-time hours are clearly a much better fit for SA women’s preferences. The majority of part-time women in SA are satisfied with their hours (51.6 per cent) and 46 per cent of their male colleagues agree. A substantial proportion of SA men and women working part-time would prefer more hours (36.4 per cent of women; 50.0 per cent of men).

Of those working full-time in SA, the majority work between 35 to 47 hours (83.7 per cent of women; 70.6 per cent of men). We have observed here that a substantial proportion of women (44.8 per cent) do not find these full-time hours meet their needs as indicated by their preference

for fewer hours, taking into account the effect on their income. In contrast, the majority of women working part-time (51.6 per cent) are satisfied with their work hours.

Work hours fit in part-time and full-time work in SA 2008/09

In 2010 part-time employees are more likely to prefer more hours (39.0 per cent) compared to 2008/09 (27.2 per cent) and this is the case for men and women. Women working a 35 to 47 hour full-time week in 2010 are more likely to prefer fewer hours (44.8 per cent) compared to 2008/09 (37.4 per cent). Sample size restrictions in the 2008/09 sample prevent further analysis.

Work hours fit in part-time and full-time work – national AWALI 2010

The patterns observed for SA are similar to the national data, with a few exceptions. Longer full-time hours are less satisfactory for SA women (84.4 per cent want shorter hours) compared to women nationally (76.6 per cent). SA men working long full-time hours are less likely to prefer fewer hours (65.4 per cent) compared to their co-workers nationally (71.1 per cent). There is also evidence of a greater desire for longer hours in part-time work in SA compared to the national average; 36.4 per cent of SA women working part-time would prefer longer hours (30.5 per cent nationally) and 50 per cent of SA men would like to join them (46.4 per cent nationally).

Full-time workers' preference to change to part-time hours

An alternative method of examining the fit of workers' hours to their needs and preferences is to examine the proportion of full-timers who would prefer to make a substantial reduction in their work hours to part-time work.

It is clear from the previous analyses that many women working full-time in SA and nationally would prefer to reduce their work hours. A substantial proportion of these full-time women would prefer to work part-time. In SA one third (32.8 per cent) of SA women working full-time would prefer part-time hours, which is comparable to the national average (31.0).

Parenting responsibilities have a significant impact on SA women's work hours preferences; 44.6 per cent of mothers working full-time in SA would prefer part-time work, and 28.4 per cent of women without children under 18 years would like to join them.

Full-time men's work hours' preferences are very different. Only 16.0 per cent of men working full-time in SA would like to work part-time and there is no difference between those with or without children under 18 years.

Sample size restrictions prevent comparisons with SA data in 2008/09.

Preferences for part-time work – national AWALI 2010

More SA women working full-time would prefer to change to part-time work compared to the national average: 11.6 per cent more mothers in SA working full-time would prefer part-time work. There is little difference on this measure between SA women and the national average for those without children.

Parenting responsibilities and work hours 'fit'

As the analysis of full-timers' preferences for part-time work shows, parenting responsibilities have a significant impact on women's work hours preferences. As observed previously, this most likely reflects the trend in Australia for women with children, especially younger children, to reduce their work hours in order to provide care for their children (Australian Government, 2009; OECD, 2002). As would be expected, parenthood has a significant influence on actual and preferred work hours and this differs for men and women.

On average, SA men work longer hours than women and this gap is particularly evident for those with parenting responsibilities for children aged 17 years or younger (26.8 hours for women; 43.3 hours for men).

The significant influence that parenting has on SA women's employment participation is also evident in comparisons of individuals with and without parenting responsibilities. Women without parenting responsibilities work 33.3 hours a week which is nearly one full-time day more (6.5 hours) than women with children. The opposite pattern is evident for men: fathers work only slightly longer hours (1.7) than men without parenting responsibilities (41.6 hours).

Women with children in SA have the best match between their actual and preferred hours (within 0.4 hours); clearly, their part-time hours suit their needs and preference. Women without children have the second best match of hours to preferences: they would prefer to work 2.1 hours fewer. The poorest fit is reported by men with children (prefer 4.7 fewer hours) and men without children (prefer 3.4 fewer hours).

Overall, 35.6 per cent of parents would prefer to work fewer hours (35.0 per cent of those without children aged 17 years or younger). Only a minority of parents would prefer to work four or more hours (14.9 per cent; 17.1 per cent of those without children).

Reflecting their longer work hours, a substantial proportion of fathers (42.1 per cent) would prefer fewer hours and nearly thirty per cent (28.1) of mothers would like to join them.

Parent's work hours fit in 2008/09

Average work hours for SA parents have not changed from 2008/09 to 2010. Men without children report working slightly fewer hours in 2008/09 (38.6) compared to 2010 (41.6). These longer hours most likely account for these men's preference to work 3.4 fewer hours in 2010 compared to 2.0 fewer in 2008/09. There is little change in women's preferences over time, whether they are with or without children.

Parent's work hours fit – national AWALI 2010

Mothers and fathers in SA work around two hours less a week compared to parents nationally (28.9 hours for mothers; 45.2 hours for fathers). Hours fit with preferences is comparable in SA to the national average with two exceptions. Mothers in SA have a better hours match (prefer 0.4 fewer hours) compared to mothers nationally (prefer 1.6 fewer hours). Men without children in SA have a slightly worse hours match (prefer 3.4 hours fewer) compared to their national counterparts (prefer 2.6 hours fewer).

Household composition and work hours

The experience of managing both paid work and parenting is likely to be qualitatively different for those in partnered relationships compared to sole parents. It might be expected that work hours have a stronger impact on sole parents' capacity to manage their work and care commitments, in the absence of the additional time and resources of a partner. Our analyses of the SA and national data paint a slightly different picture, highlighting instead the work-life strains of partnered parents.

Table 5 shows that, regardless of household composition, SA men work full-time hours on average and SA women work part-time hours.

Partnered fathers in SA work the longest hours of all groups (45.6). They also report the highest work hours mismatch (prefer 5.9 fewer hours) along with men without children (prefer 5.8 fewer). In contrast, partnered mothers work the shortest hours of all groups (26.8), which is within 1.6 hours of their preferred hours of 25.2.

For women, partnered women without children have the poorest hours fit (prefer 3.0 hours fewer). As noted previously, partnered men have the worst hours fit for their gender, whether they have children or not.

Single parents report the shortest hours and best fit of hours with preferences, and this is the case for men and women.

Household composition and hours SA 2008/09

There has been little change for SA women across the four household types in actual and preferred hours from 2008/09 to 2010. In contrast, partnered men in 2010 report a larger hours mismatch (nearly six hours) compared to 2008/09 (3.8 for partnered fathers and 2.4 for partnered men without children under 18 years). It is also evident that the increase in SA men's work hours over time is mainly due to longer hours worked by single men without children (36.7 hours in 2008/09; 42.0 hours in 2010). Despite their longer hours, single men without children in 2010 report an equivalent hours mismatch (of around 1.3 hours) to 2008/09.

