

12-2018

# Sorry I Can't Talk Right Now, or Can I?: A Qualitative Exploration of Professional Mobile Device Usage Within Domestic Spheres

Sharon Storch

Follow this and additional works at: <https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

---

## Recommended Citation

Storch, Sharon, "Sorry I Can't Talk Right Now, or Can I?: A Qualitative Exploration of Professional Mobile Device Usage Within Domestic Spheres" (2018). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 1672.  
<https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/1672>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact [cclouser@iup.edu](mailto:cclouser@iup.edu), [sara.parme@iup.edu](mailto:sara.parme@iup.edu).

SORRY I CAN'T TALK RIGHT NOW, OR CAN I?:

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF  
PROFESSIONAL MOBILE DEVICE USAGE  
WITHIN DOMESTIC SPHERES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Sharon L. Storch

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

December 2018

Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of Communications Media

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Sharon L. Storch

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

---

Anna Victoria Ortiz Juarez-Paz, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Communications Media,  
Advisor

---

Zachary Stiegler, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Communications Media

---

B. Gail Wilson, Ed.D.  
Professor of Communications Media

ACCEPTED

---

Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.  
Dean  
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: Sorry I Can't Talk Right Now, or Can I?: A Qualitative Exploration of Professional Mobile Device Usage Within Domestic Spheres

Author: Sharon L. Storch

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Anna Victoria Ortiz Juarez-Paz

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Zachary Stiegler  
Dr. B. Gail Wilson

Mobile devices and their rapid progression has been a focus in communication research in terms of their impact within various areas of our lives. Due to the mobile device's communicative power to shape our lives in terms of how we interact professionally and domestically, engagement decisions and work:life boundaries have become an everyday challenge. This dissertation sought to research engagement with these technological devices and the subsequent implications on relationships specifically by exploring the usage of mobile devices for professional (work) purposes within the domestic (nonwork) sphere. The researcher interviewed 32 participants and three pertinent themes emerged from the data: Control, Sentiments, and Influences. An unexpected theme surfaced on participants' experiences with using the mobile device for domestic (nonwork) purposes within the professional (work) sphere. This study is unique because it uses both Domestication Theory (DT) and Work/Family Border Theory as the guiding theories. Participants elucidated the domestication of the mobile device for professional purposes within the domestic sphere, thereby allowing communication scholars to understand the incorporation stage of DT. Participants shared their successful and unsuccessful experiences managing the border between work and family. Exploring their experiences alongside the nuances of the Work/Family Border Theory resulted in a proposed update to the Work/Family Border Model. This update includes the placement of the border and

revisions to the industry permeations. In consideration of the revised model, the researcher suggests testing that model from various methodological approaches and from various communicative perspectives.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my dissertation chair, Vicky Ortiz. You inspired me and supported my ideas as I developed qualitative research skills. I appreciate your expertise and your innate ability to offer constructive criticism that left me feeling positive and motivated. Not only have you fostered my growth as an academic scholar, but you have done so with patience, generosity, and humor. I would also like to thank my committee, Dr. Wilson and Dr. Stiegler. You were both instrumental in my development through this doctoral process and a true pleasure to work with. You challenged me to think critically, refine my writing, and follow my research and teaching aspirations. Lastly, thank you to the participants for sharing experiences that made this study possible.

To my husband Doug, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your unconditional support, for understanding the demands, and for helping find our unique work/life balance that made this doctoral pursuit possible. To my daughter Abby, thank you for generously providing your time and graphic design skills as we worked through multiple model drafts. To my poodles, Maurice and Sophia, thank you for literally being by my side as I researched and wrote. To my parents, thank you for instilling in me a strong work ethic and commitment. To all of my family, friends, and colleagues, thank you for being my cheerleaders through this process. Lastly, I would like to thank my late father-in-law, Dr. Champ Storch, you planted the seed and I hope this makes you proud.

Thank you to the dedicated faculty and staff at IUP. You shared your expertise and each uniquely shaped the scholar I have become. I thank you for the fine education you provided. Finally, to the CMIT students I have had the privilege of working with. I value each and every one of you and will always fondly remember this journey we traveled together.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
ONE	INTRODUCTION .....	1
	Introduction .....	1
	Rationale .....	3
	Background .....	6
	Present Study .....	10
TWO	LITERATURE REVIEW .....	14
	Mobile Devices .....	14
	Theoretical Foundations.....	22
	Possible Theoretical Underpinnings.....	23
	Domestication Theory .....	25
	Phases of domestication theory.....	26
	Evolution of domestication theory.....	28
	Work/Family Border Theory.....	31
	Present Study .....	35
THREE	METHODS .....	39
	Qualitative Approach .....	39
	Data Collection Method .....	42
	Participants .....	43
	Procedures .....	45
	Recruitment .....	45
	Data Collection.....	48
	Data Analysis .....	49
	Coding .....	51
FOUR	FINDINGS .....	53
	Control .....	57
	Time .....	57
	In control .....	57
	Responsiveness .....	58
	Workflow .....	71
	Interstitial time .....	80

Domestic events .....	84
Dinner .....	84
Vacation .....	87
Activities .....	91
Out of control .....	95
Actual time .....	95
24/7 accessibility.....	95
Time zones .....	99
Deadlines.....	103
Interruptions .....	104
Behaviors.....	108
Summary of Control One: Time.....	110
Parameters .....	111
In control .....	112
Self-developed.....	112
Verbal announcements .....	119
Out of control .....	124
Organic development .....	125
Unwritten/informal.....	126
Written/formal.....	128
Summary of Control Two: Parameters.....	130
Summary of Theme One: Control.....	131
Sentiments.....	132
Border Crosser Sentiments.....	134
Proactive.....	135
Reactive.....	141
Summary of Sentiments One: Border Crosser Sentiments .....	156
Others' Sentiments .....	157
Border crosser perceptions .....	158
Actual verbal/nonverbal behaviors.....	165
Summary of Sentiments Two: Others' Sentiments .....	175
Summary of Theme Two: Sentiments.....	175
Influences.....	177
Border Crosser.....	177
Cognitive influences.....	178
Personality .....	178
Reputation .....	181
Work ethic .....	184



Chapter	Page
	Summary of Influences One: Border Crosser .....187
	Domestic Sphere.....187
	Domestic border keepers .....188
	Industry permeations .....196
	Summary of Influences Two: Domestic Sphere.....209
	Summary of Theme Three: Influences .....210
	Nonwork in Work .....212
	Summary of Theme Four: Nonwork in Work .....222
	Summary of Findings.....223
FIVE	DISCUSSION .....226
	Theoretical Advances.....228
	Borders.....230
	Industry Permeations .....236
	Work Expectations .....237
	Work Communication .....239
	Border Crosser’s Work Ethic .....241
	Proactive vs. Reactive Behavior .....243
	Announcements not Negotiations .....245
	Relational Impact .....247
	Tension .....248
	Children vs. Spouses/Significant Others .....250
	Nonwork Communication in Work Domain.....252
	Limitations and Future Research .....255
	Limitations.....255
	Future Research.....256
	Conclusion .....258
	REFERENCES .....260
	APPENDICES .....271
	Appendix A - Recruitment Script .....271
	Appendix B - Participant Informed Consent .....272
	Appendix C – Interview Guide .....275

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Participants' Demographic Information .....	46
2	Summary of Research Questions .....	54
3	Summary of Themes .....	56

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Work/Family Border Theory's pictorial representation .....	33
2	Work/Family Border Theory's pictorial representation .....	227
3	Proposed updates to Work/Family Border Model .....	234

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Introduction**

“Sorry, I can’t talk right now, or can I?” - a communicative conundrum driven by decisions regarding self-created boundaries through the use of mobile devices. For this study, mobile devices are defined as smartphones or tablets. Technological growth is not slowing down; society is struggling to keep up with the ever-changing digital communication flow (Sorenson, 2015). Struggles of this caliber weave through our personal, familial, and professional lives. Mobile devices diminish partner intimacy (Marano, 2016), interrupt family meals (Chitakunye & Takhar, 2014; Villegas, 2013), and even result in phubbing (snubbing or being snubbed by an individual when using a mobile device) in personal and professional spheres (Roberts & David, 2016). Consequently, digital communication has altered how we interact, work, and play.

According to the Pew Research Center, 95% of Americans own some type of cell phone and 77% own smartphones (“Mobile Phone Ownership,” 2017). Those figures reflect a 35% increase from a 2011 survey (“Mobile Phone Ownership,” 2017). Furthermore, one-third of American households have 3 or more smartphones (Olmstead, 2017), with multi-generational access to the devices (“Mobile Phone Ownership,” 2017). Historically, in 2002, 62% of adults only owned a cell phone, not a smartphone (“Mobile Fact Sheet,” 2018).

Individuals’ personal worlds have been transformed into digital friends, followers, and contacts (Padilla-Walker, Coyne, & Fraser, 2012). In fact, according to Eadicicco (2015), Americans check their phones approximately 46 times per day. This high

frequency of use, deemed addictive (Roberts, Yaya, & Manolis, 2014), was coined “phonoholism” (Hoffman, 2017). Accordingly, this infusion of new media delivers new influences, both positive and negative, on family communication (Carvalho, Francisco, & Relvas, 2015; Linke, 2012; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Villegas, 2013). With immediacy of information being one reason individuals carry phones with them (Rendle-Short, 2015), Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), or mobile devices, also create complex situations to balance and set boundaries for work:personal life communication (Golden, 2013). With that said, this dissertation qualitatively explores the usage of mobile devices for professional (work) purposes within the domestic (nonwork) sphere and their subsequent impact on relationships. Professional purposes, professional usage, or professional communication refer to any communication activity that accomplishes work tasks. The domestic (nonwork) sphere refers to the time and space devoted to nonwork activities with individuals such as family, friends, and acquaintances. This exploration was accomplished by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants to gain an understanding of their professional communicative experiences within domestic spheres.

At one time an individual who engaged with mobile devices for work-related activities outside of work was considered a workaholic (Karlson, Meyers, Jacobs, Johns, & Kane, 2009). While this was typically framed in a negative light, Karlson et al. (2009) suggested the driving force of this behavior was that individuals using mobile devices for work communication during nonwork times were simply attempting to maintain some control over their work demands. Additionally, individuals were said to experience internal conflict regarding their engagement level with mobile devices, specifically

regarding their self-determined response time to asynchronous messages via technology-mediated communication; this conflict is known as “telepressure” (Barber & Santuzzi, 2015). In other words, individuals feel the same sense of pressure to respond as they would with synchronous communication. Similarly, Burchell’s (2015) study on the temporal investment with communicating via mobile devices added that some individuals felt pressure from colleagues to be connected 24/7. Ultimately, an individual’s decision to engage with technology for professional purposes outside of their work hours communicated two things: (1) how they were portraying themselves and (2) how others viewed them. All behavior communicated something (Mumby, 2013), including decisions to engage or not engage in work-related communication via the mobile device during nonwork time. As a communicative tool, the mobile device continually influences lives in multifarious ways in which individuals seemingly have (or deemed to have) control over that usage.

## **Rationale**

Considering the growth and influence of mobile devices on familial relationships and work:life boundaries, this dissertation explores professional (work) mobile device usage within the domestic (nonwork) sphere and the influence on familial relationships. Such a phenomenon is imperative to study not only due to the evolution and high-speed growth of technology, but also because of other possible variables that influence the decision-making process to communicate via mobile devices within the domestic sphere. For example, how gender (Stephens & Ford, 2016), personal, familial (Chesley, 2006), or organizational expectations (Chesley, 2006; Stephens & Ford, 2016) alter communicative

decisions. This exploration also considered the level of engagement (high/low) and whether the communication was individually- or organizationally-induced.

While studies showed various outcomes on the interchangeable spillover between work and family mobile device communication, the rapidly changing technology in tandem with family and work demands made spillover and subsequent effects an essential topic for continued research. Some areas to explore included the purpose of mobile device communication (Hughes & Hans, 2001; Burchell, 2015), the intensity and frequency of use (de Reuver, Nikou, & Bouwman, 2016), gender differences regarding technological engagement (Roberts et al., 2014; Rudi, Walkner, & Dworkin, 2015; Wajcman, Bittman, & Brown, 2008), setting boundaries between work and home (Dery, Kolb, & MacCormick, 2014; Palen & Hughes, 2007; Wajcman et al., 2008), and collecting data using current mobile technology (Golden, 2013). Dery et al. (2014) called specifically for more in-depth qualitative studies on “near constant connectivity,” which referred to the ability individuals’ had to choose to be connected via mobile devices up to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (p. 579). This constant connection, which arguably resulted in information overload via mobile devices, was both overwhelming and an everyday challenge that individuals needed to manage (Burchell, 2015). This will be explored in the next section.

Constant connection in terms of frequency of use and specific functions or applications utilized with the mobile device influences communication and relationships within everyday routines (de Reuver et al., 2016). Frequency of use is said to negatively influence everyday routines, while the specific mobile device functions or downloaded applications plays opposing roles within our everyday lives. For example, utilizing the

mobile device to research information has mild impacts on everyday routines.

Conversely, downloaded entertainment applications are more disruptive to everyday routines. de Ruever et al.'s (2016) used domestication to address mobile device usage and its influence on our everyday routines. This dissertation takes a different approach in that the researcher looked specifically at how the mobile device used for professional communication within the domestic sphere impacted familial relationships.

