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A STUDY ON THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN NONSTANDARD WORK SCHEDULES AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Contents

Abstract

This study examined the association between nonstandard work and social well-being as well as the moderating influence schedule control, and the presence of a partner and number of children in a household might have on this association. Four hypotheses were formed based on Anthony Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration and resource drain theory. The results showed that nonstandard work and the moderating factors were not associated with the social well-being of employees. The main association of schedule control however was found to be significant and negative. This finding is in line with the theory of structuration, according to which deviating from the general social schedule based on the nine-to-five employees will have a negative effect on the social well-being of employees. Lastly, labour unions as well as employers are adviced in general, not to give employees more schedule control, although exceptions might be made for nonstandard employees.

Key words: Social well-being, nonstandard work, schedule control, partner, children

1. Introduction

In 2012, Tuttle and Garr suggested that "the standard work schedule of 5 days/week, 8 h/day during the traditional hours of 8 am–5 pm, no longer applies to many workers" (p. 261). Yet De Beer (2009) concluded earlier that for the Netherlands there was hardly an increase in nonstandard work hours and no indication that this state were to be broken any time soon. However, recent numbers published by the Dutch Central Agency for Statistics (CBS) did show a steady increase in working nonstandard hours. While in 2005 3.8 million Dutch employees worked outside of the regular office hours, in 2013 almost 4.7 million were reported to work nonstandard hours, which is an increase of seven percentage points over the total working population (CBS, 2014a).

Labour unions have argued, to the disapproval of employers, that working outside the standard office hours is more tiring and has a heavier impact on family and social life than working regular office hours, and therefore should be compensated by a higher salary (Kooiker, 2015; Van Eekelen, Van Limborgh & Groen, 2013). The main concerns of the labour unions have also been highlighted in a number of published studies on nonstandard work. Jamal (2004), for example, found that working in the weekends was related to emotional exhaustion, job stress and psychosomatic health problems and working during nonstandard hours was also related to

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burnout. Furthermore, employees working on Sundays and in the evening or night more often reported having difficulties with combining their work and their social and family life (Wirtz, Nachreiner & Rolfes, 2011). Night work especially seems to put a strain on emotional well-being and perceived work-to-family imbalance (Wittmer & Martin 2010). In short, nonstandard workers generally have more health issues and problems combining work and family than standard workers.

Because of the unfavourable hours they have to work, nonstandard employees also tend to have more difficulties socializing with people besides their family members (Wirtz et al., 2011). For instance, Craig and Brown (2014) have shown that people who work during the weekends spend not only less time with family, but also with friends. Besides this, Cornwell and Warburton (2014) found that working evening and night shifts resulted in less time spent on socializing with people in the neighbourhood. Hence, nonstandard workers are likely to have lower social well-being as well.

Although some research has already been done on the effect of nonstandard work on psychological and physical well-being and social and family life, this research mainly took place in the United States and Canada (Cornwell & Warburton, 2014; Jamal, 2004; Wittmer & Martin, 2010), which labour market composition is different than the Netherlands (CBS, 2014b; De Beer, 2009; Employment and Social Development Canada, n.d.). Unlike for the United States and Canada where the increase in working outside office hours knows a longer history, the number of employees working nonstandard hours in the Netherlands has only been increasing since approximately 2005 (CBS, 2014a). Besides this, compared to employees in the United States and Canada, in the Netherlands almost three times as many people work part-time, meaning they work thirty hours or less per week (CBS, 2014b). Studying the effect of nonstandard work in the Netherlands therefore helps to show whether the conclusions from previous research also hold in a different labour market setting, where working nonstandard hours is not yet as common and where people generally have more free time.

The goal of this article is to answer the question: *To what extent is working in the Netherlands nonstandard hours associated with the perceived social well-being of employees?* In addition, since previous research has shown that schedule control, partners and the presence of children in a household have a moderating effect on work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (Byron, 2005; Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark & Baltes, 2011; Voydanoff, 1988), this study

will also examine whether these factors might moderate the association between nonstandard work and social well-being. Further, this study includes recommendations for the labour unions on how to adapt or further specify their claim that compensation of nonstandard working hours is necessary. The definition of social well-being which will be used in this article is of spending time and socializing with people besides family members. With working nonstandard hours is meant working during non-office hours.