Household composition and work hours – national AWALI 2010

Actual and preferred hours in SA for each of the household groups is comparable to national averages with the exception of partnered individuals without children aged 17 years or younger. Partnered men without children report longer hours in SA (41.2) compared to their national counterparts (38.8), and also report a greater hours mismatch (5.8 in SA; 2.2 nationally). For SA women, this group report shorter work hours (32.8) than the national average (35.5), but they would also prefer a greater reduction in their hours (3.0) compared to their national counterparts (1.8).

Table 5 Actual and preferred work hours by household type and gender, SA 2010

	Actual work hours	Preferred work hours	Work hours mismatch
		Men	
Single with children*	35.9*	36.2*	-0.9*
Couple with children	45.6	39.8	5.9
Couple without children	41.2	35.8	5.8
Single without children	42.0	40.2	1.3
		Women	
Single with children	30.0	29.6	0.4
Couple with children	26.8	25.2	1.6
Couple without children	32.8	29.9	3.0
Single without children	33.7	32.4	1.3
		All	
Single with children	31.6	31.2	.09
Couple with children	37.5	33.7	4.1
Couple without children	36.4	32.4	4.2
Single without children	37.4	35.9	1.3

Note. *Estimates for sole fathers not reliable due to low sample size. The work hour gap for those who prefer more hours is negative reflecting the number of extra hours desired to work (i.e. actual hours minus preferred hours). Table excludes self-employed persons. N = 777.

Household composition and work hours 'fit'

Using the benchmark of four or more hours gap between actual and preferred hours as a substantial mismatch (i.e. of around ½ a day), we now examine which household compositions are associated with the greatest risk of working fewer or longer hours than preferred.

Overall, just under 50 per cent of SA employees are satisfied with their work hours (Figure 18). The main exception is single individuals without children who are less likely to report a good

hours match (within four hours) (41.7 per cent). This dissatisfaction is most evident for women (only 31.4 per cent have a good match) but not men in this group (49.6 per cent have a good match)

Working longer hours than preferred is the most common experience of those who do not have a good match between actual and preferred hours. Nearly 50 per cent of partnered men, with children (47.6 per cent) or without children (46.0 per cent) would like to reduce their hours, compared to just 31.3 per cent of single men without children.

In comparison, SA women are less likely to work longer hours than they prefer: across the household groups just over 30 per cent of women think their work hours are too long.

Most employees in SA would not like to increase their hours and those that would like to work an additional four or more hours are most likely to be without children aged 17 years or younger.

Many of the estimates for single parents should be interpreted with caution due to sample size restrictions.

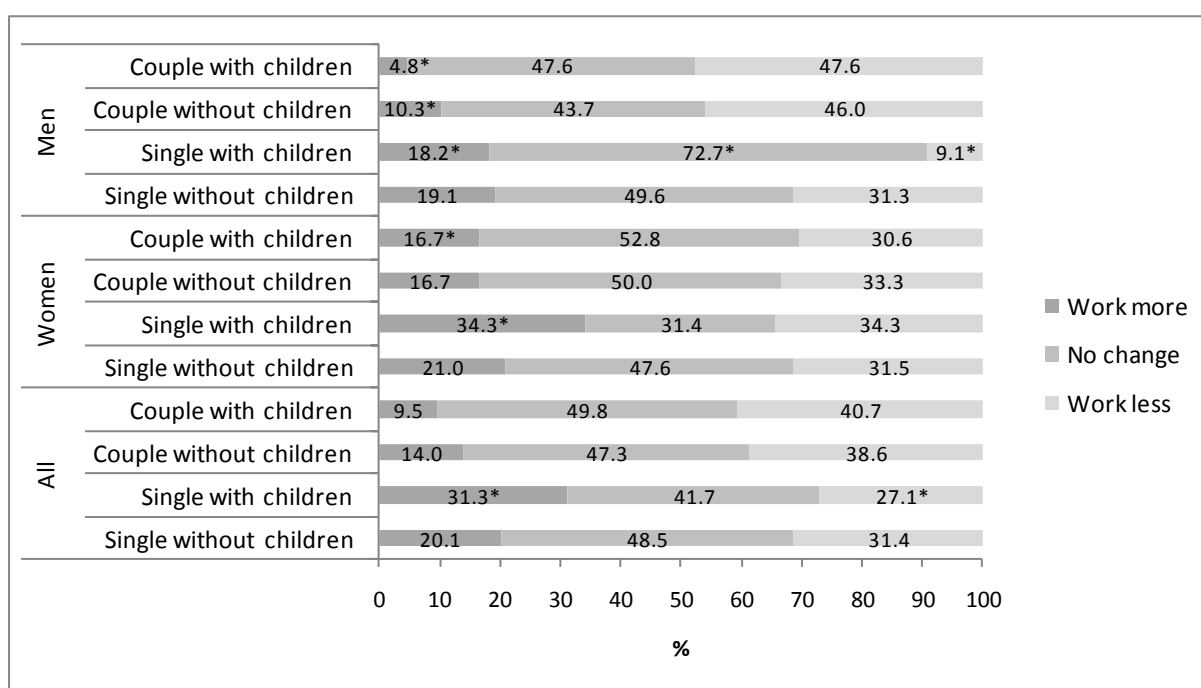


Figure 18 Work hours fit with preferences by gender and household composition, SA 2010 (per cent)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 777.

Work hours fit and household composition in SA 2008/09

The largest changes from 2008/09 to 2010 are evident for partnered individuals without children. These individuals are less likely to have a good match between their actual and preferred hours in 2010 compared to previous years and this is mainly due to a larger proportion who would like to work less hours.

Partnered individuals without children in 2010 are more likely to prefer fewer hours (33.3 per cent of women; 46.0 per cent of men) compared to 2008/09 (25.3 per cent of women; 38.1 per cent of men). In 2010 partnered men without children are more likely to prefer fewer hours (46.0) compared to previous years (38.1 per cent). Sample size restrictions prevent analysis of sole parents in 2008/09.

With the exception of men without children, the proportion of employees reporting a good or poor fit of hours with preferences is consistent between SA and national AWALI samples. Partnered men without children in SA are more likely to prefer fewer hours (46.0 per cent) compared to their national counterparts (33.2 per cent). In contrast, single men without children in SA are *less* likely to work longer than preferred (31.3 per cent) than their national counterparts (41.4 per cent). Sample size restrictions prevent comparative analysis of sole parents.

Work-life interference and hours 'fit' with preferences

Work hours fit with preference can be used as a proxy measure of work-life balance: working four or more hours than preferred is a reasonable indication that, from a time perspective, work is not fitting in well with other life commitments. Indeed, of those SA employees who are working four or more hours than preferred 71.0 per cent of women and 63.6 per cent of men report being often, or almost always, rushed and pressed for time.

As Figure 19 shows, there is a clear association between poor work-life interference and over-work. There is no significant difference in work-life interference between SA employees who would prefer more hours and those who are satisfied (within four hours) with their current work hours.

There is no difference between the SA 2010 index scores across categories of work hours fit compared to SA 2008/09 and the national average for 2010.