In that vein, New York City Councilman Rafael Espinal, Jr. has been currently attempting to address the management of mobile devices by creating legislation that prohibits employers from mandating employees to respond to emails, texts, or calls outside their work hours (CNN Wire, 2018; Jones, 2018). Councilman Espinal's inspiration spawned from France's Right to Disconnect Law and his realization that technology is blurring lines between work and home (personal communication, July 24, 2018). Espinal received positive feedback from citizens including young parents with difficulties juggling mobile device work demands and parenting in their nonwork time. Though the business community had concerns, Espinal shared that the business community needed to know this legislation was not designed to make it illegal for them to reach out to their employees. However, the employee maintained the power to turn it off without fear of retribution, thus they could choose to not respond. This was interesting and applicable to this dissertation's aim to shed light on this work:family balance issue specific to the domestic sphere, which Espinal simply called outside the work hours.

Mobile device research studies approach this communicative situation from various theoretical perspectives and methodologies. The overarching theory that guided this research was Domestication Theory. Domestication Theory is inherently a media



effects theory that explores how individuals managed media (Haddon, 2007). For this dissertation, Domestication Theory served as a media effects approach and combined with Work/Family Border Theory to develop a well-rounded research design and answer the overarching research questions.

## **Background**

With mobile device ownership on the rise (“Mobile Phone Ownership,” 2017; Olmstead, 2017) and those devices rapidly changing and evolving, our communicative practices have moved away from face-to-face interactions (Villegas, 2013) to a digital communicative world of online friends, followers, and contacts (Padilla-Walker et al., 2012). In essence, mobile devices established new influences on personal, familial, and professional communication. Such changes resulted in the need for individuals to manage those continual influences within domestic (nonwork) and professional (work) communicative experiences. For example, Ragsdale and Hoover (2016) discussed the mobile device’s power to influence job performance by enhancing work engagement. However, they also pointed out individuals need training on how to manage both professional and domestic demands (Ragsdale & Hoover, 2016). To that end, mobile devices had both positive and negative influences on the family system (Rudi et al., 2015; Sharaievska & Stodolska, 2016; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Villegas, 2013), this training suggested by Ragsdale & Hoover (2016) aimed to equip individuals with the ability to manage the domestic:professional balance.

While the mobile device created the ability to foster connections among family members, it also produced physical and psychological noise that influenced interactions. In Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz’s (2017) study, physical noise included alerts, rings, and

notifications, whereas psychological noise represented information overload and mental distractions. Both types of noise had an influence on the family system. de Reuver et al. (2016) found while short calls allowed for quick planning, they also caused more disruptions to daily life. While those interruptions and noise influenced the domestic sphere, David & Roberts (2017) suggested that if both or all individuals were on their mobile devices, the distraction was deemed less prevalent. They further suggested the development of a social contract regarding appropriate use of mobile devices between friends, couples, families, and coworkers to avoid the feeling of social exclusion that resulted when phubbed. In essence, the use of ICTs (mobile devices) between domestic (nonwork) and professional (work) spheres included mutual adjustments to minimize conflict and maximize harmony (Golden, 2013).

Spatial separation of professional and domestic lives was not easily solved (Wajcman et al., 2008). This balancing act originated prior to the wide adoption of smart phones. In a 2005 study, pagers used by on-call employees in addition to phones were found to alter family communication (Chesley, 2005). Golden's (2013) study reported data that focused on company-provided desktops or laptops, company land-lines, and personally owned mobile devices and their subsequent usages within a high-tech company. At the time, Golden's data was collected in 2009, domestic interruptions at work equated to two to five interruptions per day. Similarly, Wajcman et al. (2008) found the primary spillover occurred at work from home; the work-related spillover into the domestic area was minimal. They further posited the individual had control over establishing the boundary between work and home. Some individuals maintained multiple devices to balance their device usage (Burchell, 2015; Dery et al., 2014). While

parents made efforts to separate work from home (Khan & Markopoulos, 2009), disconnecting from work while at home was sometimes impossible and not always desirable when considering work advancement (Dery et al., 2014). While it was difficult and not always desirable to disconnect, listening through mobile devices (smartphones or tablets) on the job had the propensity to overflow into family communication (Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017). Burchell (2015) expressed the need to explore how the “values of the relational domain [are] negotiated” (p. 49). This need spoke to self-boundaries and expectations of professional spillover into the domestic sphere. While mobile devices were designed to improve communication, they hindered interpersonal relationships (David & Roberts, 2017). Consequently, there was a need to research new technology as it developed and evolved.

In an effort to explore and understand the professional mobile device usage within domestic spheres, it was relevant to use a media effects framework as an overarching concept to guide this exploration. Domestication Theory was one way to understand this phenomenon. Domestication Theory’s four components were derived from the word domestication and its applicability to tame wild animals (Haddon, 2007). Early influences in the development of this theory included the 1980s focus on media studies and media audiences, consumer consumption/semiotic purpose of goods, and finally the actual media items itself such as TV, gaming devices, VCRs, and personal computers. The theory was based on domestication of media within the home and was first cited in 1992 with a study on domestication of ICTs (Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1992). The four components of the study were considered a process (de Reuver et al., 2016) and unlike Uses and Gratifications Theory, Domestication Theory extended to include how people

managed the media, such as ICTs or mobile devices, within their everyday lives (Haddon, 2007). These processes included appropriation (selection and introduction to home), objectification (symbolic location in home), incorporation (how they were embedded into everyday routines), and conversion (how they were displayed to others). The third stage in the process, incorporation, had particular interest as a theoretical underpinning to understand professional mobile device usage and the professional overflow and influences within the domestic sphere. While Domestication Theory had been used quantitatively as a basis for a 2016 study on the impact of smartphones and mobile applications on everyday routines (de Reuver et al., 2016), the theory was primarily used with qualitative methodologies due to its nature of describing and understanding the process (Haddon, 2007). In considering this dissertation's methodology, the use of this theory was further supported by its inherent qualitative nature.

While Domestication Theory informed the research in relation to the why, how, and when professional communication with mobile devices were incorporated within domestic spheres, an additional theory that guided the research design was Work/Family Border Theory. This theory extended the exploration beyond the incorporation of mobile devices to how the border between the two domains (spheres) were managed. Significant types of borders include temporal such as work hours that divided when work was done and family began, psychological including behaviors, emotions, and rules that dictated the borders, and physical which include walls and offices that physically separated the domains (Clark, 2000). Further significance of this theory were the individuals that influenced the borders. The border crosser spanned both domains and managed their border to suit their needs (Clark, 2000). The border keepers and other domain members

were the individuals from either domain that had the power to influence the decisions and behaviors of the border crosser (Clark, 2000). In relation to this dissertation, border crossers were the individual(s) utilizing the mobile device for professional usage within the domestic sphere. The border keepers and other domain members comprised family, friends, co-workers, and bosses, all of whom influenced decisions the border crossers made to technologically engage. Work/Family Border Theory was relevant to this dissertation's focus on mobile devices to explore the mobile device's impact on the width, strength, flexibility, and permeability of the established border. To gather rich data in an effort to understand the relationship implications from professional mobile device usage within domestic spheres, those two theories were relevant foundations to understanding the overall balance between professional and domestic spheres.

### **Present Study**

The overarching purpose of this dissertation was to examine individuals' professional communication using mobile devices within the domestic sphere. First, mobile devices were defined as smartphones or tablets. Second, professional communication referred to any communicative activity that accomplished work tasks. Finally, the domestic sphere encompassed the time and space devoted to nonwork activities with family, friends, and/or acquaintances. Also, the domestic sphere was *not* limited to the four walls of the home, but extended to whatever geographic locations the domestic sphere was at in any given moment. This study was intended to research current mobile devices to build on quantitative studies and answer the call for in-depth qualitative studies.

This dissertation sought to gather rich qualitative data to add to the body of knowledge regarding how media usage influences relationships. To accomplish this, the following research questions guided the research: *RQ1: How are individuals using mobile devices professionally within the domestic sphere?*, *RQ2: How are familial relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?*, *RQ3: What expectations are established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?*, and *RQ4: How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?* Data was collected qualitatively through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Qualitative methodology is a theoretical interest in knowing how people understand and interpret communicative processes (Keyton, 2015). The aim was to understand the experiences and attitudes derived from the professional use of mobile devices within domestic spheres.

As a methodological approach, Grounded Theory guided this research to identify concepts and develop theoretical explanations that extended beyond what was currently known (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) about the professional usage of mobile devices within domestic spheres. This theory was the foundation for data analysis that enabled the researcher to study evolving concepts that surfaced and identify concepts that needed further exploration (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). With that said, this dissertation employed individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews to collect data. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to cover the same topics with each participant, yet also allowed the flexibility to add relevant questions as the conversation unfolded (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This was beneficial as it shed light on new areas that developed through the discussion. The researcher used a criterion snowball sampling method. The criterion

method set particular criteria the researcher seeks (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Once criteria were set, snowball sampling ensued, which was based on allowing referrals from others that also met the criteria to broaden the participant base (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). For this study, the researcher invited members from personal and professional contacts, as well as through a LinkedIn recruitment post; the researcher invited participants to refer others. Recording devices, researcher notes, and third-party transcriptions were utilized to collect data.

Using Grounded Theory to analyze data, open and in vivo coding methods aided the researcher in developing codes from the interview data followed by axial coding to form overarching themes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). In addition, Owen's (1984) thematic analysis was used to further analyze and constantly compare data. This process enabled the researcher to broadly delve into how individuals handled various situations through their interactions and to offer explanations as codes and themes surfaced. Through offering comprehensive explanations to support codes and themes, the process also enabled the researcher to utilize a long-standing procedural method to extract theory from relevant data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This method was applicable to this dissertation to enable the researcher to understand participants' experiences and to share rich data that supported results and discussion surrounding the four overarching research questions on mobile device usage and the subsequent influences.

Chapter 2 will provide an in-depth literature review on the evolution of the mobile devices and the nature of foundational, historical, and current studies. Domestication Theory and Work/Family Border Theory were explored further within the literature review as the theoretical underpinnings that guided this study and provided a foundation

for the research design. Chapter 3 is devoted to information on research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 4 provides quotes from participants illustrating the codes and themes that stemmed from this research. Finally, Chapter 5 provides interpretation of results that intertwine with key components from the literature review. Also, the discussion section provides limitations and opportunities for future research.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This dissertation sought to examine individuals' professional communication using mobile devices within the domestic sphere and the influence this might have on familial relationships. For this dissertation, mobile devices were smartphones or tablets, professional communication was any communicative activity that accomplished work tasks, and the domestic sphere was the time and space individuals devoted to nonwork activities. This time and space could have been in the home or outside of the home with family and/or friends. This chapter begins by highlighting the emerging and evolutionary nature of mobile device research. The chapter continues with a historical look at the development and application of Domestication Theory (DT) and its four chronological phases. DT was relevant to this examination of how, why, and when individuals incorporated mobile devices for professional communication within the domestic sphere. Additionally, this chapter will discuss the Work/Family Border Theory, which found its relevance in this study regarding the self- or organizationally-created boundary between professional and domestic spheres and the boundaries' permeability. Lastly, the chapter ends with the presentation of research questions and subsequent rationale.

#### **Mobile Devices**

Mobile devices were media tools that rapidly progressed in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and the progression intrigued researchers as to their capabilities and effects on multifarious areas of our lives. Research explored decisions to adopt the device (Olmstead, 2017; Sarker & Wells, 2003), individual and familial usage patterns and engagement decisions (Dunn, 2014; Hughes & Hans, 2001; Khan & Markopoulos, 2009;

Rendle-Short, 2015; Villegas, 2013), and the influences the device ultimately had on relational quality (Hall, Baym, & Miltner, 2014; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Taylor, 2013; Villegas, 2013). In specifically reflecting on the latter two areas, the connective tissue was how media (mobile devices) and the decisions individuals made in using them affected relationships. The researcher considered how mobile devices specifically used for professional communication within domestic spheres affected familial relationships. However, media effects in this respect began long before the advent of mobile devices.

Researchers looked at media effects on relational quality from other media elements to include TV, radio, computers, Internet, and certainly now mobile devices (Haddon, 2007). Lull (1980) quantitatively explored family communication patterns surrounding the use of television. Participants categorized within two different home environments were studied to establish if and how TV facilitated social behavior and family interactions to include positive and negative implications. Further, it was implied TV was linked to limited face-to-face interactions (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukophadhyay, & Scherlis, 1998). The authors compared this TV usage to other media usage such as listening to the radio and even reading. As the 1980s popularized interactive gaming and VCRs, the TV became less utilized as a TV, rather it was simply used as a display screen for the new technologies (Haddon, 2007). Hughes and Hans' (2001) research suggested while computers and Internet in the year 2000 had less time devoted to them than the aforementioned TV and radio, the usage resulted in relevant changes in the amount of time families spent together. Accordingly, Kraut et al. (1998)

found the greater time invested in Internet usage directly correlated with a decline in family communication and an increase in loneliness.

Regarding romantic relationships, a qualitative study using Expectancy Violations Theory looked at the expected and acceptable use of cell phones within romantic partners. Results showed the context (first date, formal date, or hanging out) of the couple's time led to the expectation of usage and respective boundaries (Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2015). In consideration of mobile devices specifically, the advent and growth of ownership and subsequent usage within the domestic sphere, researchers looked at how the mobile device usage shaped relationships, household dynamics, and work:life balance (Hall et al, 2014; Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2015; Stafford & Hillyer, 2012; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Villegas, 2013, Wajcman et al., 2008). Another area that shaped relationships were response times and related expectations.