2. Theory

2.1 Work schedules and social well-being

According to the Anthony Gidden's (1984) theory of structuration society runs on a general schedule based on a nine-to-five work week from Monday to Friday, with a two-day weekend afterwards. This general schedule is created through the employees in society who, by repeatedly working Monday through Friday during the daytime while they stop working in the evenings and on Saturday and Sunday, create a certain rhythm of work and non-work time throughout the week (Giddens, 1984). The reason such rhythms or routines exist over time is that they bring a certain amount of predictability into the lives of the people within a society (Giddens, 1984). The predictability this schedule creates in turn enables employees to plan their non-work activities, like spending time with the family, doing household chores and socializing, around the time they have to work.

When this rhythm has become a norm in a society, institutions in that society will respond to this norm in such a way that this rhythm can be preserved (Giddens, 1984). To achieve preservation of the general social schedule the institution will adapt to the schedule of the standard employees. One way institutions can do this is by relieving standard employees of their duties besides their work during daytime. Schools and day-care centres, for instance, are arranged for that purpose. While the standard employee is working, schools and day-care centres are open to watch or teach their children, only to close again shortly before or after the workday is over (Jamal, 2004). Another way to facilitate the repetition of the social schedule is by making it as easy as possible for standard employees to satisfy their needs and obligations besides their work during the time they are off. This is done by arranging the opening hours of institutions, like grocery shops but also social venues in such a way that standard workers can make the best possible use of these facilities (Jamal, 2004).

As a consequence of the persistence of this social schedule, the majority of the people in our society share their leisure time in the evenings and in the weekends (Wirtz et al., 2011). During these hours and days, institutions like movie theatres or restaurants increase the possibilities to socialize even further, by facilititating a place where people can meet and interact. However, since the nonstandard employees have to work during the evenings and weekends, they are not able to take advantage of this increase in possibilities to socialize that the general social schedule offers during these hours and days. Therefore they have fewer possibilities to meet their friends and acquaintances than standard employees. This disadvantage is likely to negatively influence their social well-being. The first hypothesis of this article therefore states that: *Working nonstandard hours is only expected to be negatively associated with the perceived social well-being of nonstandard employees*.

2.2 The impact of schedule control

For nonstandard employees having a say in the creation of their work schedule might help them to even out some of the disadvantages they experience because of their schedule compared to standard employees (Giddens, 1984; Jamal, 2004). First, having more freedom in choosing the days and hours when they work is likely to have a direct effect on the chances of nonstandard employees to socialize with others because this freedom enables them to take time off during the hours or days when the chance of shared leisure time is at its largest, namely during the evenings or the weekend (Wirtz et al., 2011). This can increase their chance to socialize and therefore might have a positive effect on their social well-being.

Having more schedule control can also have an additional positive effect on the social well-being of the nonstandard employees especially. As different studies have shown, working nonstandard hours can have a negative effect on the overall well-being of employees. For instance, it is found that working nonstandard hours is more closely related to stress and a bad health than working during the normal office hours (Cornwell and Warburton, 2014; Jamal, 2004). This can result in less energy and motivation to spent time with friends which in turn can have a negative impact on how employees perceive their social well-being (Young & Lim, 2014). Martin, Wittmer and Lelchook (2011) found however that when employees believed they had more control over their work schedule they were more satisfied with their job – even when they had to work on Sundays – than when they experienced less control.

