

# Worklife Balance in the Hospitality Industry

An Examination of the Relationship with Alcohol and Substance Abuse

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## Research Team

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‘[I]t’s the fifth of May and half the cooks in America are hung-over’

Anthony Bourdain’s, *Kitchen Confidential*, 2001: 201.



# I Eat I Drink I Work

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## One more for the road: hospitality, alcohol and the workplace

THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2009

**Anybody who has worked in hospitality has longed for a knock-off drink after a busy night on the floor, but what are the knock-on effects of the industry's penchant for excessive drinking?**

You know something's wrong when the head waiter returns from his break slurring. Or when the owner of a well-heeled restaurant passes out in the surrounding gardens. It gets worse when an apprentice collapses during service — an unmistakeable whiff of cognac clouding his breath. Or perhaps you find yourself on a bender... and it's only Tuesday morning.

Ahhh, the rock'n'roll lifestyle of the hospitality industry. It sounds like it's come straight from the pages of Anthony Bourdain's canon of culinary madness, *Kitchen Confidential*. But it hasn't.

If these stories are true, do they imply that hospitality workers are more prone to alcohol abuse and addiction than employees in other industries? And if so, how is this affecting the overall performance — and politics — of the workplace?

# A career in foodservice: Unhealthy lifestyle

by Amy Spector



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From alcoholism to obesity it's a mad, mad world

The seamy side of the hospitality industry has been fodder for consumer entertainment lately. Chef-author Anthony Bourdain of New York's Les Halles whipped his tales of drug-laced kitchen work and less-than-palatable culinary practices into a best-selling potboiler, "Kitchen Confidential." Meanwhile, Becky Mode turned her frustration and stress as a former reservationist at New York's Bouley into high comedy in the stage production "Fully Committed."

But the laughter rings hollow in the face of reality: Drug addiction, dietary hazards, failed relationships and ergonomic complications are as much a part of the restaurant industry as customer satisfaction and menu mastery.

Industry veterans can cheer one fact: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, reported cases of on-the-job injuries and illnesses declined at eating-and-drinking places between 1998 and 1999, from 6.3 cases to 5.6 cases per 100 workers. That follows a national trend for private industry, where the overall average was 6.3 cases per 100 workers in 1999.

But laughter rings hollow in the face of reality: drug addiction, dietary habits, failed relationships and ergonomic complications are as much a part of the restaurant industry as customer satisfaction and menu mastery



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# The Study

- Focused on worklife balance issues in the hospitality industry
- Examined the claim of alcohol and other substance abuse within the industry
- The research questions:
  - Is there a relationship between the level of worklife balance within the hospitality industry and the level of alcohol and other substance abuse?

Does the lack of worklife balance lead to alcohol and substance abuse?



# Our Research Agenda

## Individual Differences

- Demographic characteristics
  - especially age and gender
- Personality
  - especially positive and negative affectivity
  - stress susceptibility
- Locus of control

## Family Factors

- Age and number of children
- Aging parents
- Spouse's working arrangements
- Distance from work

## Industry Context

- long and irregular hours
- presenteeism and acceptance of long hours
- impact of a turnover culture
- acceptance of substance abuse

## Processes

- conflict
- facilitation

## A Framework to Examine Work-Life Balance in the Hospitality Industry

## Outcomes

### Organisational Level

- absenteeism
- Turnover**
- performance

### Individual Level

- job satisfaction**
- mental and physical health
- alcohol and substance abuse**
- organizational commitment