To further explore the nuances of phubbing or snubbing with respect to response times, a recent study articulated individuals had a sense of anxiety upon sending a message due to response doubts (Aranda & Baig, 2018). That study encompassed situational, personal, and safety concerns. Situational concerns referred to senders' thoughts on whether or not the receiver was busy at the moment and unable to respond. Personal concerns for senders included if the receiver was mad at them. Finally, safety concerns such as whether or not something happened to the receiver preventing them from responding. Regardless of the scenario, senders felt anxious about the possibility of being phubbed. Conversely, receivers felt responsiveness pressure in that they considered what the reasonable response time was. In consideration of conflict avoidance surrounding focus on their current endeavor, parameters around relational situations,

and/or protection of free time resulted in the determination that somewhere between 20 minutes and the end of the day were the options as well as turning off read receipts (Aranda & Baig, 2018).

With those research outcomes in mind, the other issue to shed light on was work:life balance. The age-old issue of work:life balance surfaced prior to any technological resources such as the mobile device. According to Jacobs & Gerson (2001), the dramatic changes in households challenged the ability to achieve work:life balance included dual income earners, weekend and evening work hours, and increasing demands from employers. Additionally, Guest (2002) focused his research on the psychological characteristics that carried over from work into nonwork relationships. For example, time pressure, exhaustion, poor health, long work hours, addiction/workaholics, and skewed identifications (with organization or home). Park & Jex (2011) found individuals with high work identification had higher stress levels regarding work:life boundaries, whereas stronger segmentation preferences between the two domains created stronger boundaries in which stress level was lower. These issues spoke to work:life imbalance and/or choices individuals made to promote balance.

In response to promoting balance, New York City Councilman Rafael Espinal, Jr. has been striving to pass legislation that will establish parameters and strict limitations on organizations that expect technological communication outside of the work hours (CNN Wire, 2018; Jones, 2018). This proposal sparked discussion via the professional social media site *LinkedIn*, where individuals proclaimed the pros and cons of the issue (LinkedIn, 2018). In considering the advent of technological influences, the aforementioned work:life imbalance research had new challenges to traverse. These

challenges increased the relevancy of researching this important and rapidly evolving topic that potentially influences our familial relationships.

Beyond the influence on familial relationships, decisions with mobile devices extended to work-related usage. Not only simply using the devices for work, but when and how devices were used for professional work within the domestic sphere and their subsequent effect on relationship quality. Chesley's (2005) study found both laptops and communication technologies (which included cell phones and pagers) altered family communication through the interruptions the technologies presented. However, the pagers and cell phones produced more professional overflow into the domestic sphere than did laptops; the author posited one reason may be that the newer cell phone and pager technology correlated with active decision making necessary to turn the communication devices on to engage.

In consideration of laptops, results from a 2008 study showed laptops being utilized to complete professional work at home (Ladner, 2008), thus spilled over into the domestic sphere. Ladner's study included participants from the advertising industry that operated using both work-provided and individually-owned devices. In that study, 78% of individuals had company-provided laptops, whereas only 8.5% had company-provided mobile phones. While their work day was lengthened by technological overflow into the home atmosphere, findings conveyed the value of uninterrupted time and quiet to complete work. Ladner (2008) posited the study demonstrated how mobile technology (laptops) equated to 'hyper responsivity' to work. Hyper responsivity in that study referred to actively and immediately responding to work-related issues. With the aforementioned growth of mobile devices as a communicative tool and the chief media

component for this dissertation, it was relevant to explore other studies and their findings regarding mobile devices within the professional sphere.

Research studies uncovered characteristics that influenced the decisions to technologically engage and allowed the seeping of professional (work) into domestic (nonwork) time and space. Those characteristics included workload, children, gender, organizational directives, and mobility. Chesley (2005) describes the time and space where overflow, or seeping, of work within family time or family within work time “spillover.” Work to family spillover lowered family satisfaction, increased stress (Chesley, 2005), produced emotional exhaustion (burnout) and was detrimental to overall employee well-being (Ragsdale & Hoover, 2016). With that said, the reasons for technology engagement were questioned, but employees in Ragsdale & Hoover’s (2016) study found employees viewed the phone as a means of “staying on top of work” (p.58). While the authors were unclear on what *types* of jobs or job demands perpetuated the use of device during nonwork hours (Ragsdale & Hoover, 2016), scholars believed the hours worked, overall workload, and perceptions of job performance were predictors of technology usage within the domestic sphere (Chesley, 2006). This dissertation sought to uncover reasons for this usage and the subsequent impact of the usage within the domestic sphere.

Turel, Serenko, & Bontis (2011) explored whether perceived work overload decreased commitment to their professional organization. Perceived work overload describes the individual’s perceptions of their workload that included 24/7 availability via mobile email. Findings showed an employee’s addiction level to technology impacted their perceived workload and subsequently demotivated them at work and caused family

conflict (Turel et al., 2011). In addition to workload, work mobility influenced technology engagement decisions.

According to Chesley, Moen, & Shore (2003), sometimes the individual's choice to engage with technology was null as the requirement to use technology was bureaucratically imposed by the employer. Individuals that travel or were self-employed where mobility was a central feature in their lives had a differing perspective on the mobile device usage. For example, mobile hair stylists with strong family:work boundaries equated lower usage of mobile devices to lower profits and pay (Cohen, 2010). However, once individuals felt employment security in their mobile positions, setting boundaries was possible by training clients and predicting work places as one participant in Cohen's study shared. In a different study on mobility with freelance filmmakers, mobile phones were found to be alternatives to supporting work initiatives when fixed communicative options were unavailable (Sadler, Robertson, Kan, & Hagen, 2006). Likewise, mobile devices were used to manage personal and familial issues within the professional work time and space (Golden, 2013; Sadler et al., 2006; Wajcman et al., 2008). Within a study on addiction to organizational technologies, perceived work overload had implications on family conflicts (Turel et al., 2011). To combat work overload, that study suggested managers could communicate expectations on usage so employees didn't feel pressured to exceed the usage, as well as regulate and monitor use of mobile email.

Technology moved across spatial and temporal boundaries from work to home with reciprocal implications. In a study focusing on one single company and the participants' media usage of desktop computers, laptop computers, and home Wi-Fi, the

researcher explored decisions and usage patterns of technology both professionally and domestically (Golden, 2013). Results showed there was a bi-directional influence with dual presence both at work and at home. For example, some individuals used laptops in all areas of the home to include car rides. Other participants were more selective with their usage and only utilized the technology when other family members weren't physically present. The multitasking between face-to-face and email conversations within spheres lowered overall engagement and caused tension. If the multitasking with laptops and desktops caused tension, then it was relevant to explore to what extent mobile devices in similar contexts caused tension within the domestic sphere.

Conversely, Golden (2013) posited if employees were doing work at home, they might also expect to do home at work. While this data collected in 2009 uncovered technological impacts between spheres, this study was limited in its technological focus prior to the widespread adoption of smartphones. Beyond the space that was discussed in this study, temporal boundaries were also researched.

Burchell's (2015) study took a temporal look at constant connectivity with mobile devices and how time invested in communicative connections impacted our everyday life. Findings showed participants desired physical connection to the phone, not just the communication, but the device itself to be aware of potential interactions (Burchell, 2015). While the devices were always near, results showed varying engagement levels, focused interaction, and maintained embodiment engagement, which meant the individual checked for activity, but did not engage (Burchell, 2015). To some, information overload became a daily occurrence and the only choice was to manage the flow of information, even if it was outside the work time and space (Burchell, 2015). This



time and space outside of work was of particular interest for this dissertation as the researcher assessed the use of time and space for professional communication and its possible impact on familial relationships. Finally, the inability to combat the “red number” on the app that showed the arrival of an email or text could be a stressor for some individuals. Overall, managing connections required time and effort in the communication itself, but also in the space in which it was enacted (Burchell, 2015).

As the media effects of mobile technology were researched, the research was presented with diverse theoretical underpinnings (Kim, Kim, Kim, & Wang, 2017). Mobile devices and their rapidly evolving nature combined with aforementioned technological influences on relationships and the family system, the decisions to technologically engage for professional purposes within the domestic sphere could potentially influence familial relationships. Thus, the mobile device had the ability to affect relationships. With the goal of this dissertation being the examination of individuals’ professional communication using mobile devices within the domestic sphere, the foundational and appropriate theoretical applications to address the possible effects on familial relationships will be covered in the next sections.

### **Theoretical Foundations**

Scholars utilized a variety of theoretical perspectives in researching mobile devices as familial, interpersonal, and/or organizational communicative tools (Kim et al., 2017). Considering the first component of mobile devices was actually selecting and owning one, Roger’s Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory was appropriate for mobile device research. A content analysis of 131 articles from 10 communication journals between the years of 1999 and 2014, found 63 of those articles applied a theoretical

perspective. Of the 8 top theories, the most frequently used theory was DOI, used in 5.3% of the articles (Kim et al., 2017). Beyond selecting and owning (adopting) a mobile device, research also explored when and why the mobile device was used to gratify the user. Accordingly, 4.6% of the articles employed the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) (Kim et al, 2017). According to Kim et al. (2017), both theories “...have been widely used to explain how, why, and at what rate new technologies [such as mobile devices] spread as well as individuals’ attitudes and behaviors regarding communication technology” (p. 1683). To select the most applicable theory(ies) to guide this research, it was relevant to explore and understand the widely-used theories (DOI and UGT) for their possible applicability within this dissertation.

### **Possible Theoretical Underpinnings**

In the exploration of various theories for this research, Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) and Uses and Gratifications (UGT) were considered. The overarching premise of DOI Theory is the rate of adoption of any innovation by individuals or groups within society (Rogers, 2003). DOI presented five adopter categories to label and characterize a person’s innate level of adoption: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2003). While DOI Theory speaks to the adoption process and certainly relates to Domestication Theory’s appropriation phase, it did not get to the root issue of this study, which was the incorporation of mobile devices for professional use within the domestic sphere and how that usage decision impacted relationships. Uses and Gratifications (UGT) as another possible theory encompasses why people choose the media they use and how that satisfies a personal need.

UGT was developed as a theory that challenged scholars to take a different stance in mass communication research (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, 2015). The foundational framework for this theory is that people intentionally select and use media for particular purposes to gratify them personally (Griffin et al., 2015; Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Since its inception, UGT thrived and has been applicable to various studies for over 50 years (Griffin et al., 2015) and further found applicability within the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In accordance with this study, scholars used this theory for uncovering uses and gratifications for communication technologies, including the mobile phone.

While DOI and UGT were utilized most frequently with studies on mobile devices (Kim et al., 2017), scholars looked at this issue through a variety of other lenses. Another 38 theories that surfaced from Kim et al.'s (2017) study were germane, but used only once by researchers. Domestication Theory (DT) was one of those 38 theories. Beyond the DT application located within Kim et al.'s (2017) content analysis, DT informed the formulation of a multi-theoretical model with the intent of understanding the use of technology (including mobile phones) within couples and families (Hertlein, 2012). Additionally, a mixed method study using phone logs and survey data utilized DT as the basis to understand how smartphones shaped daily routines (de Reuver et al., 2016). DT expanded to professional domestication research in 2003 with respect to how small businesses adopted and incorporated technologies within the business domain (Pierson, 2006). DT is inherently different from DOI and UGT in that it reaches beyond adoption and selection for personal gratification to include why, how, and in what temporal space media is incorporated into our everyday lives (Kim et al., 2017). According to Berker, Hartmann, Punie, & Ward (2006), the domestication perspective

has the propensity to fill the void from DOI's limitations. For these reasons, Domestication Theory surpassed the capabilities of DOI and UGT and offered the appropriate media effects platform for this dissertation to examine why, how, and at what time professional communication via mobile devices was utilized within the domestic sphere and how usage influenced relationships.

### **Domestication Theory**

The goal of this study was to explore the incorporation of mobile devices for professional purposes within domestic spheres. Accordingly, this dissertation study sought to add to the body of literature specifically on the incorporation stage (the third of four stages) of the Domestication Theory to further understand how the mobile device was being used and the influence it had on familial relationships within the domestic sphere. Domestication Theory and relevant studies will be discussed in this section in tandem with their applicability to this current study on the professional use of mobile devices within the domestic sphere.

In its simplest form, domestication was taming pets or wild animals (Berker et al., 2006; Haddon, 2007). In a sense, domesticating animals translated to domesticating a new artifact to its new surroundings (Berker et al., 2006). Thus, Domestication Theory focuses on understanding an artifact and its subsequent use in everyday life (Hynes & Richardson, 2009). The artifacts referred to in this dissertation were mobile devices (smartphones and tablets), sometimes referred to in literature as ICTs (Information and Communication Technology). According to Hynes & Richardson (2009), domestication was about simply giving technology an appropriate place in our daily lives. In other

words, individuals found a manner in which to co-exist and correspond with technology within their daily lives (Hynes & Richardson, 2009).

Developed by Roger Silverstone in the early 1990s, this theory combined and transformed previous research on media consumption, effects, and management within households into a theoretical framework on how individuals experience media (Haddon, 2007). Unlike the previously mentioned UGT which focuses on individual motivations, DT focuses on social relationships, household interactions, rule negotiations, and the notion of control surrounding the domestic space and time invasion of the technology (Haddon, 2007). In the mid-1990s, as DT further developed, Roger Silverstone and his co-researcher Leslie Haddon explored various platforms for DT to include studies involving teleworkers, single parents, the elderly, and work:home boundaries (Haddon, 2007).

**Phases of domestication theory.** There are four phases relevant to Domestication Theory: appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion. These are all important components of the overall moral economy this theory supports. In breaking down the phrase ‘moral economy,’ economy refers to economic production and consumption of the household in respect to the overarching economy, whereas moral reflects the meaning of activities such as work or leisure that were being negotiated based on the values and norms within the household (Pierson, 2006; Silverstone et al., 1992).