In this way schedule control might help to prevent or at least alleviate the feeling of stress, giving nonstandard employees the energy and motivation they need to visit their friends. On the other hand however, employees who work standard hours both tend to experience less stress than nonstandard employees (Jamal, 2004) and have more possibilities because of their work schedule to share their leisure time with others (Wirtz et al., 2011). Therefore the second hypothesis states that: *Having more control over the planning of work hours is only expected to be positively associated with the perceived social well-being of nonstandard employees.*

2.3 The impact of children

Many parents choose to raise children because they expect children to bring happiness and joy to their lives (Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields & Astone, 1997). In addition, children can also help to expand their parents' social network which in turn might increase their parents' well-being. Through their children, parents are able to meet new people; for instance, other parents or teachers.

However, in order to come into contact with these people, parents need to be free from work when the people inside their children's network are free too. This in general is especially difficult for nonstandard workers, who have to work during the evening and night hours and during weekends, the hours and days when most employees are free (Wirtz et al., 2011). Therefore, nonstandard employees are not as likely to benefit from the socializing possibilities their child's network offers them than standard employees are.

Besides this positive effect children might indirectly have on the social well-being of their parents, having children can also have some disadvantages. For many parents, their family is more important to them than their friends are (Michel et al., 2010), thus it is likely that parents choose to spend time with their children first when their work day is over. In line with this, Täht and Mills (2012) have found that some employees even choose to work nonstandard hours to be able to spend more time with their children. However, the time parents spend with their children takes away from the time they can spend socializing with friends. According to the resource drain theory people only have a certain amount of time and energy they can spend on their activities throughout the day (Michel et al., 2010). Since it is assumed that children are the first people their parents spend time and energy on when they come home from work, there is not as much left to spend on others like friend. Therefore, it is likely that in general, children have a

negative effect on the social well-being of their parents. Having multiple children will intensify this negative effect, because more children ask for more of their parents' time and energy, which their parents then cannot spend with friends (Michel et al., 2010).

Although the time and energy resources of both nonstandard and standard employees are not infinite, the disadvantage of having children on the social well-being of nonstandard employees is likely to be bigger. Because of their schedule, nonstandard employees have already less shared leisure time with others and therefore fewer possibilities to socialize than standard employees (Giddens, 1984; Jamal, 2004; Wirtz et al., 2011). In addition, a specific amount of the shared leisure time they have left is probably spent on their children (Michel et al., 2010). Since this leaves the nonstandard working parents with even fewer possibilities to socialize, children are expected to have a negative effect on the social well-being of nonstandard employees especially. The third hypothesis therefore states that: *Having more children will be more negatively associated with the social well-being of nonstandard employees than with the social well-being of standard employees.*

2.4 The impact of having a partner

Just as working parents have to invest time and energy into their children, employees who have a partner need to invest a certain amount of time and energy in their relationship with their partner (Michel et al., 2010). Therefore having a partner might be expected to have a negative effect on the social well-being of employees. However, besides asking the employee to make time for them, a partner can also create more time for the employee. They can, for instance, take over some of the household chores or they can watch the children so that the employee has more time when he gets home from work (Michel et al., 2010; Täht & Mills, 2012), time which he can use for other activities, like socializing. Since nonstandard employees have less shared leisure time than standard employees because of their work schedule (Wirtz et al., 2011), and partners have the ability to create extra time for the employee (Michel et al., 2010; Täht & Mills, 2012), they might especially benefit from having a partner.

Secondly, when the partner has a paid job, he or she can also give financial support (Michel et al., 2010). Indirectly, this might again result in more free time for the employee when the extra salary is used to outsource the household chores, for instance. Besides this, the extra money can also be used to go to movie theaters and other social venues, increasing the chances

of employees to meet different people with whom they can socialize. However, since the social venues in society are adapted to the schedule of the standard employee (Giddens, 1984) this indirect financial benefit which a working partner can offer is especially likely to have an effect on the social well-being of standard employees. Since both standard and nonstandard employees can benefit from having a partner, though each type of employee in their own way, the fourth hypothesis expects that: *Having a partner will be positively associated with the social well-being of standard and nonstandard employees*.

