

# *The paradox of precariousness: Exploring the experiences of part time and female workers*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The concept of non-standard employment has gained increasing currency over recent decades. Typically, it is closely associated with the notion of precarious employment. There is significant debate in the literature about the benefits and drawbacks of non-standard employment, ranging from increased flexibility to poor salaries and working conditions. Drawing on a national survey of one thousand employees, this paper explores the experiences of part time and female workers in Australia. The findings challenge conventional wisdom about the precariousness of non-standard work, revealing that a segment of the female and part time workforce are highly satisfied and have organisational citizenship. These findings suggest that non-standard employment is in fact, a core element of the contemporary labour market. This argument is reinforced by the ACTU's current policy initiatives to strengthen protection and extend benefits to employees in non-standard arrangements, through the Work Family Test Case (2004).