In this first phase of Domestication Theory, appropriation signifies the possession of technology (Haddon, 2007; Hynes & Richardson, 2009; Silverstone et al., 1992), or in this study, appropriating mobile devices for professional usage within the domestic sphere. Appropriation didn’t always equate to a material object, sometimes a virtual

object such as a program or a feature of a technological product (Silverstone et al., 1992). As such, appropriation of mobile devices transcends the physical boundaries of the home into the spatial area wherever the domestic sphere may be in any given moment (de Reuver et al., 2016).

The second phase of the Domestication Theory is objectification, which focuses on how an individual objectifies, or expresses, the technology. For example, where it is in the home (spatially) and the temporal aspect of how the individual determines the fit within their timing/schedule (Haddon, 2007; Hynes & Richardson, 2009; Silverstone et al., 1992). In de Reuver et al.'s (2016) study, their hypothesis on the projection that the objectification of smartphones contributed positively to daily routines was supported from the perspective of time – frequency and use of voice and email.

The third phase of incorporation was of particular interest to this dissertation. This phase focuses on how the technology is embedded into daily routines (Hadden, 2007; Hynes & Richardson, 2009; Silverstone et al., 1992). Temporal space is integral to this phase. While de Reuver et al. (2016) focused on use of downloaded applications and positively supported their contribution to individual's daily routines, this study focused on the incorporation of the mobile device for professional usage, which included the temporal space it consumed and its impact on relationships. Media posed a host of control problems within the household, both to regulate and establish/manage boundaries (Silverstone et al., 1992). One such problem came from computer use for schoolwork, which resulted in change in the established routines in the household culture and potentially caused friction (Silverstone et al., 1992; Stevenson, 2011, Turel et al., 2011). Accordingly, a 2011 study that centered on how a family incorporated a computer in the

home for school use found it could be a complex issue in managing anywhere/anytime learning via computer to the overarching decisions surrounding how and why a computer should be used in the home (Stevenson, 2011). This was relevant because the same concerns could surround mobile devices for work related issues within the domestic sphere. Domestication Theory was also employed to explore how the use or incorporation of media influenced the functioning of the family system (Carvalho et al., 2015) and how families developed relationships and communicated with each other. Further, the authors conjectured rules and/or renegotiated rituals were a structural change to incorporating technology which in turn could cause a change in family interactions. To that end, this dissertation specifically explored Domestication Theory from the perspective of the incorporation phase.

The final phase, conversion, focuses on how individuals translate the usage to the public eye or how artifacts are displayed to individuals outside of the home which in turn says something about us personally. An individual's social status can be based on their clothing, car, phone, or even software utilized (Graham, 2012). Thus, the artifact had become a status symbol (Pierson, 2006). Regarding mobile devices, this expression had extended beyond the device to the applications on the device (de Reuver et al., 2016). While this stage was not connected to this dissertation study explicitly, it was important to be aware of this phase as the conversion phase influenced new innovations and redesigned current technology to meet user needs (Pierson, 2006).

**Evolution of domestication theory.** While those four phases are the foundation of the Domestication Theory, Silverstone's research evolved into other perspectives. An additional variation looked at domestication outside of the home from a macro

perspective, which began with a study on the domestication of cars in Norway (Sorenson, 2006). Sorenson suggested Norwegians, like other societies, had multiple concerns on the advent of the car in the sense of accepting frightening changes from other transportation modes such as foot, horses, and railways. Further concerns surrounded road conditions and potential lack of resources to make the roads ready for the cars. Yet today the car has been domesticated and is a normal part of everyday life that is managed. This component of Domestication Theory suggested technological artifacts such as the car had far greater impact than the confines of the household. This research later developed into domesticating ICTs (Haddon, 2007; Sorenson, 2006), which included the morality involved in determining appropriate usage as well as negotiating rules and norms surrounding their usage (Sorenson, 2006).

Throughout the 2000s, Domestication Theory found its place in a variety of topic areas to include the domestication of computers and Instructional Technology (IT). From a different perspective, DT found a place in gender and feminism research. This research included gendered leisure time decisions, gender and technology, and social shaping of woman's work (Hynes & Richardson, 2009). The social shaping of technology perspective encompassed that technological artifacts were a component of social interactions (Hynes & Richardson, 2009). This viewpoint evolved from a sociological perspective that examined "the social context of use and agency of technology in everyday life" (Hynes & Richardson, 2009, p. 484). In fact, central to this process of domestication was the "unconscious attempt to make technologies fit into their surroundings in a way that makes them invisible or taken for granted" (Hynes & Richardson, 2009, pp. 486-487). This meant they became second nature to both users and



non-users of technology. Non-users were important as they also had the ability to shape the usage of the technology (Campbell & Russo, 2003). As such, both users and non-users influenced decisions that individuals made to technologically engage and supported the notion that technology was socially shaped and became a component of our social interactions. With that said, the use of Domestication Theory to inform this dissertation was appropriate as the focus of the present study was the influences mobile device usage had on familial relationships.

Graham (2012) highlighted the domestic approach in research concerning the integration of mobile phones within developed and developing nations. He did this not only to put emphasis on the progression of the domestic approach, but aimed to present this approach within the social science realm. This approach led him through the study of how the mobile phone was utilized to undertake daily activities.

While a few scholars extended this theory to the work domain, Pierson (2006) introduced Domestication Theory into the realm of small business owners through a mixed methodology study. In Pierson's study, the work domestication included not only mobile devices, but computers and software programs. The domestication component addressed the usefulness of these artifacts within everyday work routines once adoption had occurred (Pierson, 2006). This was important to consider as this dissertation extended into the professional sphere specifically exploring the possible occurrence of blurred boundaries and relational implications. To explore boundaries (or borders), an additional theory, Work/Family Border Theory is presented next as a component of this dissertation.

## **Work/Family Border Theory**

To fully examine the boundaries and borders surrounding our communicative practices via the mobile device between work and home, the Work/Family Border Theory was used to further guide this research. Clark (2000) posited borders segregate the domains which articulate the specific points at which domain behavior shifted from professional to home or vice versa. These borders take three forms: temporal (established work hours/established time for family), physical (material items/specific structure for workplace and home), and psychological (appropriate and accepted behaviors); all three are characterized by their permeability. Permeability is fluid and deemed an interruption when one domain interrupts another, whether that be temporally, physically, or psychologically.

Developed by Sue Campbell Clark in 2000, Work/Family Border Theory is a result of extensive literature review and qualitative research to fill the gap of previous theories on work and family (Clark, 2000). Clark (2000) noted the navigation of two different domains (work and home) through individuals being proactive or enactive; individuals cross borders while shaping and negotiating domains. While this theory was not established with mobile devices as a variable (Clark, 2000), it was relevant to inform the research design of this dissertation. The theory's main assumption is that the connection between work and family is solely shaped by individuals yet is reciprocal in that the environment of work and family also shapes the individual (Clark, 2000). The domains meet different individual needs such as professional achievement at work and showing and receiving love at home (Clark, 2000). Individuals are seen within all areas of the spectrum between work and family and travel between domains offer variety and

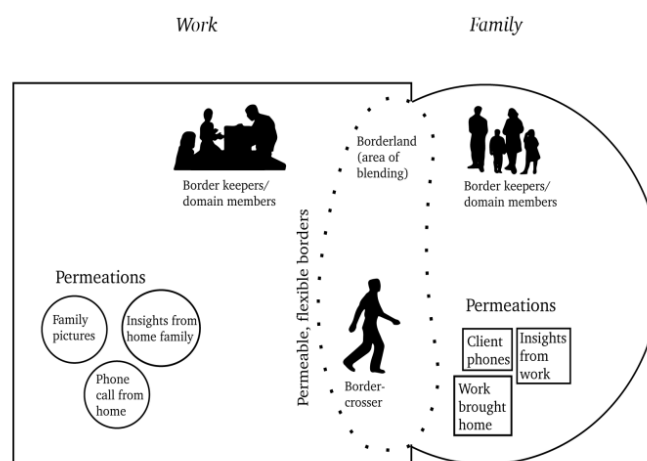
renewed energy/excitement to their lives, thus shaping them as individuals. The roots of this theory evolved from related literature and historical experiences dating back to the 1950s (Clark, 2000).

In the 1950s, work and family were primarily separate spaces, both operated temporally and physically independent of each other. As the 1970s approached, Katz and Kahn discussed a more open system surfaced in which components of each area (home and work) affected each other (Katz & Kahn, 1978). For example, the temporal and physical boundaries lessened in that behaviors and emotions from one area could potentially spill into another (Staines, 1980), thus impacting relationships (Clark, 2000). This could mean a bad day at work impacted the mood and behavior at home. Additionally, research suggested individuals compensate within each domain (Staines, 1980). For example, if an individual was unsatisfied at work, they pursued interactions at home that provided satisfaction and vice versa. Changes in family dynamics in the 1980s and 1990s included dual income earners, weekend and evening hours, and increasing demands from companies (Jacobs & Gerson, 2001). Further changes included increasing workplace stress and varying degrees of individuals' identification with either professional or domestic domain (Guest, 2002). Collectively, these changes solidified the interdependence of work and family (Clark, 2000).

While these examples looked through an emotional lens (Clark, 2000), they were relevant as they altered the original belief that work and family were independent while in fact, they were interdependent (Clark, 2000). In that vein, this dissertation looked at the interdependence of mobile devices between professional and domestic spheres and how interdependence influenced relationships. The decisions to technologically engage or

not engage made by the border crosser had the potential to directly influence relationships with the other domain members within the domestic sphere. This notion will be further expanded upon in the next section.

Within Work/Family Border Theory, Clark (2000) described the two polarities (work and home) as two countries that speak different languages, accept varying behaviors, and approach tasks differently. This theory offered a framework to understand the complexities of crossing the border between work and family domains to predict conflict and to achieve balance. Each domain had the potential to provide for different individual needs. Domain exclusivity was lost in this border area, yet when permeability is well established and individuals' exhibited flexibility, the blending of both domains occurred in the border area (Clark, 2000). Those three characteristics: permeability, flexibility, and blending determine the strength of the border. For example, in borders that are highly permeable, flexible, and enable blending, the border is weak. This served to be frustrating for both work and home domains. See Figure 1 for a graphic representation of the Work/Family Border Theory.



*Figure 1.* Work/Family Border Theory's pictorial representation. Adapted from "Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance," by Sue Campbell Clark, 2000, *Human Relations*, 53(6), p.754.

In explaining the representation, the border crosser represents the individual moving back and forth between domains; in this dissertation, the participants' are the border crossers. In Figure 1, the left side of the graphic signifies the professional sphere and the right side the domestic sphere. Spouses, significant others, and supervisors are all considered border keepers, whereas co-workers, children, and friends fall within the other domain members category. Both border keepers and other domain members are said to negotiate the domains and the subsequent behaviors within them. Border keepers were found to be influential to the priests in Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep's (2009) study in that they helped or hindered the border crosser in their attempt to balance work and home. Thus, these individuals had influence due to their expectations what the domain looked like. They were crucial to the border crosser (individual) in their management of both domains and the border (Clark, 2000).

In considering the advent of mobile devices, the domestication of the phone relaxed the borders by intertwining home and work (Palen & Hughes, 2007). In a 2007 study which focused on parents' use of mobile devices, bi-directionality was discussed in the light of parents fielding calls from their mobile devices both at work for home and at home for work. Parents found it difficult to have full involvement with family with 24/7 connectivity or on-call status for their work. The study focused on laptops, pagers, and mobile phones; the persistent usage of that technology permeated borders causing work-family and family-work spillover (Palen & Hughes, 2007). Another influence on the border strength was the border keepers and other domain members (Clark, 2000).

Spatial separation from the two domains was not as clear-cut as it seemed, as users had choices on when and how to respond (Wajcman et al., 2008). The border

between work and home domains was increasingly unstable with less recognizable and firm boundaries (Dery et al., 2014). In considering the border theory, this web of usage seemingly widened the spatial and temporal borders in which technology users crossed. Allen, Cho, & Maier (2014) suggested the permeability and flexibility of the borders needed reconsidered in the sense that when work and home life were convoluted, the ability to make and adhere to parameters to segment the two spheres challenged border crossers. They further supposed “permeability may be construed as a latent construct that is composed of other existing constructs, such as interruptions, role transitions, and internal work-family conflict” (Allen et al., 2014, p. 113).

To understand the balancing act between work and home regarding professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere, the Work/Family Border Theory was applicable to this research design surrounding two integral spheres within individuals’ lives.

### **Present Study**

Considering the expeditious adoption and usage of mobile devices within our everyday lives (Eadicicco, 2015; “Mobile Phone Ownership,” 2017; Olmstead, 2017; Sorenson, 2015) and their multifarious influences on family dynamics, this dissertation sought to explore and understand usage from the perspective of professional communicative usage within the domestic sphere. While there have been numerous studies on mobile devices within multiple theoretical perspectives (Kim et al., 2017), the fact remains technological communication variables were evolving and changing as fast as the mobile devices themselves. These changes had effects on interpersonal, familial, and organizational communication and relational quality. This communicative situation

made this dissertation research necessary to keep up with the changes and understand how relationships were influenced by decisions surrounding mobile device usage in this context.

Taking a qualitative methodological approach answered a call in research for in-depth qualitative research on 24/7 connectivity concerns (Dery et al., 2014). Employing Domestication Theory and Work/Family Border Theory to inform and guide the research design was appropriate as these theories offer a fresh and unique approach to understanding professional communication within the domestic sphere. While Domestication Theory had been used on a limited scale with mobile devices, for example, smartphone applications within everyday life, it was not used to explore professional (work):domestic (nonwork) communication in tandem with Work/Family Border Theory to assess relational implications.