3. Method

3.1 Data

This study makes use of the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS). The NKPS is a nationally representative study for which different people within the same household are interviewed. The NKPS primarily focuses on kinship ties within the Netherlands (De Bruijn, Hogerbrugge & Merz, 2012). Data for the third wave were collected between 2010 and 2011. In this wave, a total of 4390 respondents have been interviewed. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, by telephone, and respondents had the option to answer the questions online (De Bruijn et al., 2012). Questions were asked concerning the personal background of respondents, their parents, partners, children, siblings, work and education and health (De Bruijn et al., 2012).

3.2 Subsample

For this study only the respondents who reported having a paid job and having children under the age of 13 were selected. First, 1663 respondents who were not working or did not have a paid job were excluded. Second, 1792 respondents who had no children under the age of 13 were excluded. Finally, this resulted in a subsample of 935 respondents.

The mean age of the respondents in the subsample is 40 years. This is comparable to the mean age of 41 years of the overall working population in the Netherlands in 2012 (CBS, 2013). The average respondent in the subsample has two children, which is comparable to the average amount of children of the total Dutch households (CBS, 2014c). In the subsample, the amount of working mothers (62 percent) is overestimated, since less than half (48 percent) of all the working parents in the Netherlands is made up of women (CBS, 2015). Of the women in the subsample 10.7 percent has a full-time job, whereas slightly less than the 15.8 percent of

working mothers in the Netherlands had a full-time job in 2012 (CBS, 2015). However, the amount of full-time working men (85.1 percent) in the subsample is representative for the 87.5 percent full-time working fathers in the Netherlands (CBS, 2015). Finally, the mean income per month for the subsample is 1838 euro per month, which is much less than the 3487 euro income of an average Dutch family with children (CBS, 2014d).

3.3 Measures

Social well-being is measured by a series of 11 statements (e.g., 'There is always someone I can talk to about may day-to-day problems' and 'I miss having a really close friend'). Responses were measured on a three point Likert scale (1 = y*es*, 2 = *more or less*, 3 = *no*). Results of a factor analysis indicated that the factor loadings (see Appendix for the table showing the factor loadings of the one-factor solution) were all larger than .4, which is sufficiently high to be used in the analysis according to a lecture of Dr. J. Weesie on September 29, 2014. Therefore a scale was created to represent social well-being (alpha = .776). Here a higher score means a higher social well-being.

Nonstandard work was measured by the question 'Does your job require that you work outside regular office hours, this means outside 7:00-18:00 h'? (1 = *yes* and 2 = *no*). This variable was recoded (0 = *no* and 1 = *yes*).

Job schedule control. Schedule control was measured on a four point likert scale. The answer categories of the question 'How free are you to choose the hours and days that you work'? ranged from 1 (*no freedom*) to 4 (*I am free to choose the days and hours I work*). This variable was also recoded so that its range became 0 (*no freedom*) to 3 (*I am free to choose the days and hours I work*).

Family characteristics. A binary variable was created for having a partner (0 = *no partner* and *partner, but living apart together* and 1 = *unmarried cohabiting with partner* and *married with partner*). This division is made because respondents who have a partner but are not living together are not able to profit from the advantages a partner living at home can offer, like letting them watch the children or let them do some household chores (Michel et al., 2010; Täht & Mills, 2012). Therefore they are treated the same as respondents who do not have a partner. Respondents were also asked for the number of children they have. This continuous variable was centred before it was included in the analysis.

Control variables. Since people perceive more social well-being when they have more time to share with other people during non-office hours (Young & Lim, 2014), part-time work is included as a control variable. Next, education is used as a control variable because previous research has shown that a large amount of the nonstandard jobs are done by employees with lower levels of education (Shields, 2002; Zeytinoglu & Cooke, 2006). In addition, previous research has shown that with increasing age employees experience more difficulties in adjusting their lives to the nonstandard work rhythm (Van Eekelen et al., 2013). This might have a negative effect on the amount of energy they have left after work which will make it more difficult to socialize with friends outside the office (Young & Lim, 2014). Finally, a dichotomous variable was created for gender (0 = *man*, 1 = *woman*), because research indicated that the sector in which employees work differs by gender (Presser & Gornick, 2005; Presser, Gornick & Parashar, 2008). Many women tend to work in the service sector, in which nonstandard work is more prevalent than, for example, the industrial sector, a sector where men are overrepresented (Presser & Gornick, 2005; Presser et al., 2008).