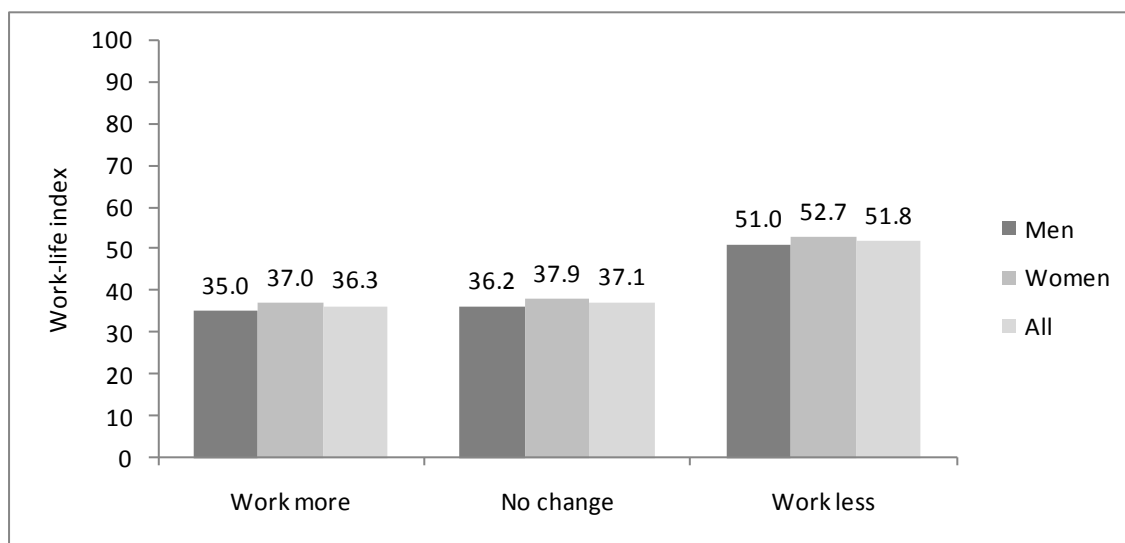


Figure 19 Work-life index scores by work hours fit, SA 2010

Note. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4+ more hours than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 825

Summary

Longer work hours are associated with worse work-life interference for SA employees and this is particularly the case for very long hours (48+).

Whether they are working shorter or longer part-time or full-time hours, SA women report worse work-life interference compared to their male co-workers.

Women work shorter hours in full-time employment compared to men, yet their work-life interference is equivalent. This is further evidence of the stronger impact of work hours on women's work-life outcomes.

Overall, SA employees would like to work 2.6 hours fewer per week. Underneath this average lie important differences. Full-time employees would prefer to work six hours less and part-timers would prefer four more hours.

Reflecting the greater impact of work hours on their work-life interference, the largest preferred decrease in work hours is reported by full-time women, whereas part-time men prefer the greatest increase in hours.

We define a poor hours fit with preferences as a gap of four or more hours between actual and preferred hours. By this definition, just over half of SA employees do not have a good fit of hours to preferences. Working longer hours than preferred is the most common experience: one third of SA employees are working at least four hours a week longer than they would like.

Reflecting their longer hours and concentration in full-time employment, SA men are most likely to be working longer hours than they prefer.

However, when women are in full-time employment, they are more likely to prefer fewer hours compared to men, and this is particularly the case for very long hours (48+); 84.4 per cent of SA women working very long hours would prefer to work less and 65.4 per cent of their male co-workers would like to join them.

Part-time work is a better fit with women's preferences, although 36.4 per cent would prefer more hours and 50 per cent of men working part-time agree.

Many women in full-time employment would like to work part-time: nearly one-third of SA women overall, a figure that rises to 44.6 per cent for SA mothers working full-time. In contrast, only 16 per cent of SA men working full-time would like to work part-time.

Parenting responsibilities also have a significant impact on work hours and their fit with preferences. Women with children work the shortest hours compared to both fathers and women without children under the age of 18 years.

Mothers also have the best hours fit with preferences, whereas fathers have the poorest fit indicated by a preference to work 4.7 fewer hours. Partnered fathers, in particular, are likely to work longer hours and have a poor hours fit.

Overall, 35.6 per cent of parents would prefer to work fewer hours (42.1 per cent of fathers; 28.1 per cent of mothers).

In sum, there are clear gender differences in the impact of work hours on work-life outcomes. This is particularly clear for women in full-time work – even though they work shorter average hours than men, full-time women are more likely to prefer shorter hours and to prefer a larger reduction in hours than men.

This is consistent with international research which has shown that when men and women working similar hours are compared, women are more likely to experience work-life interference, (Gutek, et al., 1991; Hill, 2005), a finding often attributed to gender inequity in caring and domestic work (Connell, 2005; Fuwa, 2004).

Comparison with SA 2008/09

Part-time work is not as protective of women's work-life outcomes in 2010 compared to 2008/09: women's index scores are higher in part-time work in 2010 compared to previous years. Long full-time hours also create more work-life strains (higher index scores) in 2010 compared to 2008/09 for SA women.

Nevertheless, SA women in part-time work in 2010 would prefer almost two more hours of paid work compared to 2008/09.

This preference of SA women for longer hours in part-time work has increased from 2008/09 (27.2 per cent) to 2010 (39.0 per cent). In contrast, women working a 35 to 47 hour full-time week are more likely to prefer fewer hours in 2010 compared to previous years.

SA men's actual work hours have changed over time and this is particularly evident for single men without children who report working five more hours in 2010 than in 2008/09.

Partnered men, whether fathers of children under 18 years or not, report a greater number of hours worked above that preferred in 2010 compared to previous years.

The extent to which work hours fit with preferences has a significant impact on work-life outcomes. SA employees who are working longer than preferred have worse work-life interference compared to those with a good fit, or those who would like to work longer hours.

Comparison with AWALI 2010 – national averages

There are more similarities than differences between the SA and national averages. Here we highlight the main contrasts observed.

Overall, SA employees work similar hours (36.2 hours) to the national average (36.5 hours). SA employees also report a comparable number of hours worked above those preferred, and a comparable level of preferred work hours.

Comparison with national data highlights the poor fit of long full-time hours for SA women: 8 per cent more of the SA women working these hours would prefer to work less compared to the national average. In contrast, SA men in long full-time work are less likely to prefer fewer hours than their national counterparts.

SA part-timers' preference for longer hours is also clear when compared with the national average.

Part-time work is a strong preference for SA women with children: 11.6 per cent more mothers in full-time work would prefer part-time hours in SA compared to the national average.

Part-time work suits SA mothers: they report a better fit of hours to preferences than the national average.

In contrast, partnered men without children in SA are more likely to be working longer hours than they prefer compared to their national counterparts.

Section 5: Personal and household characteristics, location and work-life interference

Section 4 described how work hours and their fit with preferences vary by gender, parenting responsibilities and household composition. In this section, we extend this analysis to examine how these key socio-demographic characteristics are associated with work-life interference using the composite work-life index measure. As in previous sections, in many analyses we statistically control for the effects of work hours to identify the unique association that each socio-demographic characteristic has with work-life interference, independent of work hours effects.