In an effort to assess the mobile devices in this context, the researcher offered the following questions to guide the data collection and analysis.

*RQ1: How are individuals using mobile devices professionally within the domestic sphere?*

This question was designed to discover the intent of communication (Hughes & Hans, 2001; Burchell, 2015), the intensity and frequency of use (de Reuver et al., 2016), and how the borders were managed in respect to this usage. In accordance with Domestication Theory, the researcher sought to understand how the devices were incorporated into everyday life within the domestic sphere.

*RQ2: How are relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?*

In consideration of familial communicative concerns regarding mobile devices (Carvalho et al., 2015; Linke, 2012; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Villegas, 2013) and the establishment of boundaries between work and home (Dery et al., 2014; Palen & Hughes, 2007; Wajcman et al., 2008), this question looked specifically at how professional mobile device communicative decisions transcended to relationships within the domestic sphere.

*RQ3: What expectations are established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?*

In consideration of expectations of self and others, while taking into consideration the other domain members (Clark, 2000) and non-users (Campbell & Russo, 2003) had influence over decisions, this question uncovered what expectations were established as well as their purpose and outcome.

*RQ4: How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?*

This question shed light on border crossers, border keepers, and other domain members (Clark, 2000) which negotiated the expectations of time, space, and behavior within the respective domains. The researcher explored the process individuals went through to negotiate and strive to adhere to expectations.

Those research questions were contrived to advance theoretical applications, address rapid technological changes and subsequent communicative decision making, glean data on mobile device boundaries within family and the workforce, and uncover whether expectations of use were self-induced, organizationally-induced, or a combination of both. This project added to the Domestication Theory literature from this



perspective, which at this point lacked sufficient exploration. Further, it extended our overall understanding of the 2000 Work/Family Border Theory and how that theory and its stance on borders evolved with the advent and rapid infusion of mobile devices.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

This dissertation's purpose is to gather qualitative data via participants' stories and experiences to explore the possible familial relationship influences from the usage of mobile devices for professional (work) purposes within the domestic (nonwork) sphere. Mobile devices included both smartphones and tablets. To achieve this, the following research questions guided the exploration: (1) How are individuals using mobile devices professionally within the domestic sphere?, (2) How are familial relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?, (3) What expectations are established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?, and (4) How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?

First in this chapter is an explanation of the rationale for using a qualitative methodological approach. Second is the justification for utilizing semi-structured interviews for data collection. Third, the details are given surrounding participant selection. Finally, the procedures of recruitment, data collection, data analysis are described to include the coding process.

#### **Qualitative Approach**

A qualitative approach encompasses a theoretical interest in the knowledge and understanding of people's experiences and interpretations of communicative processes (Keyton, 2015). According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research uses theory as an interpretive lens to study the meaning individuals have imputed on a social or human issue. This means in considering an issue, the theory molds the overarching questions as

well as individual questions within the interviews (Creswell, 2014). To that end, the aim of this dissertation is to understand individuals' experiences and attitudes derived from the professional use of mobile devices within domestic spheres and the possible influences on familial relationships. Both Domestication Theory and Work/Family Border Theory guided and informed the research to understand this human communicative issue. Qualitative methodology seeks to achieve a comprehensive understanding of social concerns within a specific framework (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). This notion coincides with this dissertation's goal of understanding the use of mobile devices from a professional context within domestic spheres. Professional referred to any work communicative activity on a mobile device, and domestic sphere referred to any activity or location during nonwork hours. In other words, the domestic sphere extended outside the four physical walls of the home.

Theoretical underpinnings of this study added to the rationale for a qualitative research design. Domestication Theory has been typically explored through qualitative means with its innate ability to offer descriptions and overall understanding of a phenomenon (Haddon, 2007). Work/Family Border Theory contains qualitative roots in that it developed out of interviews and focus groups (Clark, 2000). *Understanding* is a word Clark (2000) used to describe the future direction of Work/Family Border Theory research. For example, "...understanding why work/family conflict exist." (p. 767). With that said, the overarching goal of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of experiences through stories, accounts, and explanations (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Within this dissertation, the researcher's goal was to hear the experiences of participants regarding their decision to engage or not engage in professional communication with

their mobile devices within the domestic sphere and to further understand the possible relational implications. The goal of the research aligned appropriately with the qualitative nature of the theories.

Mobile device research spans heterogeneous contexts and methodological approaches. From 1999-2014, Kim et al. (2017) reviewed 131 articles from 10 different communication journals encompassing various contexts of mobile device research as part of a content analysis. Findings showed 58.8% were quantitative (survey being the #1 instrument), 37.4% were qualitative (interview being the #1 instrument), and the final 3.8% reflected what the authors called a combined category. Accordingly, while not an exhaustive list, an assessment of resources for this dissertation showed the following methodological results: quantitative 53% (Chesley, 2005; Chesley, 2006; David & Roberts, 2017; de Reuver et al., 2016; Derks, van Duin, Tims, & Bakker, 2014; Ragsdale & Hoover, 2016; Rendle-Short, 2015; Roberts et al., 2014; Rudi et al., 2015; Turel et al., 2011), qualitative 21% (Burchell, 2015; Golden, 2013; Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2015; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017), and other methods 31% to include literature reviews (Cohen, 2010; Hughes & Hans, 2001; MacCormick, Dery, & Kolb, 2012; Villegas, 2013), case studies (Dery et al., 2014), and ethnographies (Sadler et al., 2006). There is a need for more in-depth qualitative studies on mobile devices specifically on their ability to offer individuals 24/7 connectivity (Dery et al., 2014). This need coincided with the focus of this dissertation. Additionally, Domestication Theory was a virtually untapped theoretical basis within mobile device research (Kim et al., 2017). While it was used quantitatively as a basis for a 2016 study on smartphones specific to mobile applications (de Reuver et

al., 2016), it had not been used qualitatively, to the researcher's knowledge, in tandem with Work/Family Border Theory to study mobile devices.

### **Data Collection Method**

Qualitative research comprises four basic types of data collection approaches. These types include observations, interviews, documents, and audio/visual materials (Creswell, 2013). Interviews provide historical and current information through the direct interviews of the participants (Creswell, 2013), which was desired for this dissertation. Interviews have been conducted by qualitative researchers for various reasons to include understanding individuals' perspectives, considering past experiences, gaining expert insight, flexibility to alter line of questioning, and gathering information unavailable through other types of data collection (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). In addition, interviews glean open ended responses that aid the researcher in determining why some individuals act in a particular way (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). For this dissertation, the researcher determined direct contact with participants in the form of interviews was the most advantageous way to collect data.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the use of an interview guide. Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher consistently covers the same topics with each participant, yet has the flexibility to alter questions as the conversation unfolds (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The interview guide offers the researcher the flexibility to take the discussion into other areas as the interview progresses (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Having the ability to shed light on new areas that were brought forth by the participant was highly beneficial to the outcomes of this research. While the interview guide offered flexibility and efficient use of time, it also served to increase reliability to the present

study through the consistent framework (Bernard, 2002). The semi-structured interview, based on an interview guide provided consistent and comparable data, left the door open for new ideas to develop and leads to be followed (Bernard, 2002). Further, it conveyed to the interviewee the researcher was organized, efficient with time, and proactively regulated the interview (Bernard, 2002). The latter was especially important when interviewing individuals that were “accustomed to efficient use of their time” (Bernard, 2002, p. 205). This was extremely relevant to the participants that are discussed in the next section.

### **Participants**

The researcher purposefully selected participants that best enabled her to understand the phenomenon and explore the research questions (Creswell, 2014). Hence, the researcher used a criterion snowball sampling method. There were two components of this sampling method. Criteria were specific parameters established to set inclusionary and/or exclusionary characteristics to the desired sample (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Secondly, a snowball sampling method was employed. This meant participants that fell within specific criteria were also asked to refer others that fell within those same criteria to increase the research participation (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

The participant criteria (or parameters) for this study included job status (part-time/full-time), hierarchy, work location, age, technology ownership, and available communicative technology devices at the work location. First of all, participants were full-time employees within a management role. Exploration of salary-based managers allowed for exploration of work responsibilities and how those responsibilities influenced possible spillover into the domestic sphere within that organizational hierarchy.

Management personnel included, but were not limited to individuals whose tasks include managing people, programs, projects, finances, or functions within the organization. This parameter allowed the researcher to assess the managerial level within the organizational hierarchy and how that level of work responsibility and subsequent demands influenced the spillover of professional communication into the domestic sphere. To ascertain data on participants' physical borders between home and work, the managers reported to a specific physical work location; they were not individuals that work out of a home office. A minimum age of 25 was expected to allow for the acquisition of education or experience necessary for a managerial role. The participant had a personal or work-provided mobile device (or both). Additionally, the physical work location provided additional communicative options beyond their mobile device, such as desktop or laptop computers, and landlines. Participants for this study were not compensated.

To ascertain the desired number of participants, Creswell (2014) recommends 20-30 is an appropriate goal. While that was a desired number, theoretical sampling left the data collection open regarding the number of individuals, rather it was focused on concepts acquired (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This meant the researcher followed the trail of the concepts unfolding from the interview data without really knowing where it led. As concepts presented themselves, the researcher explored them in more depth with an attitude of discovery versus one of securing a particular number of participants. Therefore, the researcher sought a saturation point to determine the number of participants. Saturation has been referred to as the point at which no new concepts surface from the data collection process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell, 2013).

## **Procedures**

### **Recruitment**

To recruit participants, the researcher began by inviting individuals that fit the criteria from her personal and professional contacts as well as through LinkedIn. The researcher has over 10 years of experience in business, as well as over 15 years of experience in K-12 public education and higher education, therefore, her personal and professional networks are appropriate as a launching pad for this research. Considering the nature of LinkedIn as a professional social media site, that was an appropriate site to recruit participants. LinkedIn's mission statement has been to "connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful" (About LinkedIn, 2018). Additionally, relevance for this site was drawn from the content of an April 2, 2018 LinkedIn post containing an article on New York legislation to ban messaging tools for employees in nonwork times (LinkedIn, 2018). This controversial post sparked 2,840 comments, most with additional replies. As this was part of professional discourse on LinkedIn, this site was relevant for recruitment purposes.

Recruitment procedures began with a recruitment script (See Appendix A) shared via a LinkedIn post and emails directly to personal and professional contacts. Once participants agreed, the researcher emailed, texted, or called them personally to set up a convenient time and place for an interview. It was important to clarify where and when data would be collected (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Consequently, the researcher accommodated the participant in what was the most convenient location for them in consideration of their time, space, and geographic location. The interview occurred in the researcher's home, the participants' home, the participants' workplace, a neutral location,



or via digital means such as FaceTime or Skype. The researcher ultimately interviewed 32 participants for this study; 15 of those resulted from referrals. The participants' demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Participants' Demographic Information*

Pseudonym	Age	Sex	Family Status	Industries
Tim	55	M	Married/ No Children	Benefits/Insurance
Ann	42	F	Living with Significant Other Step Child	K-12 Public Education
Jared	47	M	Married/ Children	K-12 Public Education
Jessica	49	F	Divorced/Children	Retail Banking
Alexa	28	F	Married/No Children	Diversity Coordination
Adam	45	M	Living with Significant Other No Children	Higher Education Administration
Landi	35	F	Married/Children	Architecture
David	49	M	Married/Children	Public Relations
Ben	38	M	Married/Children	Petroleum Wholesale Distribution
Carol	63	F	Widowed/Children	Scrap Iron Metal Processing

---

Kevin	49	M	Married/No Children	Financial Planning
Jake	46	M	Married/Children	K-12 Public Education
Rich	49	M	Married/Children	Bridge/Civil Engineering
Ryan	43	M	Married/No Children	Government/Higher Education
Lisa	59	F	Divorced/Child	Higher Education Administration
Janine	39	F	Married/Child	Public Relations
Dani	40	F	Separated/Children	Higher Education Administration
Lydia	39	F	Married/Children	Private School Administration
Ellen	48	F	Married/Children	Academic Non-profit Research
Rachel	47	F	Married/Children	Public Relations
Mary	47	F	Married/Child	Benefits/Insurance
Curtis	38	M	Married/Children	Electrical Contracting
Alyssa	35	F	Married/No Children	Private School Administration
Kara	37	F	Married/No Children	Retail
Cindy	46	F	Married/Children	Disability Services
Bonnie	52	F	Married/Children	Hospital Nursing Education
Laura	40	F	Married/Children	Absence Management
Nigel	36	M	Married/Children	Bridge/Civil Engineering
Mark	53	M	Married/Children	Christian Camping Industry
Sheila	51	F	Married/Children	Property Management
Karen	56	F	Separated/Children	Education

---

## Data Collection

After the participants were secured, the data collection process ensued. At the time of the interview, potential participants were provided an informed consent (See Appendix B) that explained their rights; the participants were required to sign the informed consent prior to officially beginning data collection (Bernard, 2002; Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Those participants opting to be interviewed via Skype or FaceTime received their informed consent and returned it signed via email prior to the interview. Procedures were approved by the IRB. Lastly, pseudonyms were utilized to provide participants with anonymity (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Linke, 2012).

Once participants signed the informed consent, which included the permission to record the interview for transcription purposes (See Appendix B), the interview began by first establishing rapport. During the course of establishing rapport, encouragement was conveyed to the participants. Since the researcher sought to learn from the participants, she offered encouragement and assurances to the participants so they felt comfortable interjecting throughout the interview if they thought of something important to share (Bernard, 2002). Next, the motivation for the study was explained followed by the actual questions from the interview guide. During the interview process, probes were utilized to encourage the participant to share more information (Bernard, 2002), yet consideration was taken as to not lead the participant. The researcher practiced patience and appropriate wait time with the silent probe. This meant the researcher waited and allowed the participant to think and continue. Silence was effectively combined with a head nod or the *uh-huh* probe to encourage continued discourse. The *uh-huh* probe spoke for itself; the researcher simply said *uh-huh* to offer neutral, yet affirmative responses (Bernard,

2002). Additionally, the echo probe was used, though sparingly and only as needed, to ensure the understanding of the participants' dialogue.