3.4 Method of Analysis

In order to test the hypotheses, hierarchical regression analysis will be used. Before the regression analysis was performed it was tested whether the assumptions for the analysis were not violated in such a way that the results of the analysis could be challenged. In the first step of the analysis nonstandard work, part-time work, education, age and gender were included. In the second step of the analysis the main associations are included. The interaction terms are included in the third step of the analysis.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive analysis

Before continuing with the analysis, the descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Here the mean and standard deviations are shown, as well as the minimum and maximum scores for the standard and nonstandard employees. First, Table 1 shows that the mean social well-being scores of the standard and nonstandard employees are very much alike, which is 1.33 for the standard and 1.32 for the nonstandard employees respectively. Also, in the percentage of employees who have a partner, the standard and nonstandard employees are comparable. However the

nonstandard employees in the subsample tend to have slightly more schedule control in their job than the standard employees. Concerning the control variables, there is one noticable difference between the two types of employees. Of the standard employees 72 percent work part-time as opposed to 53 percent of nonstandard workers.

Table 1   *Descriptive statistics for standard and nonstandard employees for perceived social well-being, type of work schedule and schedule control, family composition, the interactions with work schedule and control variables (N=935)*

	Standard employees (N = 396)				Nonstandard employees (N = 539)			
	Mean	(SD)	Min.	Max.	Mean	(SD)	Min.	Max.
Dependent variable								
Social well-being	1.33	(.26)	1.00	2.73	1.32	(.25)	1.00	2.73
Independent variables								
Nonstandard work (1 = yes)	.00	(.00)	.00	.00	1.00	(.00)	1.00	1.00
Schedule control	1.24	(.91)	.00	3.00	1.57	(1.00)	.00	3.00
Partner (1 = yes)	.92	(.28)	.00	1.00	.95	(.22)	.00	1.00
Number of children	2.28	(.94)	1.00	7.00	2.28	(.95)	1.00	8.00
Control variables								
Part-time work (1 = yes)	.72	(.45)	,00	1.00	.53	(.50)	.00	1.00
Education	7.82	(1.97)	2.00	11.00	8.12	(2.07)	1.00	11.00
Age	40.04	(5.42)	25.00	57.00	40.53	(5.81)	26.00	62.00
Gender (1 = female)	.72	(.45)	.00	1.00	.54	(.50)	.00	1.00

4.2 Exploratory analysis

The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 2. The first step of the regression analysis shows the main association of nonstandard work and the control variables. This model does not explain a significant proportion of the variance in social well-being (F = 1.616, p = .153, R^2 = .009). The association between nonstandard work and social well-being seems to go into the expected direction with nonstandard work being negatively associated with social well-being. However the association is not significant and therefore the data do not

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Table 2   *Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting social well-being from nonstandard work, schedule control, partner, number of children, the interactions of nonstandard work with schedule control; partner; and number of children and part-time work, education, age and gender.*

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	1.314	.031		1.418	.049		1.441	.058	
Nonstandard work	-.018	.017	-.035	-.012	.017	-.023	-.049	.068	-.096
Part-time work	-.012	.025	-.023	-.016	.025	-.031	-.013	.025	-.026
Education	-.006	.004	-.049	-.005	.004	-.038	-.005	.004	-.039
Age	.002	.001	.051	.002	.002	.046	.002	.002	.041
Gender	-.017	.025	-.032	-.026	.026	-.050	-.029	.026	-.055
Schedule control				-.020*	.009	-.078	-.029*	.014	-.114
Partner				-.072*	.034	-.071	-.081	.046	-.080
Number of children				.005	.009	.017	-.012	.013	-.047
Nonstandard work x schedule control							.015	.018	.066
Nonstandard work x partner							.017	.066	.035
Nonstandard work x number of children							.030	.017	.086
R²	.009			.019			.023		
R² Change				.011			.012		
F	1.616			2.286*			2.004*		

Note. Reference category for schedule control is no schedule control.