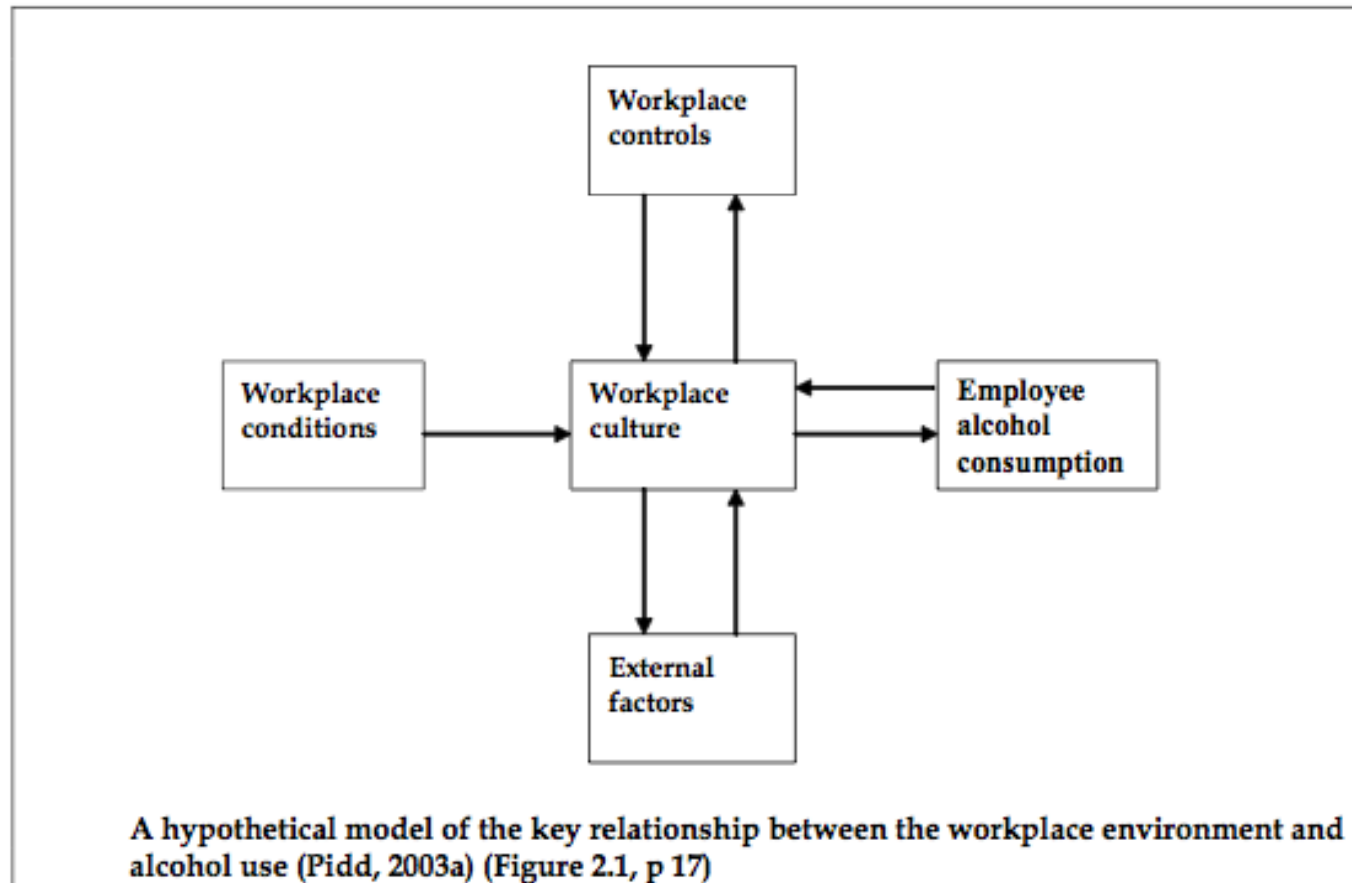
### Family Level

- marital relations
- relationships with children
- family opportunities and satisfaction

## Reactions/responses from the Organisation

- recognition of WLB difficulties
- availability of 'well-being' resources such as gym memberships etc
- on-site child care flexible rosters
- recognition of Generation X and Y preferences
- less emphasis on presenteeism
- job sharing

# A Guiding Framework





# Why examine this?

- Increasing concern at the impact of long working hours on families, personal health and productivity
- Australia has 118 million days of accrued annual leave by full time employees.
- This equates to \$33 billion in wages (Roy Morgan Research March 2010)
- 1 in 4 of Australian full time employees are leave stockpilers (Roy Morgan Research)





# Why examine this?

- Alcohol abuse cost the Australian community \$15.3 billion in 2004–05 when factors such as the following are taken into account:
  - crime and violence
  - treatment costs
  - loss of productivity
  - and premature death (Collins & Lapsley 2008).
- The cost of alcohol- related absenteeism has been estimated at \$1.2 billion per year (Pidd et al 2006).

*“The largest percentages of workers who frequently (at least weekly) drank at short-term risky or high risk levels were employed in the hospitality industry.....*

*The largest percentage of workers who drank at long-term risky levels were employed in the hospitality industry....”*

Pide et al (2006: 40), *Alcohol and Work: Patterns of Use, Workplace Culture and Safety*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

# The Industry

- The Accommodation and Food Services industry:
  - employs 741 700 workers in Australia
  - and accounts for 6.8 per cent of the total workforce.