Age

Employment participation changes across life stages, with changing emphasis on study, family formation and leisure across age groups. In SA, younger women aged 18 to 24 years and women aged 65 and older, work an average of 23.0 and 28.0 hours per week, respectively. This increases to longer part-time hours (ranging from 29 to 34 hours) for women aged 25 to 64 years. Men consistently work longer hours across all age groups. On average, younger (aged 18-24) and older (aged 65+) men in SA work long part-time hours (37.2 and 35.1 hours, respectively), whereas men aged 25 to 54 work an average of 44.3 hours per week, which drops to 40.6 hours for men aged 55 to 64.

Despite these differences in work hours, men and women report similar levels of work-life interference in SA across the age groups. Figure 20 shows work-life index scores statistically adjusted for work hours. For SA employees overall, work-life interference is lowest for older workers aged 55 years and over. SA women consistently report higher levels of work-life interference than men across most age groups, with the exception of those aged 45 to 54. However, these gender differences are not statistically significant except for the youngest and oldest age groups. A comparable pattern is evident for the unadjusted index scores (not reported).

Work-life interference across age groups in SA 2008/09

There has been little change in work-life interference from 2008/09 to 2010 across the age groups with two exceptions: women aged 25 to 34 and women aged 45 to 54. Work-life interference has increased for women in these age groups in 2010 (index scores of 50.0 and 43.2 respectively) compared to 2008/09 (index scores of 40.7 and 36.9, respectively).

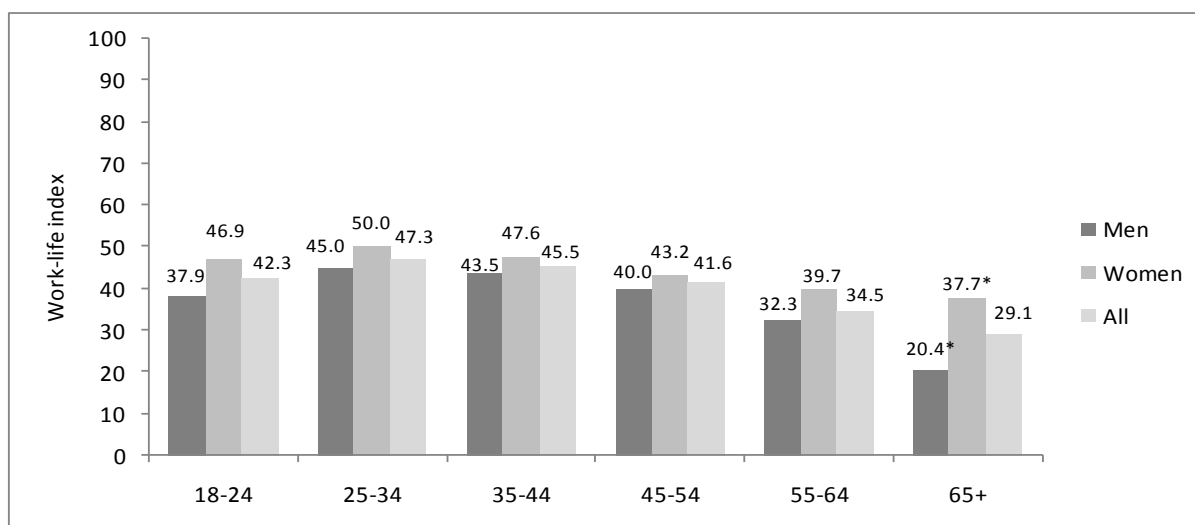


Figure 20 Work-life index scores by age and gender, SA 2010

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons. Index scores adjusted for work hours. N = 848.

Work-life interference across age groups – national AWALI 2010

The work-life index scores across age groups in SA are comparable to the national averages.

Parenting responsibilities

The challenges of both parenting and engaging in paid work are well established and are a common source of work-life strains and pressures (Craig, 2007). As in many other countries, women in Australia are most often the primary care givers to children, especially very young children.

As we observed in Section 4, women in SA (and nationally) tend to reduce their work hours to manage both child care and paid work responsibilities, whereas men are likely to maintain or increase their work hours with parenthood. Therefore, it is particularly important when examining the effect of parenting responsibilities on work-life interference to control for differences in work hours.

Table 6 shows work-life index scores for those with and without children aged 17 years or younger. It is clear that parenting responsibilities increase work-life interference for men and women in SA. This is evident whether index scores are adjusted for work hours or not.

It is also evident that parenting responsibilities have the strongest impact on SA women's work-life outcomes, when differences in work hours are statistically controlled. When differences in work hours are not controlled, mother and fathers report equivalent levels of work-life interference, despite 16.5 fewer hours in paid work for mothers compared to fathers. Statistically adjusting for this difference in work hours, SA mothers have worse work-life interference (index score of 51.8) compared to fathers (index score of 43).

Parenting responsibilities and work-life interference in SA 2008/09

There is little change over time in the patterns or magnitude of work-life interference for SA employees with or without parenting responsibilities. Women with children are the one exception: they report higher work-life interference on the unadjusted (47.3) and adjusted (51.8) work-life index in 2010 compared to 2008/09 (41.8 and 46.7, respectively). Men without parenting responsibilities are the only group to report a change in work hours from 2008/09 (38.5) to 2010 (41.6).

Parenting responsibilities and work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

Levels of work-life interference reported by SA parents, or those without parenting responsibilities, are equivalent to the national average. This is the case for both men and women.

Work hours were also equivalent for SA men compared to the national average. In contrast, SA mothers work shorter hours (26.8) than the national average (34.5), whereas women without children aged 17 years or younger work longer hours in SA (33.3) than the national average (27.8).

Table 6 Work hours and work-life index scores by parenting responsibilities and gender, SA 2010

	Work hours	Index unadjusted	Index adjusted
Men			
Child < 18 years	43.3	46.3	43.0
No child	41.6	37.7	35.1
All	42.4	42.0	39.3
Women			
Child < 18 years	26.8	47.3	51.8
No child	33.3	38.8	40.1
All	30.5	42.5	44.9
All			
Child < 18 years	35.2	46.7	47.4
No child	37.0	38.3	37.6
All	36.1	42.3	42.1

Note. *Estimate not reliable due to small sample size. Employee N = 848. Self-employed N = 115.

Household composition

Very similar patterns of work-life interference are evident when we consider whether employees are parenting in a sole or partnered household.

Figure 21 shows adjusted work-life index scores for SA men and women in sole and partnered households, with and without children. Work hours differ according to household composition, particularly for men. Partnered fathers work around 10 hours longer every week compared to sole fathers. In contrast, sole mothers work only three hours longer than partnered mothers.

When we do not control for these differences in work hours, men and women report comparable levels of work-life interference across the household types with the exception of sole parents. Women report worse work-life outcomes compared to men when sole parents.

Controlling for these differences in work hours, women report higher work-life interference in each household type.

The contrast between those with and without children is most evident for women. Sole and partnered mothers have much higher work-life interference compared to their counterparts without children aged 17 years or younger.

Estimates for sole fathers in SA should be interpreted with caution due to the low sample size.