The variables number of children, education and age are centred.

* p <.05.

support the first hypothesis (B = -.018, t = -1.047, p = .295). In the first model, no significant associations are found.

The second model, in which the main associations of schedule control, having a partner and the number of children in a household are also included, explains 1.9 percent of the variance in social well-being (F = 2.286, p = .020, R² = .019). In this model, the associations between schedule control and social well-being and having a partner and social well-being are significant. As can be seen in Table 2, having more schedule control is associated with less perceived social well-being (B = -.020, t = -2.314, p = .021). This means that compared to people who have no schedule control, the perceived social well-being for those who are free to choose the hours and days they will work is .060 less. However, the decrease in social well-being per extra amount of schedule control is rather small. Having a partner is also associated with a decrease in social well-being (B = -.072, t = -2.132, p = .033). Against the expectations, employees who do have a partner experience .072 less social well-being compared to employees who have no partner. The difference in social well-being between respondents who have a partner compared to those who do not have a partner is however also rather small. Besides this, although the number of children is not significantly associated with social well-being, the moderation also goes into the opposite direction of what was expected. Nonstandard work and the control variables remain not significantly associated to social well-being.

The third model explains approximately 2.3 percent of the variance in social well-being (F = 2.004, p = .025, R² = .023). Compared to the second model that is an increase of 0.9 percent which is quite small. With the inclusion of the interaction variables, the association between schedule control and perceived social well-being remains significant and negative (B = -. 029, t = -2.109, p = .035). The association between having a partner and social well-being on the other hand has became insignificant (B = -.081, t = -1.776, p = .076). As in Model 2, no significant association is found between nonstandard work, the presence of a partner, number of children and the three interactions and social well-being. Table 2 further shows that neither part-time work, nor education, age and gender are significantly associated with social well-being.

Conclusion and discussion

Using the third wave of the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study, this study has examined whether nonstandard work is associated with the social well-being of employees. Furthermore, since

previous research has shown that schedule control, the presence of a partner and the number of children living in a household have a moderating effect on the conflict between the working life and non-work life of employees (Byron, 2005; Michel et al., 2011; Voydanoff, 1988), it was examined whether these factors also moderate the association between nonstandard work and social well-being. To answer the research question of the article, hierarchical linear regression analysis was used.

Nonstandard work was not found to be associated with the social well-being of employees. Having more schedule control is also not associated with social well-being of nonstandard employees, although the direction of the association was positive. The results furthermore showed that the association between the presence of a partner and the social well-being of employees, though its direction was positive, was not significant. Therefore hypothesis 1, 2, and 4 were not supported by the data. Hypothesis 3, expecting that having more children is associated with less social well-being for nonstandard employees especially, was also not supported by the data. In addition to the insignificant finding, the direction of the association was also positive, which was against the expectations. Although the data did not support the hypotheses of the article, the main association between schedule control and social well-being was found to be significant. Having more schedule control was associated with less experienced social well-being of employees, regardless of whether they are working standard or nonstandard hours. This is somewhat surprising since it was expected that, after the inclusion of the interaction variable of nonstandard work and schedule control, the significant main association between schedule control and social well-being would disappear or at least decrease in size, but it did neither.

However, although unexpected, the finding that in general, having more schedule control can have a negative effect on social well-being seems to be in line with Anthony Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration. According to Giddens (1984), society runs on a specific schedule based on the standard employees. Other institutions in society, like social venues for instance, are also adapted to this general social schedule. Compared to nonstandard employees, for standard employees having more schedule control therefore can only result in the decision to work more during nonstandard hours. This way they would deviate from the general social schedule. Since for standard employees this could only result in a decrease in shared leisure time, this might explain the negative main association between schedule control and social well-being.