## The industry is characterised by:

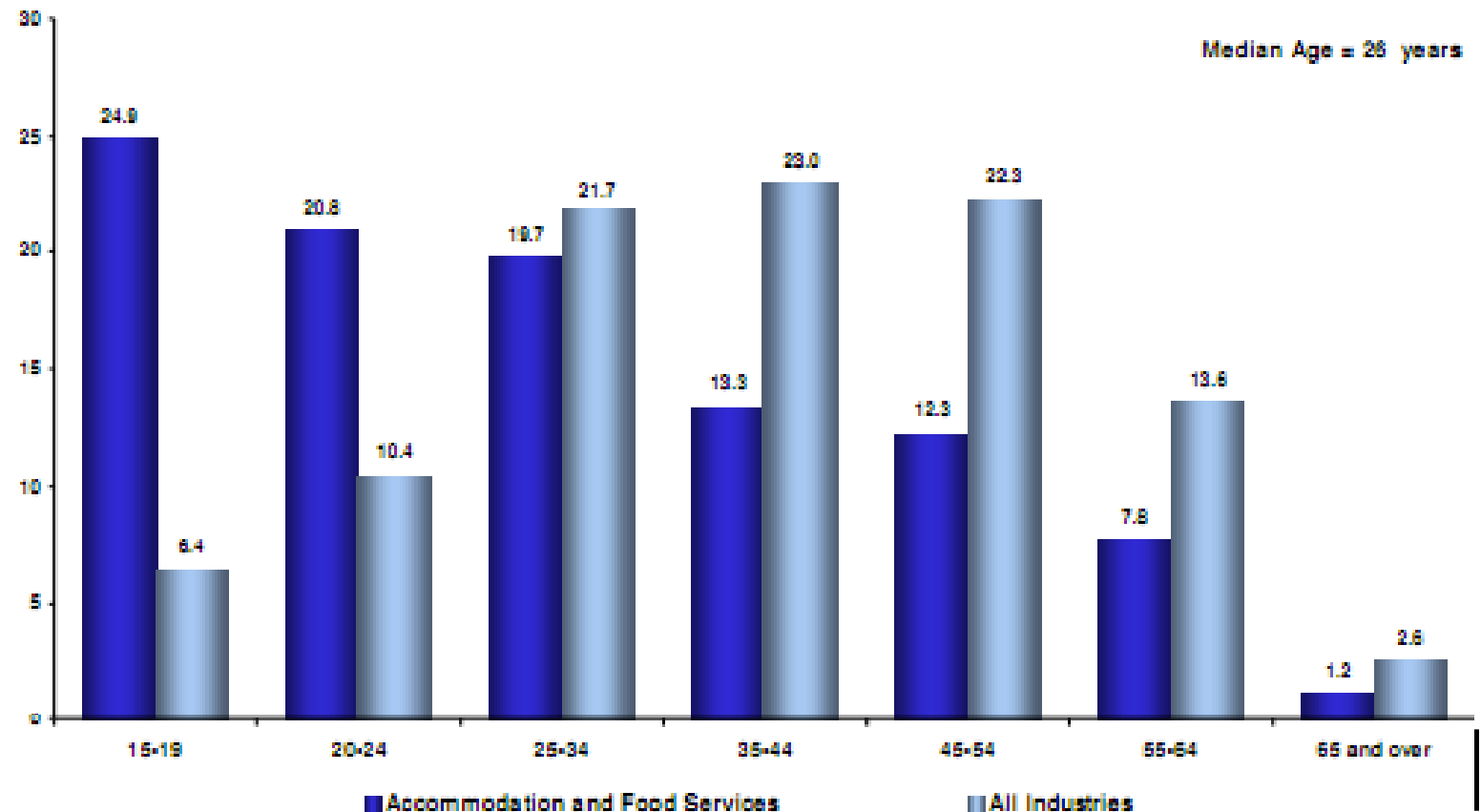
- Long, unsocial working hours
- A highly casualised workforce
- An environment that can be intimidating and emotionally stressful
- An industry that encourages (condones?) drinking of alcohol



# Who Works in the Hospitality Industry?

## Age

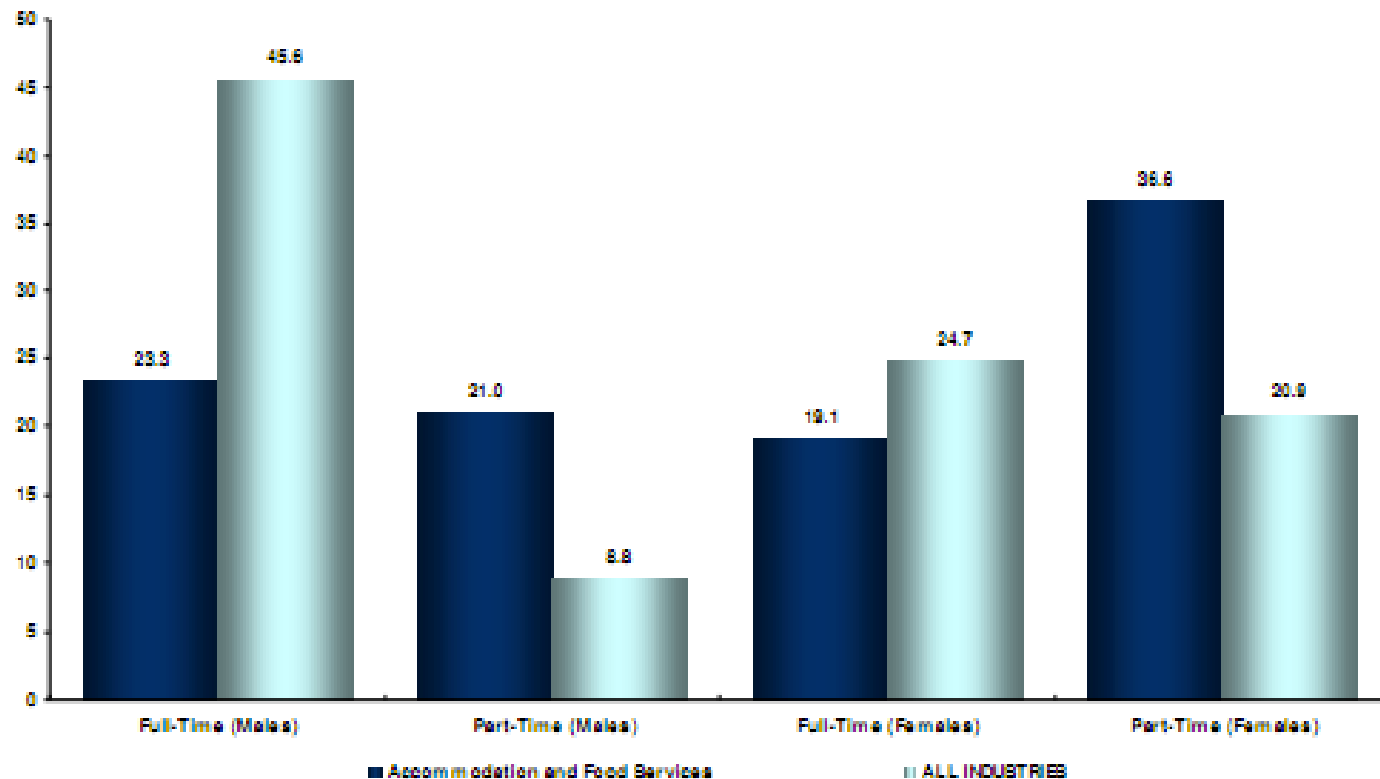
The Accommodation and Food Services industry has a relatively young workforce, with 45.7 per cent of workers aged 15 to 24 years, compared with 16.8 per cent for all industries