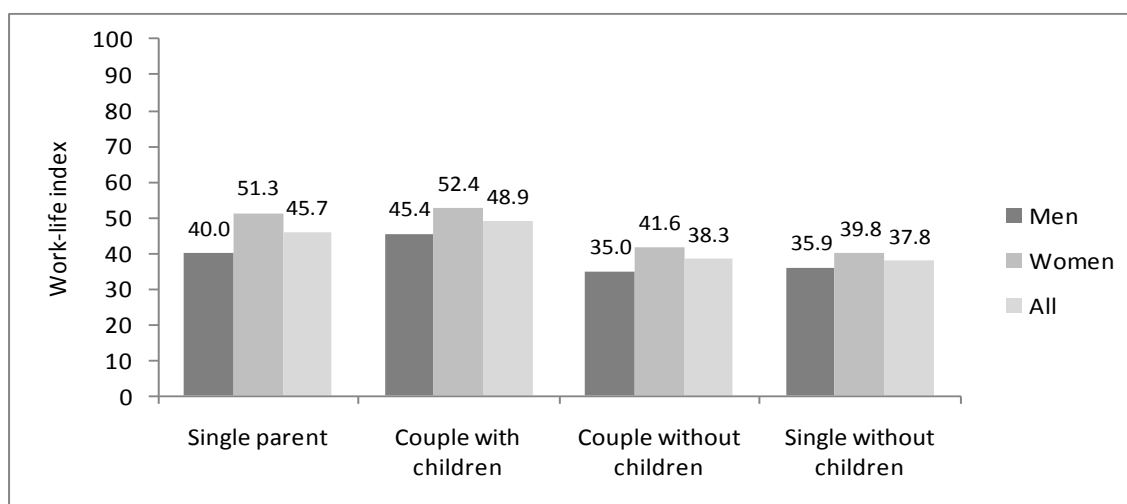


Figure 21 Work-life index scores by household composition and gender, SA 2010

Note. Table excludes self-employed persons. Index scores adjusted for work hours. N = 796.

Household composition and work-life interference in SA 2008/09

In 2010, couples with children report higher work-life interference (48.9) compared to 2008/09 (43.9). There is also an indication of a slight rise in work-life interference for partnered women with or without children over time, however these contrasts are not statistically significant.

Household composition and work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

For each household type, the work-life index scores are comparable to the national average for men and women. The small sample size of sole fathers in SA does not support a comparative analysis of this group.

Household income

Household income can be a resource that may be used to ease work-life pressures and strains. Additional income can be used to purchase supports (e.g. child-care, house cleaning, gardening) and time saving goods (e.g. pre-prepared foods). Those on lower incomes must manage work and family commitments without these time-saving supports, and they are more likely to experience time strains related to reliance on public transport and longer work commutes from suburbs located at a distance from cities and other business concentrations. On the other hand, higher levels of household income are likely to indicate longer work hours (for individuals and households as a whole), and employment in managerial or professional occupations where high levels of work-life interference are common (see Section 6).

As Table 7 shows, men and women in the lowest household income group (< \$30,000) report the shortest work hours (20.5). There is a significant increase in work hours as household income increases, with the longest hours reported by those in the \$60,000+ income brackets. In each income group, men report longer hours than women.

Work-life index scores track the trend in work hours. For all SA employees, the largest contrast is between the lowest two and highest two income groups; those with household incomes above \$60 000 report the highest work-life interference. This can be observed with index scores adjusted (Table 7) or unadjusted for work hours.

For SA men, the largest and statistically significant contrast in work-life interference is reported by those with the highest household income compared to the two lowest income groups.

A different pattern is evident for SA women: those in the second lowest household income group (\$30,000 to \$59,999) report the lowest work-life interference compared to all other groups (although the contrast with the lowest income group is not statistically significant, most likely due to the small number of low income women in the sample). Indeed, SA women in very low or very high household incomes report equivalent levels of work-life interference, when differences in work hours are statistically controlled.

When controlling for work hours, women report higher work-life interference compared to men, with the exception of those in the second lowest income group. It should be noted that the estimates for men in the lowest income groups should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size.

Table 7 Work-life index scores and work hours by household income, SA 2010

	< \$30,000		\$30,000 – \$59,999		\$60,000 – \$89,999		\$90,000+	
	Hours	Index	Hours	Index	Hours	Index	Hours	Index
Men	26.3*	31.5*	38.5	35.9	43.7	39.7	45.1	44.1
Women	18.3	46.5	31.2	39.7	33.8	49.1	33.9	49.7
All	20.5	39.0	34.3	37.8	38.5	44.4	40.1	46.9

Note. *Estimate not reliable due to low sample size. Table excludes self-employed persons. Index scores adjusted for work hours. N = 729.

Household income and work-life interference in SA 2008-09

Work hours and work-life index scores across the income groups have shown little change over time, with a few exceptions. Work hours have increased for men in households earning \$30,000 to \$59,999 (35.5 in 2008/09, 39.4 in 2010) and decreased slightly for men in households earning \$60,000 to \$89,999 (42.8 in 2008/09, 39.2 in 2010). Women's work hours have remained consistent in each income group over time. Work-life outcomes have worsened for those in the highest income households (\$90,000+). For these individuals there is evidence of higher work-life interference in 2010 (46.9) compared to 2008/09 (41.5).

Household income and work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

Work hours and work-life interference are comparable between SA employees and the national average in each income group.

Geographic location

Overall, work-life interference in SA for all employees (42.3) is equivalent to the national average (43.7).

We also consider the impact of living in urban compared to rural or regional areas where access to essential services may be more limited and travel times longer between locations (e.g. home, work, child care).

As Table 8 shows, there is little difference in work-life interference between SA workers living in urban compared to rural/regional locations. There is no evidence of greater work-life strains for parents living outside of the city. Indeed the only contrast of statistical significance is the lower work-life interference reported by SA women without children who are living in a rural/regional location compared to their urban counterparts. These patterns can be observed for index scores adjusted (Table 8) or unadjusted for work hours.

Adjusting for work hours, women with children report the highest work-life interference, whether in urban or rural/regional locations (unadjusted scores are equivalent for mothers and fathers in both locations).

Table 8 Work-life index scores of rural/regional and urban employees by gender, SA 2010

	Rural/regional	Urban
Men		
Child < 18 years	43.1	43.0
No child	34.5	35.4
All	38.8	39.2
Women		
Child < 18 years	51.0	52.1
No child	36.4	41.3
All	43.7	46.7
All		
Child < 18 years	47.0	47.5
No child	35.4	38.3
All	41.2	42.9

Note. Data excludes self-employed persons. Index scores adjusted for work hours. SA: Rural/regional N = 271, urban N = 577.

Geographic location and work-life interference in SA 2008/2009

In general, work-life index scores show little change for urban or rural/regional employees over time. Again the exception to this trend is women: there is evidence of an increase over time in work-life interference for rural and urban women in SA, although these contrasts are not

statistically significant (most likely to due to the low sample sizes of rural/regional women in 2008/09).