However, this negative association might also be explained by another variable. The results of Byron's (2005) meta-analysis showed that employees who were better able to manage the time they had experienced less interference of their work with their family life and the other way around. Since these skills affect interference between two important life domains, it is possible that they also affect the interference employees experience of their work with their social life. Future research taking the time management skills of employees into account is needed to reveal whether schedule control in the Netherlands is indeed negatively related to social well-being of employees or whether at least part of this association might be explained by poor time management skills.

Contrary to the result that schedule control is negatively associated with social well-being, the finding that nonstandard work is not significantly associated with the social well-being of employees does not seem to be in line with the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984). Giddens (1984) states that nonstandard employees share less leisure time with others than standard employees. Therefore a significant result between nonstandard work and social well-being would be expected. However, although no evidence was found that nonstandard work is associated to the social well-being of employees, this does not necessarily mean that in the Netherlands, nonstandard work has no disadvantages to the social well-being of employees. The negative direction of this association and the positive direction of the association between schedule control for nonstandard employees and social well-being for instance, suggest otherwise.

That these associations were not significant might stem from the way this study has measured nonstandard work. Young and Lim (2014) for instance, have shown that the social well-being people experience throughout the week increases during the weekend days, only to decrease again when the weekend is over. Cornwell and Warburton (2014) also found an increase in time to socialize for employees during the weekend. These results indicate that weekend workers especially might experience less social well-being because of their work schedule and that they might benefit more from having more schedule control than nonstandard employees working during the evening or night.

Since in the article only nonstandard employees and standard employees were compared, this study might have overlooked the consequences on social well-being of nonstandard employees working on specific hours and days. By including different groups of nonstandard

employees, future research might be able to give a more definitive answer to whether nonstandard work is negatively associated with well-being in the Netherlands and whether schedule control, the presence of a partner or the number of children or other factors moderate this relationship.

Although few significant associations were found, this study is able to add to the existing knowledge about nonstandard work and the social well-being of employees in two ways. First, the results suggest that, although in the Netherlands many more employees work part-time than in other countries (CBS, 2014b), working nonstandard hours is still likely to have a negative impact on their social life. In addition, the negative association between part-time work and social well-being indicates that working part-time not necessarily means that employees use the extra time they have, compared to full-time employees, to socialize. The significant result that in the Netherlands having more control over the creation of one's own schedule is negatively associated with the social well-being of employees can only substantiates this. For the Dutch employees, making time for their friends does not seem to be the first priority or they might have difficulties dividing the time they have between their work and family obligations on the one hand and their social needs on the other. However, since the subsample differed from the general working population in the Netherlands especially in income, it is possible that these findings are representative of a subpopulation of the Dutch employees rather than the general employee.

In addition, the results could potentially be used to advise what the labour unions should strive for concerning nonstandard employees. First of all, when the results of this study are combined with that of others (Cornwell and Warburton, 2014; Craig and Brown, 2014; Jamal, 2004; Wirtz et al., 2011; Wittmer & Martin, 2010), the claim of the labour unions that nonstandard work has a negative effect on the (social) life of the employee and therefore should be compensated for by the employer seems justified. Secondly, although the association with schedule control as a moderating factor was not significant, its direction was positive. Therefore the nonstandard employee might profit from activities of the labour unions focused on increasing the schedule control of these employees. However, since schedule control was negatively associated with the social well-being of employees in general, neither the labour unions, nor the employers in the Netherlands are adviced to strive for more schedule control for employees, unless this is absolutely necessary.

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Appendix

Table 1 *Factor loadings of the one-factor solution of the 11 items of the social*
well-being scale

	Factor loadings
Talk about daily problems	,556
Enough people to lean on	,619
Enough people I feel close to	,606
Call on friends if necessary	,593
Miss really close friend	,636
Experience emptiness	,618
Miss pleasurable company	,638
Circle of acq too limited	,645
Many people to count on	-,566
Miss having people around	,653
Often I feel rejected	,518

Note. The 11 items are described in the first column. All factor loadings are above .40