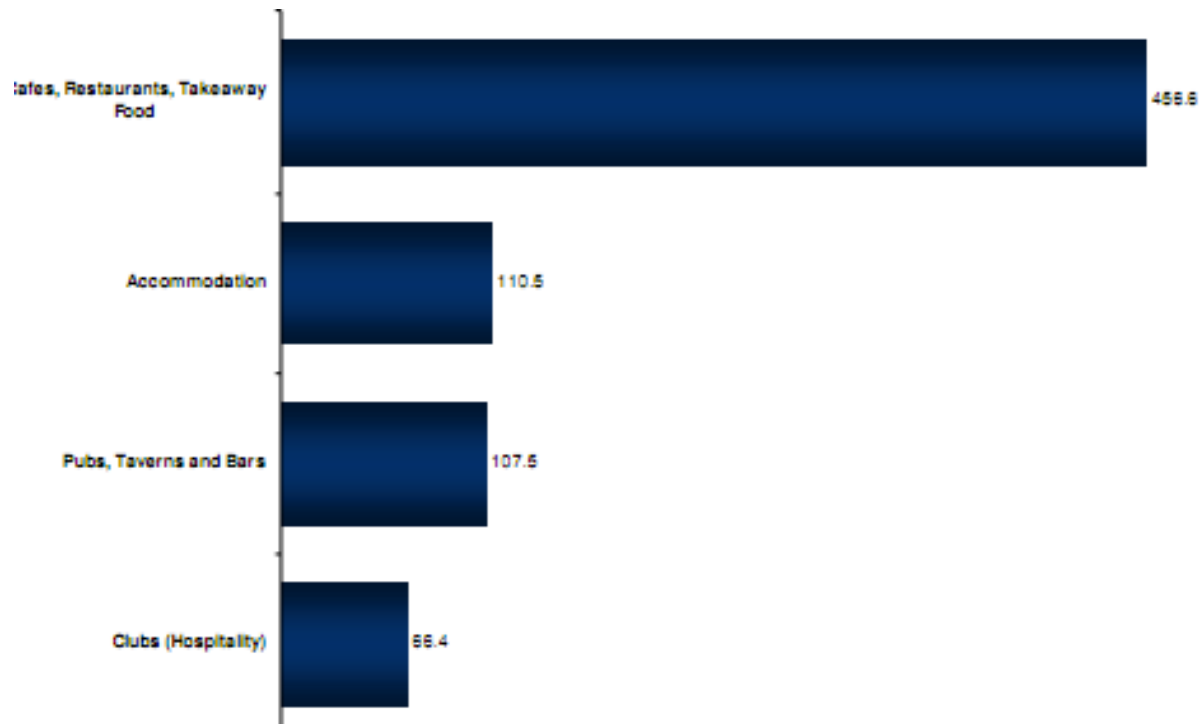
# Who Works in the Hospitality Industry?

## Gender and Full/Part Time Employment

*Figure 13: Employment by Gender and Full-time - Part-time (% share) – year to February 2010*



# Employment in the Hospitality Industry



# The Literature

- Two key elements to the literature:
  - Worklife balance research
  - The hospitality industry and drinking/substance abuse 'activity'.





# Work life Balance

- Debate over terminology:

- Work-family balance (Lewis, 2009)
- Work-life conflict (Cuthbertson et al, 2001; Lapierre et al, 2008)

- Our definition:

“an individual’s ability to meet both their work and family commitments, as well as other non-work responsibilities and activities” (Parkes and Langford, 2008: 267)