Geographic location and work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

Work-life index scores for rural/regional and urban employees are comparable to the national average with one exception: rural/regional women without children in SA have lower work-life interference in SA (36.4) compared to the national average (43.1).

Summary

There are clear patterns of association between particular socio-demographic characteristics and increased work-life interference. As expected, most of these effects are due to the increased work-life challenges of combining paid work with parenting and family commitments.

Work-life outcomes differ across the life course. In SA, older workers aged 55+ have the best work-life outcomes. Younger men (aged 18 to 24 years), but not younger women, also have better work-life outcomes compared to their older counterparts.

Managing two important roles, paid employee and parent, tends to increase work-life strains for SA workers. This is the case for men and women. When we control for differences in work hours (mothers work shorter average hours than fathers), it is evident that paid work has the largest impact on mothers' work-life interference. This is the case whether parents are partnered or not.

In general, work-life interference also increases with higher levels of household income. As expected, work hours also increase with higher household income, however the increase in work-life interference is observed for index scores both adjusted and unadjusted for work hours.

This pattern is evident for SA men, however for SA women those in the lowest household income group (< \$30 000) also report high levels of work-life interference comparable to those in higher income households (\$60,000+). This suggests that women are particularly vulnerable to work-life strains associated with a lack of financial resources. This pattern is not unique to South Australia: it was also observed in the national AWALI 2010 survey.

There is no evidence that living in a rural/regional location in SA has a different effect on work-life outcomes compared to living in an urban area. Regardless of their geographic location, women report higher levels of work-life interference compared to men (controlling for differences in work hours).

Comparison with SA 2008/09

Work-life outcomes have worsened over time for women in two of the age groups where work/career engagement and family responsibilities are likely to be most intense: those aged 25 to 34 and those aged 45 to 54.

SA mothers also have higher work-life interference in 2010 compared to 2008/09 and this was also the case for partnered parents in general.

Men and women in higher income households (\$90,000) have also experienced intensification of work-life interference over time.

Comparison with AWALI 2010 - national averages

SA employees report equivalent levels of work-life interference compared to the national average across the major socio-demographic groups as defined by age, parenting responsibilities, household composition and income and geographic location.

Section 6: Employment characteristics and work-life interference

In this section we examine the impact of different types of employment characteristics on work-life interference. We re-visit self-employment, this time with a focus on part-time and full-time hours for employees and self-employed workers and on whether self-employment offers any work-life advantages for parents. Work-life outcomes are also examined according to industry, occupation and type of employment contract (ongoing, fixed-term, casual). Unless indicated otherwise, we adjust for differences in working hours allowing us to focus on differences associated with different employment arrangements per se, independent of work hours.

Self-employment

In many ways self-employment can be a qualitatively different way of engaging in paid work compared to being an employee. Self-employment provides the opportunity for greater control over the timing, arrangement and conduct of work. On the other hand, with increased autonomy comes greater responsibility, for example with regard to business administration and finance. Here we examine the work-life outcomes of employees and self-employed workers in full-time and part-time employment.

Table 9 shows that self-employed men work longer hours in full-time employment (50.1; 46.0 for employee men) and part-time employment (22.0; 18.6 for employee men). In contrast, SA women's work hours are comparable in full-time and part-time employment for the self-employed and employees. Overall, employee women work longer hours (30.5) than self-employed women in SA (25.2).

Work-life index scores are comparable for employees and self-employed workers in SA, and this is the case for men and women in full-time and part-time work. There is no evidence that self-employment is associated with particular work-life advantages or strains in South Australia. It should be noted that the longer hours of self-employed men in full-time employment are associated with a slightly higher index score compared to their employee counterparts, however this difference is not statistically significant. The 4.1 extra hours reported by self-employed men have only a marginal impact on their work-life interference, perhaps reflecting the extra flexibility often available in self-employment.

The findings for self-employed persons should be interpreted with caution due to the small number (< 50) of self-employed men working part-time and self-employed women (in total).

Table 9 Work hours and work-life index for employees and the self-employed, SA 2010

	Employee		Self-employed	
	Work hours	Index unadjusted	Work hours	Index unadjusted
Men				
Part-time	18.6	30.3	22.0	35.2
Full-time	46.0	43.7	50.1	45.8
All	42.4	42.0	40.9	42.3
Women				
Part-time	19.7	39.6	17.1	43.1
Full-time	42.4	45.7	41.9*	49.2*
All	30.5	42.5	25.2	45.1
All				
Part-time	19.5	37.9	19.8	38.8
Full-time	44.7	44.4	48.7	46.4
All	36.2	42.3	36.4	43.2

Note. *Estimate not reliable due to low sample size. N = 963

Employees and the self-employed work comparable work hours with the exception of women without children. Self-employed women without children work shorter hours (24.7) compared to their employee counterparts (33.3).

Overall, self-employed workers and employees in SA report comparable levels of work-life interference whether they have parenting responsibilities or not. This is the case for index scores unadjusted or adjusted for work hours. There is some indication that self-employed women in SA may have higher work-life interference compared to their employee counterparts and self-employed men. This finding should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size of self-employed mothers in SA and the lack of statistical significance.

Table 10 Work hours and work-life index scores of employees and self-employed workers by parenting status, SA 2010

	Employee			Self-employed			All employed		
	Work hours	Index unadj.	Index adj.	Work hours	Index unadj.	Index adj.	Work hours	Index unadj.	Index adj.
	Men								
Child < 18 years	43.3	46.3	43.0	44.3	44.1	40.3	43.4	46.0	42.8
No child	41.6	37.7	35.1	39.2	41.5	40.0	40.5	38.6	36.6
All	42.4	42.0	39.0	40.9	42.3	40.2	41.9	42.1	39.7
	Women								
Child < 18 years	26.8	47.3	51.8	25.8*	56.5*	61.4*	26.9	47.7	51.9
No child	33.3	38.8	40.1	24.7	36.7	42.1	32.5	38.7	40.3
All	30.5	42.5	46.0	25.2	45.1	51.8	30.1	42.6	46.1
	All								
Child < 18 years	35.2	46.7	47.4	38.0	48.3	50.8	36.5	46.9	47.3
No child	37.0	38.3	37.6	35.4	40.2	41.1	35.4	38.7	38.4
All	36.1	42.3	42.5	36.4	43.2	46.0	36.0	42.4	42.9

Note. *Estimate not reliable due to low sample size. N = 963.

Self employment and work-life outcomes in SA 2008-09

The small sample sizes of self-employed women and self-employed men working part-time in the SA 2008/09 sample, limits the comparisons that can be made and the following observations should be applied with caution. There is little evidence of a change in the work hours in full-time or part-time employment reported by employees or self-employed workers over time. Similarly, work-life interference has not changed from 2008/09 to 2010 for full-time or part-time workers in each type of employment.

Changes over time in the work hours and work-life outcomes of self-employed mothers cannot be examined due to the small sample of these women in the 2008/09 surveys. There has been no significant change in work-life interference for self-employed men over time, regardless of parenting status.

Self employment and work-life outcomes – national AWAALI 2010

We previously observed (Section 4) that employee men in SA, with or without children, have comparable work hours and work-life outcomes in SA to the national average.