Notes were also an important component of interviewing. According to Bernard (2002), notes should be taken in addition to recordings. Notes have been focused on items the recording couldn't offer, such as the demeanor of the participant, surroundings, interruptions, and general contents of the interview. Both transcriptions and detailed notes were the "meat and potatoes" of the data (Bernard, 2002). Thus, the researcher was vigilant at ensuring the details of recordings and notes were attended to.

Upon completion of each interview, the digital file was uploaded to the researcher's password protected computer then sent to a third party transcriber. Upon receiving the transcription back from the third party transcription service, the researcher listened to the recordings to ensure accurate transcriptions; edits were made as necessary. This review reacquainted the researcher with the data to prepare for the analysis stage.

Interviews for this dissertation ranged from 24.03 minutes to 89.20 minutes representing an average of 54.51 minutes. Those interviews resulted in 974 pages of transcribed data used with notes for data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was guided by Corbin and Strauss' Grounded Theory, which offered a systematic approach to bring order to the logic of discovery (Creswell, 2013). This process began as transcriptions were completed; the researcher did not wait until all the interviews and transcriptions were complete to begin analyzing. This is important within the Grounded Theory framework as it allowed for constant comparisons of data early in the analysis process in which the researcher began to identify emerging concepts

(Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In subsequent interviews within the data collection process, the researcher was able to recognize themes that had already developed and also recognized additional emerging themes; this recognition assisted the researcher in refining the semi-structured interview guide extemporaneously. Grounded Theory enabled the researcher to study concepts that needed further examination and were grounded in data discovered from participants' relevant experiences (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). This was appropriate for this study in that the researcher developed theoretical explanations that reached beyond what was currently known about the usage of mobile devices for professional usage within the domestic sphere and the possible relational influences. In looking specifically at what was not currently known, the researcher acquired new insights into age-old issues. As mentioned earlier, the issue between work/family border began as a theory of how work and family borders were shaped by the individuals (Clark, 2000). Therefore, Grounded Theory was able to look at the work/family border issue which offered new insight with the growth of mobile devices. By using the Grounded Theory approach, the researcher was able to examine how "logic and emotion combine to influence how persons respond to events or handle problems through action and interaction" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 11). Finally, through Grounded Theory, the researcher drew conclusions from the participants' voices and words, not from her own preconceived thoughts on what might be the outcome (Charmaz, 1996).

As the transcriptions were returned to the researcher from the third party transcriber and the transcriptions were checked for accuracy, this process aided to improve the validity of the qualitative research process (Creswell, 2014). Next, the official analysis process began with coding. The researcher investigated the results with

the goal of uncovering codes and themes derived from the data. This investigation was ongoing while continuing to interview participants with the goal of saturation of data. The researcher continued to interview, transcribe, and analyze until new concepts were no longer surfacing through the interview process; thus saturation of data was achieved (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell, 2013). The next section offers descriptions of the coding process to include microanalysis, open coding, in vivo coding, thematic analysis, constant comparative method, axial coding, and selective coding.

### **Coding**

The coding process began during the researcher's experience listening to the recordings to substantiate the accuracy of the transcriptions. Not only did the researcher get reacquainted with the data, but also used microanalysis as a preliminary analytic tool to explore certain components of data with greater depth to begin deciphering categories (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Microanalysis as a component of open coding, was appropriate to use in the early stages of analysis, and gave the researcher the opportunity to think differently about concepts during this early review process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Next, the researcher used both open coding and in vivo coding to analyze the interview data. As ideas manifested from data, or open coding, the researcher noted categories that surfaced (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). A category might be derived from participants' actual words or phrases; called in vivo coding, and was a process that occurred at the same time as open coding in this research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). During this data interpretation component, the researcher employed Owen's (1984) thematic analysis procedures, noting repetitiveness and forcefulness of participants' verbal and nonverbal responses. This aided in the

creation of categories. Throughout this initial coding process, the researcher looked at data line by line and used the constant comparison method to compare new data to categories already identified to validate original findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell, 2013). Also, new categories developed through this ongoing process of comparing units of data with each other (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Once categories were determined, the researcher engaged in axial and selective coding processes.

Once open coding process was complete, axial coding was employed by the researcher to find connections between categories to make a new set of codes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Thus, the purpose for this stage was to allow the researcher to separate and re-categorize to collapse categories and form overarching themes.

The final process was the selective coding. In this stage, the researcher pieced the puzzle together into an understandable big picture of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Through this process, the researcher made connections and reports findings in the forthcoming results and discussion sections of this dissertation.

In Chapter 4, Results, the researcher will share the findings of the data analysis in terms of the four research questions. By using strong participant quotes, rich thick descriptions are provided so readers can transfer findings to their setting due to shared characteristics (Bernard, 2002; Creswell, 2014). Sharing these rich thick descriptions aids in building the validity of the study (Creswell, 2014). Results are organized by theme, categories, and then by supporting quotes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

The goal of this dissertation was to understand individuals' professional communication using mobile devices within the domestic sphere. Accordingly, mobile devices were defined as smartphones or tablets. Professional communication referred to any communication activity that accomplished work tasks. The domestic sphere was defined as the time and space devoted to nonwork activities with family, friends, or acquaintances at any given domestic moment or within any nonwork location. This dissertation sought to gather qualitative data to add to the body of literature on how media usage, in these instances mobile devices, was incorporated in the domestic sphere and how it influenced relationships.

In order to understand the forthcoming terminology, it is imperative to revisit terms derived from the Work/Family Border Theory (Clark, 2000) and define terms related to this dissertation's overarching themes and findings. First of all, the border crosser is the individual that crosses the border between work and family domains, which in this research was the participant interviewed. Next, the border keepers/other domain members in the domestic sphere comprise spouses, significant others, children, and extended family. Finally, an important concept from the Work/Family Border Theory is permeations, which is when the industry permeates into the domestic sphere or vice versa. Industry permeations with respect to the original Work/Family Border Theory included client phone calls, actual work brought home, and insights from work. This dissertation found additional manners in which the industry permeates into the domestic sphere specifically due to the influence of the mobile device.



Considering the research goal, participants shared detailed accounts of how, why, and where they used mobile devices professionally within the domestic sphere, what or who influenced their usage, and how usage potentially impacted domestic relationships. In order to answer the four research questions, the participants' words and stories were analyzed and the following three themes developed: Control, Sentiments, and Influences. See Table 2 below for a summary of the research questions.

Table 2

*Summary of Research Questions*

---

RQ1	How are individuals using the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere?
RQ2	How are relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?
RQ3	How are expectations established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?
RQ4	How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?

---

The first theme derived from the data is Control. Participants found areas they controlled and areas they didn't control in terms of time and parameters. Control shed light on areas of research questions one, three, and four. The second theme is Sentiments. Sentiments is defined as how the participant (border crosser) or other domestic domain members felt emotionally based on their mood and temperament and also included the

interviewees' perceptions of others. This data offers answers to research questions one and two. The third theme, Influences, uncovers the border crosser's personal influences, as well as how domestic border keepers and industry permeations influence border crosser's mobile device usage and the subsequent impact on domestic relationships. This data provides answers to research questions one and three. Finally, information was gleaned on how participants used the mobile device for nonwork purposes while at work, which found relevancy in understanding participants' experiences within their professional sphere. This is important to explore possible differences in usage between the professional and the domestic sphere. A summary of themes and subthemes can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

*Summary of Themes*

Themes	Subthemes
Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. In control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Responsiveness</li> <li>ii. Workflow</li> <li>iii. Interstitial time</li> <li>iv. Domestic events</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Out of control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Actual time</li> <li>ii. Interruptions</li> <li>iii. Behavior</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Parameters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. In control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Self-developed</li> <li>ii. Verbal announcements</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Out of control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Organic development</li> <li>ii. Unwritten/informal</li> <li>iii. Written/formal</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Sentiments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Border crosser sentiments <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Proactive</li> <li>b. Reactive</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Others' sentiments <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Border crosser perceptions</li> <li>b. Actual verbal/nonverbal behavior</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Influences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Border crosser <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cognitive influences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Personality</li> <li>ii. Reputation</li> <li>iii. Work ethic</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Domestic sphere <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Border keepers</li> <li>b. Industry permeations</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Nonwork in Work	

## Control

Control refers to the control participants had or did not have regarding mobile device professional communication within the domestic sphere. It is important to remember this control, or lack thereof, focused on professional communication and other manners in which to advance workflow within the domestic sphere – in nonwork times and spaces. Control elucidates experiences related to the subthemes of time and parameters. Included in each of those subthemes are detailed accounts of participants' experiences that result in being in control and/or out of control. In exploration of those subthemes and related stories, insight was shared to answer *RQ1* How are individuals using the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere?, *RQ3* How are expectations established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?, and *RQ4* How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?

## Time

Time was overwhelmingly an important concept derived from the data. This section chronicles areas of the participants' domestic lives where time played a role in their professional mobile device usage. Participants disclosed how they felt in control of their time and decisions surrounding how to use their time wisely, while also expounding on several situations in which time was out of their direct control. The first area that will be considered is how participants controlled their time.

**In control.** Participants spoke of how they controlled their professional time on the mobile device when not at work within the domestic sphere. They felt control of responsiveness, workflow decisions, interstitial usage of the mobile device for

professional usage, and also discussed manners in which they controlled engagement during domestic events such as dinner, vacations, or family activities.

***Responsiveness.*** Importance was placed on the participants' ability to control their responses. They offered a quick response, prioritizing who they responded to (i.e. bosses), and controlled their overall response rate. Interestingly, participants also strove to control their response expectations from their employees and professional contacts. Throughout the discussions, participants appreciated the ability to answer immediately to get things off their plate. The benefit of immediacy enabled participants to clear out communicative items such as texts or emails that might carry over into their next work day. "Next day" was mentioned by several of the interviewees and thus was instrumental in controlling their response times in planning for the next workday and avoiding surprises or unplanned, possibly unpleasant, occurrences in their next workday. Carol mentioned her preference to quickly respond using the mobile device.

Because I have so many things that I'm in control of and I found that over the years it's easier if you deal with it right then, with a five minute phone call and say, 'no, you know what do it this way,' or 'he can wait,' or whatever, than to let it pile up and try to figure it out when you get back.

She felt waiting until she returned to the office served to prolong the time invested in a situation that could be better controlled with a quick response in the evening. Other participants, like Mark, discussed how he believed a quick response was beneficial to the sender.

I'm assuming that the people on the other end of the phone need an answer...it's not a big inconvenience for me to take five minutes and answer...and the way I

am, if I want an answer, I'd like to have the answer as soon as I can. So, I also try and give the answer as soon as I can.

Most participants kept their phone with them always and, as such they were always available, while others like Ellen and Dani shared they periodically checked their phones. Mark simply stated "If I'm awake, I answer my phone just like at my work, whether I'm at work or not." Laura said, "Well, it's just being on- so, so off hours, I am always on." By off hours, Laura was referring to her domestic sphere when she was not at work. Participants equated the convenient presence of the mobile device to their ability to be timely in their responses for professional purposes in their nonwork environment. Sometimes a person wanted to be able to shut that off, but realized the benefit of controlling the after-hours response. Cindy found "as much as we would like to be able to shut it off, there are just times it's easier to deal with it in the moment and be done with it than to let it fester." While Cindy enjoyed the ability to control the times she needed to quickly respond, with experience came the wisdom that immediate responses were not always necessary and the ability to control her response rate was important. When discussing the nuances of a new leadership role, she shared, "I was always afraid that I was going to miss that critical email and....You know, over time we all learn that nothing is that critical that a couple hours is going to make that big of a difference." Like Cindy's initial fear of missing a critical email, David suggested that he had a bit of "FOMO [Fear of Missing Out]" as he was often on his phone.

I think it is...in some ways an unconscious...should I say need to know what's going on. There is a bit of FOMO, I guess you're missing out. Did something

happen at work that I should know about? Is there something I should be prepared for tomorrow when I walk in?

Like Cindy and David, due to their fear of missing out, participants controlled how and at what time they responded to prepare for the next day. Cindy also referred to work/family balance as she described how she learned controlling her time also meant some communication didn't require a response, thus she did not always respond to the sender.

Like Cindy, Jessica enjoyed freedom as well and preferred to be in control and provided responses in her nonwork or domestic time as it aided her clients in making quicker decisions. In fact, to control her responsiveness, she shared "I'll excuse myself and tell her [Jessica's daughter] I have to discuss something with a client and she knows now that if I'm on the phone with a client, just give me a second." Similarly, Jared exhibited control by excusing himself from the family to be responsive for professional communication.

Jared prided himself in responding to people in a timely fashion. While he sometimes questioned if the response was necessary at that time, he also didn't want to risk forgetting to respond. He enjoyed the convenience the mobile device offered him and the control he had to choose to stay connected and engaged with his managerial duties in the education field.

I'm anal retentive about emails, I am always replying to messages at home from my cell phone...that's pretty much I don't like to say round the clock but it's round the clock and I respond and I do that just so I don't get to a point where I'm trying to respond to a litany of emails. So I'm accessible, probably too accessible at times, because it kinda can overtake you a little bit. I find myself late at night

checking my cell phone and early in the morning to see what messages I have on there, but that's my primary mode of communication when it comes to responding for ya know even with with teachers. It's emails. Teachers have my cell phone number so they can they can text message me at any time or teachers do in an emergency or even just if something's happening that they need to share.