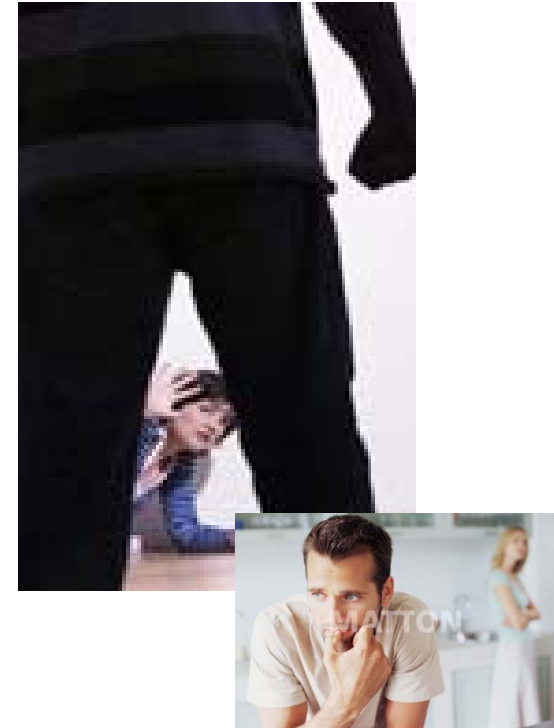
# Antecedents to a Lack of Work-Life Balance

- Long working hours
- Time pressures
- Lack of flexibility
- Financial pressure
- Employer practices
- Supervisor practices
- Lack of communication to staff
- Demographic details



# Antecedents to a Lack of Work-Life Balance (contd)

- Increased work demands
- Stressful work; job stressors such as:
  - job insecurity
  - role clarity
  - job autonomy
  - time pressures
  - relationships with supervisors
- Exhaustion from work and too tired to enjoy homelife
- Marital dissatisfaction via job exhaustion



# Work-life Balance in the Hospitality Industry

- Spillover Theory (Frone et al, 1992)

Hsieh et al (2011) found a positive spillover effect from personal life to work and personal life has a more beneficial effect on work life than work life has on personal life.

- Alcohol and substance abuse (Berry, Pide, Roch and Harrison, 2008),

hospitality workers were at a significantly higher risk of short-term and long-term harm than most other workers.



# Work-life Balance in the Hospitality Industry (contd).



## ■ Presenteeism

- ‘an overwhelming need to put in more hours or, at the very least, appear to be working very long hours’ (Cooper, 1998: 314)
- Cullen and McLaughlin (2006) suggest that this culture is promoted in the hospitality industry

## ■ Women employees in the hospitality industry (Doherty, 2004: 448)

- ‘a male model of a career based on commitment in the form of long hours persists’
- Disadvantaged by the long hours and lack of flexibility in hours

# Work-life Balance in the Hospitality Industry (contd)

- Work-life conflict, exhaustion and motivation (Karatepe and Uludag, 2007:23)

front-line employees in the hotel industry “who had difficulty in spending time with their family and/or social commitments as a result of their job-related responsibilities were more susceptible to elevated levels of emotional exhaustion”



- Turnover culture (Deery 2002; 2006) and intention to leave (Netemeyer, Brarshear-Alejandro and Boles, 2004)

# Hypotheses

These hypotheses are a selection of the hypotheses tested

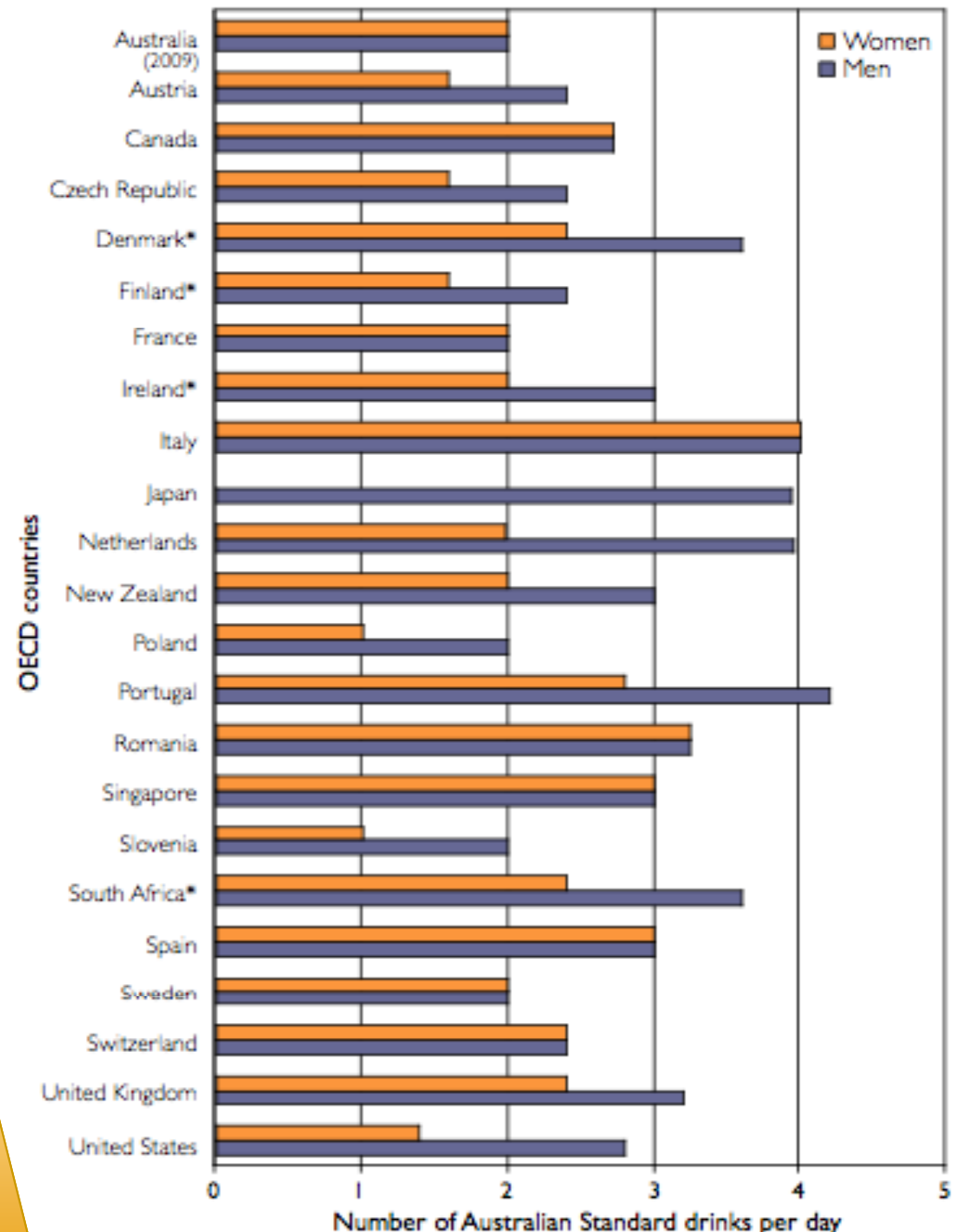
- H1 Employees with a lower perception of their WLB drink more than colleagues with a higher perception of WLB.
- H2 Employees with a lower perception of their WLB use more drugs than colleagues with a higher perception of WLB.
- H3 Employees with low perception of WLB will have a higher intention to leave the hospitality industry
- H4: Substance abuse will be higher in Australian female hospitality employees than Australian male hospitality employees
- H5 Employees currently working in hospitality use recreational drugs more than those who have left the industry, but who had worked in it in the past two years