This is not the case for self-employed fathers in SA: they work shorter hours (44.3 in SA; 49.3 nationally) and also report index scores around 10 points lower (indicating better work-life

outcomes) compared to the national average. This is the case for index scores adjusted or unadjusted for work hours.

SA self-employed women without children work shorter hours (24.7) than the national average (32.3). There is also some indication that self-employed mothers in SA may have worse work-life outcomes than their national counterparts, however this finding should be interpreted with caution given the small sample size of SA self-employed mothers and the lack of statistical significance.

Type of employment contract

Just as self-employment can be a qualitatively different way of engaging in paid work compared to being an employee, employment on a casual contract is also a qualitatively different type of employment relationship compared to fixed-term or ongoing/permanent employment.

In SA the majority (70.4 per cent) of employees were on permanent or ongoing contracts, with slightly more men than women on these secure employment arrangements. Casual work is the second most common form of employment (18.3 per cent), especially for women (24.3 per cent). Comparatively fewer employees are on fixed term contracts (11.4 per cent).

This distribution across employment contracts is comparable to the national average observed in AWALI 2010 with a few exceptions. SA women are slightly less likely to be in permanent or ongoing employment compared to the national average, and slightly more likely to be in fixed-term or casual work.

Table 11 Type of employment contract by gender, SA 2010 and Australia 2010 (per cent)

	SA 2010			Australia 2010		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Permanent/ongoing	77.8	63.3	70.4	77.1	68.3	73.0
Fixed term	10.3	12.4	11.4	9.5	9.1	9.3
Casual	12.0	24.3	18.3	13.4	22.6	17.6

Casual employment is less secure and often more variable than fixed term or permanent employment. On average, casual employees work fewer hours (22.6) compared to those on fixed-term (35.0) or permanent contracts (39.8) (Table 12).

On the work-life index unadjusted for these differences in work hours, there is clearly worse work-life interference for permanent or fixed-term employees compared to casuals. Work hours account for the majority of this effect: controlling for work hours (adjusted index) removes this significant difference in work-life outcomes.

Men work longer hours than women in each group; however their unadjusted index scores are equivalent in each type of employment contract.

When we control for differences in work hours, women report higher levels of work-life interference compared to men in each type of employment contract, although the contrast did not reach statistical significance for fixed-term employees.

Table 12 Work hours and work-life index scores by type of employment contract, SA 2010

	Work hours			Index score unadjusted			Index score adjusted		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Permanent/ongoing	44.8	34.3	39.8	43.4	44.3	43.9	40.0	45.1	42.5
Fixed-term	40.6	31.0	35.0	42.2	42.7	42.5	40.4	44.8	42.6
Casual	28.4	20.0	22.6	32.4	37.6	36.0	35.4	44.1	39.7

Employment contract and work-life interference in SA 2008/09

Work-life index scores have shown little significant change over time, although there is some indication that women in fixed-term contracts may have slightly worse work-life outcomes in 2010 compared to previous years (although this contrast is not statistically significant).

On the unadjusted and adjusted index, men in casual work in 2010 have better work-life outcomes compared to 2008/09 (index unadjusted = 37.2; adjusted = 43.6). Their work hours have increased from 23.9 in 2008/09 to 28.4 in 2010. Nearly half of men on casual contracts in 2010 (49.6 per cent) would prefer to work four or more hours (48.3 per cent in 2008/09). This suggests that for men working on casual contracts, the observed increase in work hours has improved their work-life outcomes.

Employment contract and work-life interference – national AWALI 2010

Index scores for each type of employment contract are comparable between SA and the national averages with the exception of casual employees. Casual workers in SA work slightly longer hours (around two more for women and four more for men) compared to the national average. When these differences in work hours are statistically controlled, casual employees in SA have lower work-life interference compared to the national average (index scores = 45.0 overall; 41.6 for men and 48.5 for women).

Occupation

Work hours and work-life outcomes differ significantly by occupation. Managers in SA work the longest hours (43.9) and also report the worse work-life interference, and this is the case for men and women (Table 13).

For women, professionals have the second highest index score adjusted or unadjusted for work hours; whereas for men, community and personal service occupations have the second highest work-life interference when differences in work hours are controlled.

Other occupations with above average work-life interference are community and personal service workers, sales workers and clerical and administrative workers.

Adjusting for difference in work hours, the occupations with the lowest work-life interference is machinery operation and driving.

Statistically removing the effect of work hours on index scores (adjusted scores) results in only small changes to index scores for most occupations, indicating that contrasts between occupations primarily reflect differences in the characteristics of work per se, rather than differences in work hours.

It is important to note, however, the only contrasts that reach statistical significance are between the occupations with the highest and lowest index scores.

As expected, differences in work hours closely track these occupational trends in work-life interference with the exception of machinery operators and drivers who work the longest hours (50.9 hours for men; 41.6 for women), but experience the least work-life interference.

Table 13 Work-life index scores adjusted and unadjusted for work hours by occupation (from highest to lowest adjusted score for all employees), SA 2010

	Work hours	Index score unadjusted	Index score adjusted
		Men	
Managers	46.2	49.4	44.9
Community & personal service workers	35.9	50.0	50.0
Professionals	40.7	45.4	43.4
Sales workers	39.6	45.9	44.4
Clerical and administrative workers	41.4	41.7	39.3
Labourers	37.9	33.2	32.4
Technicians & trades workers	42.3	40.6	37.6
Machinery operators and drivers	50.9	38.3	31.9
		Women	
Managers	39.5	54.3	52.8
Community & personal service workers	29.5	42.5	45.4
Professionals	35.1	47.7	48.1
Sales workers	25.1	40.5	45.3
Clerical and administrative workers	31.3	40.8	42.9
Labourers	19.8	36.3	43.4
Technicians & trades workers	25.4	30.3	35.0
Machinery operators and drivers*	41.6*	24.4*	22.1*
		All	
Managers	43.9	51.1	48.9
Community & personal service workers	30.6	43.7	47.6
Professionals	37.6	46.7	45.8
Sales workers	29.4	42.1	44.9
Clerical and administrative workers	33.5	41.0	41.1
Labourers	30.6	34.4	37.9
Technicians & trades workers	40.1	39.3	36.3
Machinery operators and drivers	50.0	36.4	27.0

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to low sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 843.

Looking across all occupations, men consistently work longer hours than women. The largest difference in work hours is evident for labourers (18.1 more hours), technicians and trade (16.9 more hours), sales (14.5 more hours) and clerical and administrative workers (10.1 more hours).

Within occupations, SA women have generally higher work-life interference than their male colleagues (controlling for differences in work hours), however none of the contrasts reach statistical significance (most likely to due to smaller sample sizes (< 50 persons) in many occupational groups).

Occupation and work-life outcomes in SA 2008-09

Sample size restrictions for occupational groups in the 2008/09 sample prevent a comparative analysis.