Jared preferred to act in as much real time as possible and strove to respond by the end of each day and sometimes being in two places at one time (home and professional communication) became challenging to control his responsiveness goals.

Mike was in a similar managerial role in an educational setting; he also preferred to provide timely responses when possible.

I would say just—there are certain things I know I can take care of quickly, through a mobile device. So if it's a—if it's an email—a quick email from a parent or a teacher, or, some other communication from—from one of those people that I can give them an answer right away, I—I'll do it. 'Cause it makes their life easier, it makes my life easier 'cause it's not something I have to deal with the next day. I won't forget. You know I could send them a quick email yes or no. If they need my availability for a meeting in the morning, you know I can say yes I can be there, no I can't, rather than waiting until I come in the next day five minutes before they want to meet with me. So that...I try my best to get back to people as quick as I can. If they have questions that certainly if I can give them an answer I will.

Mike recognized the value of being in control of his response time. Like other participants, Mike felt his next workday was more efficient due to his decision to respond



during his nonwork time. Unlike Cindy, who didn't always send a status response to the sender, Mike preferred to email a response explaining that he would take care of it the next workday. Educational managers explained their response routines regarding the teachers they managed and to the parents of students. Participants in that industry appreciated the ability to focus on students and other communicative issues during the school day and further appreciated the mobile device affording them the opportunity to control quick responses in the evenings.

While participants were in control of their responsiveness, they also believed due to the mobile device, others expected timely responses from them. Mike often woke to a few emails from parents that were sent at two in the morning, as well as having received weekend emails. He spoke of trying to offer timely responses when possible.

I don't want to speak for parents but I sometimes believe that because a parent can email you on a Saturday afternoon and they expect a response right away. I don't necessarily wait until Monday to respond. But if I'm busy I'm not going to give an immediate response and if it's—if they have a question about something I'm not familiar with I can't get an answer until Monday anyway. I sometimes I think we're too... too available? Too accessible? But at the same time too sometimes there are issues happen on the weekends where an incident may have happened on a Friday where, the parents have questions about it on Saturday and if I can get back to them I will.

While Mike felt the urgency of needing to respond, he maintained control of his time and prioritized his decisions to engage. Similarly to Mike's belief in his parents' response

expectations, Rich believed people expected others to have their mobile device on them at all times.

They expect a response quickly to an email or a voicemail or whatever, because they, they think that you're just sitting there waiting for them to get ahold, you know, for you to get ahold of them, and for you to respond back. So, I think that's ... and the upside is, you do have that ability to be more responsive, but I think the negative is that it's sort of an expectation nowadays. So it's sort of, has a, a draw on your time.

Rich's discussion on the conducive nature of mobile devices for professional communication in nonwork times left him a bit conflicted with the ability to control responsiveness, yet manage others' expectations. Though participants like Mike and Rich identified the existence of others' response expectations, they firmly established their sole control on how they spent their time responding to people who needed them.

To manage the expectations of their superiors, Dani, Alexa, and Ellen intentionally chose to respond quickly to their employers within their industries. Dani explained in her line of work she had the flexibility to control where, when, and how she did her work. However, she chose to provide a quick response to her boss as needed considering the "formal power" that she had over Dani.

When I do email from the phone, it really is almost only response to my director, and it's because she's asking me something on a weekend. And it would just take me 30 seconds to reply and just take care of it.

Dani deemed her bosses communication as urgent and thus she chose to provide timely responses. Alexa had a similar thought process to Dani in that Alexa chose to provide

quick responses to her boss, however, she also instituted a flagging system that controlled her response rate to others to protect her domestic time.

So if it's from the Dean, who's my boss, who's also the Dean, which is like really important, right. So if it's the Dean and she asks me something, she knows like—and she usually says, like, 'don't worry about this right this second. Like, you know, you can tell me tomorrow,' but I'm like, 'well I might as well just tell you right now like I'm reading it, like—I'll just respond to you.' So usually if it's from an administrator or somebody—a colleague with the Dean's office or something, or the Dean, I'll respond pretty much right away from my phone. But then if it's a student or if it's pretty much anything else, I'll just flag it and follow up within the next day.

Noticeably, the Dean communicated to Alexa that she did not need to respond until the next day. As such, Alexa maintained power and control over her response decision. Ellen also believed her superiors appreciated the timeliness of her responses. Ellen put pressure on herself to ensure she responded during her nonwork time as needed by physicians she worked for.

The other day one of the physicians emailed me and asked me a question and I was like, oh, I gotta you know, I answered them right away and he's like, 'well Ellen, no rush, like you don't have to.' He's like, 'I know you're at home right now.' Like he was like understanding so. But that was more on me because I'm like, oh, he needs this information. I feel like I should give it to him, you know? She elaborated that while she didn't have to provide a quick response, nor did she think the sender was stressed about getting a response, "but they appreciate the timeliness of

the answer.” It was significant to recognize in light of their obvious control, they willingly relinquished control to respond to bosses and in a timely fashion; they did not want to make a person with higher power wait regardless of the directive that the communication could wait.

In considering the participants’ personal response practices in tandem with professional communication on their mobile device, as managers, they also placed importance on their expectations of when others should respond to them. While participants mentioned responding to their bosses, they did not readily expect subordinates to have that same level of response towards them. Lisa and Cindy sometimes emailed individuals in the evening. They both preferred direct reports didn’t answer them. In fact, Cindy had even communicated to them that she didn’t want a response. For Ann, that expectation was situation dependent. She explained she did not

have that expectation from my teachers I think that that goes from my heart you know and them needing to break away, I think, when it came to my administrative colleagues not so much. I think that that would require, I would want them to respond because typically those conversations are maybe at a heightened level of something that needs addressed. But I think with my staff I don’t, I don’t have that expectation for an immediate response.

Clearly, Ann didn’t necessarily expect a response from individuals she managed throughout the workday. Other participants spoke of that same belief system and shared how they worked to manage it. Mary solved this by proactively postdating emails.

If there's not, you know, a burning emergency around that and so we try to, even if we are working over the weekend, we're postdating emails so you know that they send to an employee like on Monday morning.

In that way, she had control over at what time of day her employees responded, thus in turn controlled her need to re-respond. Lydia believed and behaved in a similar fashion to control not only her response rate, but her expectation of others'.

So, you know, I think that it's reasonable to expect people to respond to email between like eight and six. I don't think I need to be responding to parents at 8:00 at night. Sometimes that's when I have the time to. And so I will sit down and write that, but I think in terms of them, their reply back that can, if I send it out at 7:30 the next morning, they replied back, comes back during office hours and then we're still talking during office hours.

Those controls Mary and Lydia put in place allowed them to control the professional communication dynamic by thinking through not only their response rate, but how to control their response timing from others. That plan allowed the dialogue to continue during work hours.

In the same vein, Rachel's husband pointed out to her the time stamp on her emails which turned into a discussion about responsiveness.

He says, 'Look what time it is.' Like, 11 o'clock at night, whatever. He said, 'You don't want to time stamp on it, 11 o'clock at night. Well, they'll think that you never leave your job.' I'm like, 'Well, I don't.'

While Rachel's husband questioned her response time and what a time stamp communicated to others, Rachel possessed the ability to decide to approach the situation

more like Mary and Lydia, but ultimately Rachel was in control of her responsiveness and as such elected to respond with the 11:00 time stamp.

In examples from Lydia, Mary, and Rachel, participants elaborated on the various strategic approaches to how they controlled their responses, response interpretations and actions of others, and their response expectations.

Participants had varying schools of thought and practices on how they strategically planned to engage, but overwhelmingly discussed how planning improved the timing throughout their next day. Participants talked of enacting the control of their next workday by engaging regardless of the potential impacts on the domestic sphere and subsequent relationships within that sphere. They spoke of this ability to invest time and engagement as a benefit to their professional sphere. Kevin was cognizant to how some mobile device dialogue between him and his assistant helped plan for the next day; that dialogue represented a shift in the way things happened in his industry prior to the advent of mobile devices.

Max would go and actually text me after work to remind me of an appointment in the morning or um, 'hey, FYI you need to call this person tomorrow morning.

They just called in.' Whereas before, you wouldn't get that. She wouldn't call the home and grab the landline and call my home. That never happened back then neither. It's just everything would wait until the next day.

Prior to mobile devices, professional colleagues were unable to reach each other unless the person was physically at home and answered their landline. That intentional practice within his industry and position at the company enabled plans to be in place for the following day enabling a smoother start and flow to the overall day.

Many participants felt the need to look at their mobile device right before they went to bed, first thing in the morning, or intermittently throughout the day to plan their transition to work. Others, like Janine, intentionally engaged more frequently throughout the evening/weekend to avoid numerous emails she needed to address the next day.

I'll be able to clear a couple of hundred [emails] just so that I know coming in Monday, I'm not going to have 300 emails in my inbox. I mean, a lot of them I'll be able to, oh, this needs, I can forward this to this person, or oh, we took care, I took care of that. Delete, or oh, why are we, why is the sales salesperson emailing me delete, you know, those kinds of things that are simple to take care of.

For Janine, this nonwork time was well spent to alleviate stress and overload when she arrived at work in the morning. Similarly, Jessica checked her email three to four times per night to stay abreast of situations and needs for the next day.

I'm not required to, but I do just because I have to keep up with, you know, knowing what's going to happen the next day or if a client needs, if somebody wants to get ahold of me for a loan, I'm not going to wait until the next day to call them.

By choosing to engage to plan for the next day, Jessica believed her timely responses offered superb service for her clients. Like Jessica's goal of offering superb client service, Ben made it clear when he joined his company that he was not going to fail. His philosophy was "So if that means, you know, being on the device for a couple of hours every evening or on the weekends then so be it." He elaborated in the passage below.

There are connections and there are fellow staff members, others that we do business with that, without the mobile device I think it would be much more

difficult to have that relationship, because it's just so convenient to, you know, at any moment. Again I might think of something that I wanted to tell a customer or that I wanted to offer a customer or check with a supplier on and I'll think about it at eight o'clock at night, you know. And, you know, if you didn't have the mobile device you'd either have to write it down so you could call them the next day, but it's just so easy now to just again, fire off an email, fire off a text, call them and say, 'hey I wanted to tell you this earlier but f—totally forgot.' You know, or, 'hey I wanted you to check into this for me, you know, look into it and get back to me tomorrow and let me know what you found.' So it's uh, most definitely there's um, there's a lot of that going on that uh, couldn't happen without the mobile device.

Ben made a promise to himself and others and he planned to fulfill that within his industry. As such, he was accepting of the fact that he would have to sacrifice domestic time to increase his overall success at work. Ben was in control of this decision and embraced it as a reality.

Ann, Mike, and Jared's clients were parents and students within a public school system. Those managers had a system in place that was accessed from their mobile device called *AESOP* which was used to control substitute teachers for their next workday. This was a tool they visited frequently in the evening to preplan for the next day, as Ann articulated. "The things such as the *AESOP*, you think you're going to be short subs the next day so you're constantly checking that in the evening or in the morning before work hours." The practice of checking and reacting as needed helped control the next workday; in the absence of checking that, the day could begin on a very



stressful note. Beyond intentionally planning to check *AESOP*, Ann shared her next workday would be overwhelming without other intentional communication check-ins to her email and texts via her mobile device.

I think it absolutely would be more pressure in my work you know if I'm able to stay on top of things outside of work it allows me a little better opportunity to stick to what I need to the next day which always brings new things anyway. So to compound the already craziness of a day with things I could've accomplished the night before and didn't that's the part that I think would become overwhelming.

Lydia also believed engagement by reviewing emails and mobile device communication in her nonwork time positively impacted her next day.

So that I'm not kind of then backlogged to the next day where I get another influx and again, depending on what my schedule is the next day, you know, there are heavier days and lighter days and so I kind of managed that looking at what my calendar looks like and how much needs to be done at home versus how much needs to be done at work.

Nigel used his time uniquely with communicative social media posts by using the *Buffer* app, which he learned about in professional social media training.

They put us on to this *Buffer* app, which is pretty cool. So you ... it works for everything, like *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *LinkedIn*, whatever you want, and it, it basically is a place you can buffer articles...you just put something out earlier that day, you're not gonna just send another one, so you can buffer it so that every

Tuesday, at 9:00 .a.m., it puts the next article in your queue. It's, kind of, a nice way to, kind of, maintain a social media presence.

Nigel explained the efficiency of buffering articles to rollout to friends and followers on his controlled timing. This use of the *Buffer* app enabled him to communicate relevant information to his professional contacts not only just in the next day, but planned out into even the next week. He found that useful to boost professional communication, while controlling his time and his potential recipients.

While participants controlled time in terms of their responsiveness to others, they sometimes did so at the expense of their domestic time. With high concern for their next day and what stresses that might bring to their professional sphere, light was shed on the manners in what responsive decisions participants made and their perspective of others. In consideration of the participants' responsiveness decisions that impact time within the domestic sphere, they also placed utmost importance on their ability to control their ability to work remotely using other features and applications of the mobile device. David valued the ability to control his responses and his ability to professionally engage with the mobile device at the time he desired.

I like to have the control...I like the idea of self-directing and I can choose if I'm thinking of something work related outside of work that I can still do something about it. I don't have to wait. I don't want to.

David, like other participants, appreciated the device for its inherent qualities that allow for advancing workflow resulting in wise use of time.