## Recommended Number of Drinks per Day

- Australia's recommended level is two standard drinks per day\*
- NZ- it is two for women and three for men,
- UK recommends 2.5 per day for women and just over three drinks for men.
- Other substance abuse was examined with regard to the use of drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, methamphetamines, cocaine or other such recreation drugs.

The Australian standard drink contains 10g of alcohol (equivalent to 12.5 ml of pure alcohol) (NHMRC, 2009). One standard drink is 100mls of wine, one nip (30mls) of spirits or 250 mls of beer.



Recommendations on level of alcohol consumption in OECD countries

# Method

- Instrument design using an adaptation of Wong and Ko's (2009) research into WLB in the hospitality industry
- Data collection through research company using panels of respondents. Criteria for selection:
  - Over 18 years of age
  - Panellists who had worked in the hotel industry within the last two years or were still working in it
  - Panellists from UK, New Zealand and Australia
  - Request for 100 -200 respondents from each group.

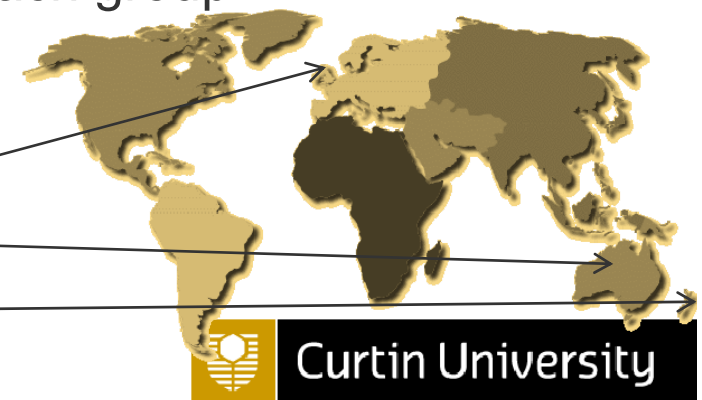
- Sample: 513 respondents comprised of:

Australia - 204 respondents

NZ – 208

UK – 101

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# Results: Respondent Profile

| Variable      | Total Sample             | Australia                | New Zealand              | United Kingdom           |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age (mean)    | 35.8                     | 38.1                     | 35.1                     | 32.7                     |
| Gender (%)    | Male: 46%<br>Female: 54% | Male: 49%<br>Female: 51% | Male: 41%<br>Female: 59% | Male: 53%<br>Female: 47% |
| Education (%) | %                        | %                        | %                        | %                        |
| Primary       | 0                        | .5                       | 1.0                      | .4                       |
| Secondary     | 35.3                     | 36.1                     | 15.8                     | 31.8                     |
| Vocational    | 29.4                     | 26.4                     | 21.8                     | 26.7                     |
| Undergraduate | 21.6                     | 23.6                     | 34.7                     | 25.0                     |
| Postgraduate  | 13.7                     | 13.5                     | 26.7                     | 16.2                     |

# Respondent Profile (contd)

- On average, 75% of respondents were currently working in the hospitality industry
- The most common period of time spent in the industry was between 1-3 years (although 50% of the Australian sample > 7 years in industry)
- The most common category for marital status was 'married' followed by 'long term relationship' or 'single' depending on country