Occupation and work-life outcomes – national AWALI 2010

Work hours in each occupation are also comparable to the national average with the following exceptions. SA men report longer hours in sales (39.6; 35.7 nationally), clerical and administrative (41.4; 37.0 nationally) and machinery operation/driving (50.9; 44.9 nationally). SA women report shorter hours in labouring (19.8; 26.0 nationally) and technician and trade (25.4; 31.4 nationally) occupations.

For all SA employees there is no statistically significant difference between work-life index scores in most occupations and the national occupational average. The exception is machinery operators and drivers: they have better work-life outcomes in SA (27.0) compared to the national average (37.9). There is also some indication that technicians and trades workers in SA have better work-life outcomes, and community and personal service workers worse work-life outcomes, than the national average. However, these contrasts did not reach statistical significance. These patterns are evident for men and women.

Industry

There are also different patterns of work hours and work-life interference across industries in SA (Table 14).

On the unadjusted index scores (not controlling for differences in work hours) there is a clear correspondence between the industries with the longest work hours, mining (62.0) and information media and telecommunications (44.7), and the worse work-life interference (index scores of 52.5 and 48.0, respectively).

When differences in work hours between industries are controlled (adjusted index score), there is a substantial decrease in the work-life index score for mining employees (41.3) and a smaller decrease for information media and telecommunications workers (44.2). This indicates that, for mining in particular, very long work hours make a substantial contribution to higher work-life interference.

On the other hand, the two industries with the lowest work hours, administrative and support services (24.6) and accommodation and food services (26.1), report average levels of work-life interference on the unadjusted index. When we control for work hours, these two industries report the highest work-life interference. This observation is likely to reflect the high concentration of women in these industries. As previously observed, women are more likely than men to report high work-life interference when differences in work hours are controlled.

Table 14 Work-life index scores adjusted and unadjusted for work hours by industry (from highest to lowest adjusted score), SA 2010

	Work hours	Index score unadjusted	Index score adjusted
Administrative and support services	24.6	45.2	50.3
Accommodation and food services	26.1	44.3	48.7
Health care and social assistance	31.6	44.9	46.8
Education and training	34.3	45.1	45.8
Information media and telecommunications	44.7	48.0	44.2
Professional/scientific and technical services	37.0	43.0	42.6
Public administration and safety	36.9	43.0	42.6
Agriculture/forestry and fishing	40.8	43.6	41.5
Mining	62.0	52.5	41.3
Financial and insurance services/real estate	34.9	40.2	40.8
Wholesale/retail trade	30.1	38.1	40.5
Arts and recreation services*	35.6*	39.1*	39.3*
Construction	43.0	41.4	38.3
Transport/postal and warehousing	40.2	40.0	38.1
Other services	37.6	37.4	36.7
Manufacturing	41.4	39.5	37.1
Electricity/gas water and waste services*	43.1*	32.7*	29.6*

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to low sample size. Wholesale and retail trade categories combined due to low sample size of wholesale trade. Financial/insurance services combined with real estate services due to low sample size for latter industry. Figure excludes self-employed persons. N = 843.

Industry and work-life interference in SA 2008/09

Changes in index scores over time should be interpreted with caution as many industry groups in the 2008/09 sample contained less than 50 respondents, and the sample size for four industry groups in 2008/09 was too small to support analysis (information media and telecommunications, mining, arts and recreation services, transport/postal and warehousing).

There is evidence of an increase in work-life interference from 2008/09 to 2010 for the following industries: agriculture\forestry and fishing, accommodation and food services, administrative and support services, education and training and health care/social assistance. It is important to note that these contrasts do not reach statistical significance, most likely due to lower sample sizes (< 50 persons) in many industry groups, but can be considered as indicative trends. It is also notable that, with the exception of agriculture\forestry and fishing, the industry groups showing a worsening in work-life outcomes over time are female-dominated industries. There is no change evident for any other industry groups.

Industry and work-life interference - national AWALI 2010

In the national AWALI analysis we combined the 2009 and 2010 AWALI data to overcome problems with low sample sizes in particularly industry groups.

Most industries in SA have work-life index scores comparable to the national average with two exceptions. Adjusting for work hours, SA employees in administrative/support services report higher work-life interference (50.3) compared to the national average (39.4). Employees in the combined wholesale/retail industry group in SA report better work-life outcomes (40.5) compared to the national average for retail employees (44.7). As only a small number of employees in wholesale trade were represented in the SA data (< 10), this contrast most likely reflects the experience of retail employees in SA. Although these contrasts did not reach statistical significance, again most likely due to sample size limitations, they are indicative of general trends.

Summary

There is substantial variety in the tasks, roles, demands, rewards, organisation and arrangement of paid work across occupations, industries and types of employment contract. In this section we examined how work-life outcomes differ across these key employment characteristics.

Self-employed workers report longer hours than their employee counterparts and this is most evident for men working full-time.

There is no significant difference in work-life outcomes between employees and the self-employed, whether in part-time or full-time employment or according to parenting status.

For employees, casual work can also be a qualitatively different experience to working on a more secure fixed-term or ongoing contract. Casual employees work substantially fewer hours than those on fixed-term or ongoing contracts, and this translates into significantly lower work-life interference.

When these differences in work hours are statistically controlled, there is no difference in work-life interference between casual and fixed-term or ongoing employees.

Men work longer hours than women in each employment type. When this difference is statistically removed, women have higher work-life interference regardless of employment contract.

For men and women, managerial work is associated with the longest hours and worse work-life outcomes, regardless of whether occupational differences in work hours are statistically controlled or not. Machinery operators and drivers have the best work-life outcomes.

There are also clear patterns of work hours and work-life interference across industries. Mining and information media and technology have the longest hours and worst work-life outcomes when industry differences in work hours are not statistically controlled.

Controlling for differences in work hours, administrative and support services and accommodation and food services report the worst work-life outcomes, which is most likely due in large part to the high concentration of women in these industries.

Comparison with SA 2008/09

There has been little change in work hours or work-life outcomes for self-employed workers over time.

Men in casual work report longer hours in 2010 compared to 2008/09 and also better work-life outcomes. This is most likely due to the common preference for longer work hours reported by just under 50 per cent of men in casual work. With their longer work hours in 2010, men in casual work have better work-life outcomes than in previous years.

Sample size restrictions limited analyses of changes over time in specific occupations and industries.

Comparison with national averages – AWALI 2010

Self-employment for fathers in SA provides some work-life advantages. Self-employed fathers in SA work shorter hours than the national average and also have better work-life outcomes (lower work-life interference).

Casual employees, men and women, also have better work-life outcomes in SA compared to the national average (when differences in work hours are statistically controlled).

Work hours and work-life outcomes across occupations in SA are comparable to the national averages, with a few exceptions. SA men work longer hours in sales, clerical and administrative, and machinery operation/driving occupations compared to the national average. SA women report shorter hours in labouring and technician/trade occupations compared to their national counterparts. Machinery operators and drivers have lower work-life interference in SA compared to the national average.

Work-life outcomes are also comparable in SA to the national average with two exceptions. SA employees in administrative/support services report worse-work life outcomes than the national average, whereas those in retail trade in SA have lower work-life interference compared to their counterparts nationally.

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