# Was our Sample Representative?



## ■ In Australia:

- The hospitality workforce is younger (average age 26 years) than our sample
- There is the same percentage of vocationally educated staff but fewer with UG or PG qualifications than in our sample
- The percentage of female employees was similar (54%)
- The average hours worked per week is 44.2 hours. (ABS, 2010); our sample 40 hours

# Results: WLB

## Comparison of Perceptions of WLB

- 'I feel my work-life is balanced in this job'

| Country        | N   | Mean |
|----------------|-----|------|
| Australia      | 204 | 3.15 |
| United Kingdom | 101 | 3.23 |
| New Zealand    | 208 | 3.28 |

- 5 point Likert scale used
- No statistically significant differences between countries on this variable

# Results: Drinking and Other Substance Abuse

## Results from the Total Sample

| Number of standard drinks per week | %           |  | Recreational drug use | %    |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--|-----------------------|------|
| None                               | 18.1*       |  | Never                 | 86.7 |
| Less than 7                        | 46.2        |  | Once or twice a month | 7.0  |
| *8-14                              | 19.9        |  | Weekly                | 2.7  |
| 15-21 (low risk)                   | 9.6 (16.5)* |  | Twice a week or more  | 3.5  |
| 22-28 (medium risk)                | 2.9 (14.6)  |  |                       |      |
| 28 or more (risky)                 | 3.3 (5.0)   |  |                       |      |

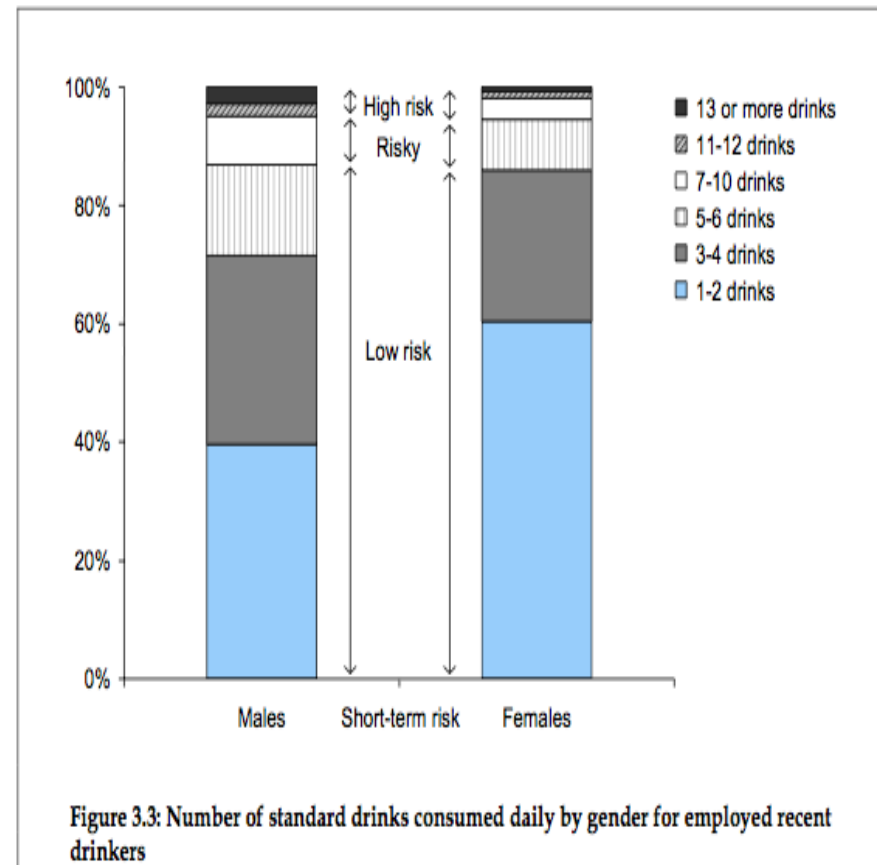
\* 8-14 drinks per week is within the acceptable range; 1-2 drinks daily

\* Statistics taken from Pide et al (2006)



# How Does our Sample Compare?

- AIHW (2008) found:
  - 10% of Australian adults have never had a full serve of alcohol and about 17% have not consumed alcohol in the past year
    - Our sample: 18%
  - 41 per cent drink weekly.
    - Our sample: 46%
  - 8 per cent drink daily
    - Our sample: 20%



# Results

**H1: Employees with a lower perception of their WLB drink more than colleagues with a higher perception of their WLB.**

## Overall Results

- Based on Chi Square, no statistically significant differences.
- However, there were many more people in the higher WLB group who did not consume any alcohol.

**Overall Result: Reject Hypothesis**

## Results by Country

### H1a: Australian

No statistically significant differences.

### H1b: New Zealand

No statistically significant differences.

However, many more people in the higher WLB group who did not consume any alcohol.

### H1c: UK

There were statistically significant differences based on Chi Square.

- Of those who consumed 15-21 standard drinks per week, more were in the group who felt that they had a higher WLB.
- Contrary to this finding, however, there were more people in the higher WLB group than expected who did not consume any alcohol.



# Results (contd)

- **H2: Employees with a lower perception of their WLB use more drugs than colleagues with a higher perception of their WLB.**

Based on Chi Square, no statistically significant differences.

**Overall Result:** [Reject Hypothesis](#)



# Results (contd)

## H3: Employees with low perception of WLB will have a higher intention to leave the hospitality industry

- A Chi Square was calculated based on the cross tab between WLBsplit and 'intention to leave the industry in the near future', which was a dichotomous variable.
- Statistically significant differences were found in the expected direction.

**Overall Result:** [Accept Hypothesis](#)

- **H3a: Australian**

- Statistically significant differences were found in the expected direction.

- **H3b: New Zealand**

- Statistically significant differences were found in the expected direction.

- **H3c: UK**

- Statistically significant differences were found in the expected direction.

# Results (contd)

**H4: Consumption of alcohol will be higher in female hospitality employees than for male hospitality employees.**

- Based on a Chi Square analysis, statistically significant differences were found.
- The key differences were that many more females than expected consumed 15-21 standard drinks per week compared to males.
- Partially offsetting this, however, was the finding that more females than expected were found not to drink alcohol at all compared to males.

**Overall Result:** [Reject Hypothesis](#)

## **H4a: Australian**

- Statistically significant differences were found.
  - fewer females consumed in excess of 28 standard drinks per week compared to males.
  - more females were found not to drink alcohol at all compared to males.

## **H4b: New Zealand**

- Statistically significant differences were found.
  - More females than expected were found not to drink alcohol at all compared to males.

## **H4c: UK**

- No statistically significant differences were found.



# Results (contd)

H5 Employees currently working in hospitality use recreational drugs more than those who have left the industry, but who had worked in it in the past two years

- Based on a Chi Square analysis, statistically significant differences were found.

**Overall Result:** [Reject Hypothesis](#)



- More people who were working in hospitality use no recreational drugs compared to non-hospitality workers
- Fewer current hospitality workers were using drugs once or twice per month.

# Overall Findings

- Those with a high WLB tended to drink less or not at all
- Those with a lower perception of their WLB do not use more drugs than colleagues with a higher perception of their WLB
- Many more females consumed 15-21 standard drinks per week compared to males.
- However, more females were found not to drink alcohol at all compared to males.
- More people who were working in hospitality use no recreational drugs compared to non-hospitality workers
- We found no statistical differences on age, marital status or education

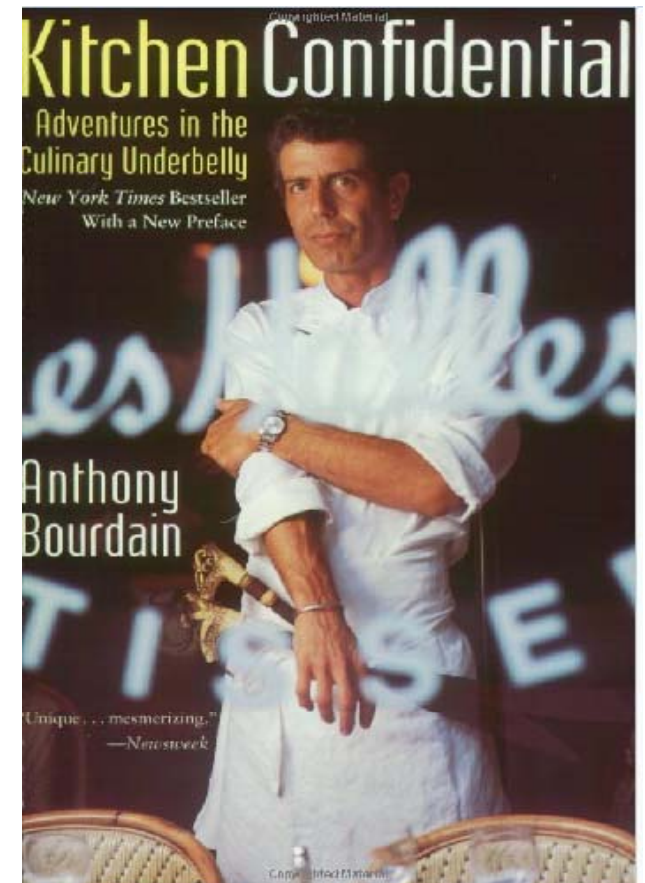




# Conclusion...

- Overall:
  - we found no evidence to suggest that there is any relationship between alcohol and substance abuse and a lack of work-life balance

**So... are the reports of alcohol and drug abuse in the hospitality industry correct?**



# Influences on the Results

- Socially desirable response (SDR):
  - Friedman et al (2004) found SDR for those responding on drug and alcohol use
  - However, the use of internet panels appears to reduce the problems associated with SDR (Hansen and Pedersen, 2011; Baker et al 2010)
- Greater understanding by society of the effects of drug and alcohol use –
  - the latest AIHW (2007) statistics show a slight decline in the use of alcohol across Australia.
  - Pide et al (2006) and Berry et al (2008) studies based on 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey
  - Campaigns such as 'Drinkwise' may be having some effect

# Influences on the Results

- Reports on alcohol and substance abuse in the hospitality industry may no longer be accurate as they are based either on:
  - early studies on the hospitality industry as a whole
  - anecdotal commentary, mainly on chefs
- The use of panel respondents could influence the results.
  - *Research Now* provides details of the quality assurance processes followed

These aspects require further investigation and are now part of the research agenda for the Team



**Thank you – Questions?**