**Workflow.** The in vivo code of workflow refers to the ability to control the advancement of participants' work through active management and monitoring of

industry happenings via their mobile device. As such, they are controlling their time to use it wisely so work doesn't stop, this management of professional workflow occurred in the domestic sphere. To this effect, participants disclosed ways in which they could control their mobile device usage to actively manage components of work and ways they monitored activity from a distance. Both their management and the monitoring surpassed just aforementioned communication experiences. Instead, other mobile device considerations and usage assisted with personal and collective workflow within various industries. They actively managed and monitored their workflow by considering mobile applications and features that served to assist in their overall control of advancing work in their nonwork domain, sometimes with the purpose of self-reminders. These next paragraphs explore the notions of controlling time and workflow.

For Bonnie and Carol, texting enabled them to manage their workflow. Bonnie occasionally got some ideas to incorporate at work. She simply chose to text constituents to share the idea as a reminder to herself and the other person(s). Bonnie described a shopping excursion in which she saw an idea that would translate well to a work initiative. "I noticed it and I thought this would be something good to put in the *PowerPoint*....So I just text her and I'm like, 'Hey remind me to tell you about this.' So then it would trigger my mind." For Bonnie, using text feature on the mobile device enabled her to quickly share an idea and have record of it on her phone upon her return to work thus saving overall time and ensuring she did not forget.

Carol had a situation where she did forget something important at work. She had a doctor appointment on her payroll day and forgot to manage some items in preparation for submitting pays. To control her workflow and the timeliness of the situation, a quick

text to her foreman from her mobile device prior to leaving for the doctor enabled her to reach him and have the necessary documents pulled and ready at her desk when she arrived. Carol managed a company in the scrap industry in which drivers had duties regarding deliveries and pickups. To manage them and the overall workflow for the company, she texted drivers in her nonwork hours to alert them of any route changes to keep work moving forward. By texting in these situations, Carol controlled her workflow which allowed progression of the industry's work and that of the drivers while using time effectively.

Sometimes managing workflow involved organizing emails, texting, or professional responsiveness to move work forward and make the next day more efficient. Other times, participants used specific mobile device features to control and manage their workflow. Using the mobile device for notes was discussed as a means of reflecting and generating new ideas; both of which interviewees did not want to forget. David and Mary found value in using that feature. Mary shared

I kind of keep that in my notes screen. I also then reflect on what happened during the week. And so I kind of have like a—an ongoing list of, I need to call underwriting about this, or I need to make sure the phones got fixed. So I feel like outside of work I'm still thinking about work so much that I need my phone to keep track of what I need to do tomorrow.

In that way, Mary moved work forward in her nonwork times with the help of her mobile device and when she returned to work, she had the information she needed at her fingertips. Karen used that feature for the same reason, to remember when she returned to work. "I use Notepad to take notes on things that come to me when I'm off...Oh yeah. I've

gotta remember to do that tomorrow or next week or whatever. I'll take notes on that.”

The notes feature of the device offered participants a way to control and actively manage their overall workflow.

Participants spoke of how they used specific apps on their mobile devices to control their workflow and their overall time management. Two participants used an app for a to-do list simply called *Todoist*. Lydia believed incorporating this app significantly changed her workflow due to the amount of meetings she attended and the amount of emails she received. “I couldn't manage my workflow if I didn't do some of it at home.” In describing how *Todoist* worked to assist her in controlling her time and advancing her work, Lydia shared

It's like truly just a to-do list of things, but you can sync things that then you can throw emails into it. So when I'm in my email I can say, you know, if it's something I need to attend to, you know, three days from now I can throw it into my email as a to-do item and then it will open that email back up instead of keeping kind of the running inbox open and box of things.

Due to its success for Lydia, its cross compatibility with the computer, and its collaborative nature, Lydia shared this tool with others and she has changed the way others controlled their workflow within her industry as well.

Beyond *Todoist*, participants used other unique industry or open apps that assisted in moving their work forward. Kara used an app to help manage her workflow, but that was a company directive rather than an optional app like *Todoist*. Regardless, Kara found the app *Workday* to be helpful in managing her workflow with direct reports and days requested off. With that app, she could “...review and approve time off and things of that

kind.” Jessica used the *Workday* program and did her payroll on her phone at any time. With the availability of this app to assist with their workflow and payroll/benefit responsibilities, they controlled their nonwork time by electing to utilize it to move work forward. Jessica also managed clients’ accounts through sharing documents such as tax returns and copies of driver’s licenses to process bank products. Without the ability to share documents in this way via her mobile device, her work would not flow as efficiently. These participants that were actively managing work initiatives through specific apps and appreciated the control the apps offered them with their overall workflow and timeliness. Accordingly, some participants described using their mobile device to collaborate using *Google Docs* or even *PowerPoint*.

*Google Docs* was mentioned by a few participants due to its accessibility and ability to positively impact their workflow. Both Jared and Alyssa had specific instances in using *Google Drive* for accessing and managing work from their phones. Having mobile access to information afforded Alyssa the opportunity to answer questions or refer to documents in her nonwork time to control the progress and timeliness of her work. Jared also found the school district’s information app highly useful in locating and contacting parents in nonwork hours, thus allowing him to continue his work after he left for the day and enabling him the control to address special circumstances within any given time in his domestic sphere. Jared appreciated the control of his time and workflow as he “100% does not want to get behind.” Like Jared, Mike accessed an app at their school called *Skyward* that allowed him to obtain student and parent specific information to manage concerns in his nonwork time. For these participants, the ability to control at

what time and how they could access work information was instrumental in the active management of their workflow.

Cindy and Nigel found being able to review others' work and offer feedback a very useful way to manage their workflow from their mobile device. Cindy said "probably 95% of the time I can manage it on my mobile device." As a manager, it was important for her to be able to give timely feedback to others, which served to manage not only her workflow, but that of others that required input from her.

Nigel also found the mobile device conducive for controlling his workflow by reviewing others' work through *Notability*.

I can markup PDF's... people have sent me PDF's, and I remember when we first had ... one of our children was very young and I ... like newborn, and I was spend ... you know, I was spending hours holding and walking...I could actually get ... you know, review things a little bit, and I remember doing that one night, for something that had to go out, so that was ... useful.

Within his domestic sphere, he found it useful to multitask while holding his baby and managing his workflow by offering collaborative comments via *Notability*. Though he had responsibilities within his domestic sphere, he was able to maximize his time and control not only his workflow, but that of others that needed his feedback.

The participants appreciated the way they could control their time and workflow through using various features and options with the mobile device. This allowed their work to continue to move forward rather than coming to a halt when they left the office. They realized the benefits it had on their managerial duties and how their active management of the time they elected to engage in various work situations further allowed

them to control their workflow within their domestic sphere. Participants said the control of their time and advancement of work alleviated some stress from their day. Rather than actively managing experiences through their device to control their workflow, they also talked about how they monitored communication and progress on projects from afar.

Participants also chose to utilize their time to monitor work progress overall. The process of monitoring for the participants was to get more of a birds-eye view of what was occurring whether it was reflection on their own work, true progress checks on others' developments, or monitoring competitive industries. Often monitoring included reviewing emails, apps, websites, or documents via the mobile device. Landi described her monitoring in the following way: "I tend to helicopter...and interject it if needed but for the most part, you know, it just relieves the anxiety I think of returning to work." The use of term "helicopter" for Landi simply referred to her control of workflow through time spent monitoring progress. Her discussion aided in defining how others used monitoring with their mobile device to control their workflow.

Similar to Landi's use of monitoring to control workflow, Dani commented using her time in that way helped her to foresee what she faced when returning to work.

So, I know like if there's a hot mess I'm walking into...when I go back to work in a couple of hours, I've got this many emails that I'm walking into. So, just kind of keeping my work flow going or having more awareness about what my work flow is gonna be.

She appreciated that preview of what was to come. Even without responding, she was given the opportunity to begin thinking about the situation. Several other participants mirrored Dani's approach to monitoring emails and as such reflected on how simply



monitoring through reading allowed them to gain the knowledge on how to control their workflow and their time that day or even in upcoming days. This positively impacted the participants by giving them the time to simply think and therefore consider and actuate the control of their workflow.

Adam used his nonwork time to monitor what other schools within his industry were doing in addition to reflecting on his industry's current projects. "I have looked at other places' courses as well, using the iPad just to see what other people are doing." Because Adam was a Basic Course Director, he monitored what other universities were doing to compare to their work and always continued to improve and even to solidify the direction they were moving was the correct one. When Adam devoted nonwork time to this, he gained further control over the direction of his workflow as he sought to understand what other similar companies within his industry were doing through monitoring their websites. Similarly, Kevin being in the financial planning industry enjoyed "watching what's going on in the news and the stock market." Rather than actively managing situations by engaging, monitoring those issues via his mobile device allowed him to reflect on his work and his clients to control the forward movement of his workflow. The monitoring process offered Kevin additional information with which to make educated and strategic decisions. Ryan monitored *Google Alerts* through his mobile device to track legislative updates, in fact he claimed that was the first thing he did with his time when he woke up. Through that monitoring process, Ryan stayed abreast of what was going on that may impact his industry and afforded him nonwork time to make thoughtful decisions that progressed his workflow. He further shared "I probably use my mobile device, even for work moments, even more in my nonwork time." Though the

time investment was at the expense of the domestic sphere, the participants controlled their nonwork time and workflow decisions by monitoring activity at companies within their industries.

In Juan's industry, rather than monitoring other facilities, he used his mobile device to monitor the security at his plant via an app called *IC Realtime*. This app gave him the control to monitor situations at any given time and address them if needed. Finally, Ann and Mike monitored industry activity that impacts their workflow through an app called *AESOP* to assess teacher absences and assigned substitute teachers. While it could be set up to send alerts, they also went online and checked it via their mobile device. Mike preferred to monitor that regularly in his nonwork time to "make sure everybody's covered when I get in there." By checking these apps, Mike and Ann could make positive impacts on their workflow and that of others.

Whether its active management or monitoring from afar, the participants shared accounts to which controlling their time on the mobile device also allowed them to advance workflow from their nonwork time and space. This included proactive use of mobile device features and apps that extend workflow beyond just communication to actual review of work projects and even processing benefits. This control, in conjunction with managing when or where they would accomplish this in their domestic sphere, allowed participants to advance their work forward. They benefitted by having less anxiety and fewer surprises when they returned to work. Contributors to this study enjoyed the control they possessed over their decisions to manage and monitor via their mobile devices, they also appreciated the ability to control at what time engagement

happened within their domestic sphere. At times, they took advantage of interstitial moments in time to engage.

***Interstitial time.*** Participants found it useful to steal interstitial moments within their domestic sphere to engage in professional communication while not 100% removing them from interacting with others. Tapping into these interstitial moments afforded participants control over the times that fell in between their domestic interactions. For example, participants expanded on how they controlled unplanned downtime or extra moments in their day to avoid directly interrupting time within the domestic sphere. Ben commented “when I’m not at home, per say, it’s always in my pocket and then I’ll just reach in and grab it when there’s a spare moment of when we’re in between a break or whatever and check it.” Other interstitial moments were those unexpected moments when family or friends were not home or were otherwise engaged. The participants controlled their engagement by transforming those moments into time to engage professionally on their mobile device.

Unplanned downtime occurred for participants when they were near their mobile device as when passing through to another area of the home. Curtis shared “It’s random. If I’m near it or I’m walking past the bedroom, and...hey, let me check my email.” Cindy used interstitial times while her boys were in with the orthodontist and she was in the waiting room. Carol employed that practice as well by checking the phone when she was in her bedroom or when she had time to herself. These are all examples of how participants controlled interstitial time within their day, therefore, also controlling the domestication of their mobile device within the domestic sphere. David stole opportunities when his wife and sons were not engaged with him.

Yeah times when I'm just on my own. When I did have—you know I'm, getting ready for bed or I'm working on a paper or something and I'm closing the computer down and I'm just waiting for something to happen and I'll check the phone.

David illustrated what other interstitial moments looked like for him.

The family's in the kitchen or one of the kids is in the living room which is kind of an open and there's maybe some conversation going on but I tune out for a moment to do my checking on my—on my mobile phone.

For David, he controlled those moments in time when his family was either not present or not completely engaged with him to monitor professional communication on his mobile device. Rich also controlled interstitial time, but he considered any available five or ten minutes he could squeeze in to staring at his phone.

Oh yeah. Yeah. If I'm just sitting there watching TV, watching a sporting event or something like that, and I'm not interacting with anybody else anyways, sometimes I'll, instead of paying attention to that, check in for five minutes. See what's going on in the email world and then get back to whatever.

In a similar vein, Lydia shared how her younger children would be off “...doing their own thing and they're you know, reading or playing or doing something else and I'm not directly engaged with them, then I'll be on my mobile device to take care of some things.” Like Lydia, Nigel had a similar situation in his home with younger children as he controlled moments in time when he engaged with the device. “Yeah, the mobile device would just be like even smaller snippets...I'll just check in real quick while we're out back, the kids are playing in the sprinklers, so that, that feels very easy.” With this

interstitial approach, these participants felt more in control of the balance between work and home because they were not directly interrupting times devoted to any domestic events.

Interstitial moments presented themselves to the participants at varying times of the day. Sheila, an empty nester, found refuge in controlling her morning hours. “I feel really good, nobody's here, I'm by myself- I going to ... Maybe I'll answer some phone calls.” Those moments in time looked different for Cindy. Due to the age of her sons, interstitial moments increased in the evenings as they got ready for bed and she was still up and could control those moments to engage. Rachel, also with older boys, felt less guilty when her boys were involved in other things and then she stole that time when they were otherwise involved to engage professionally with her mobile device. Accordingly, Alexa took advantage of moments when she learned her husband was late getting home. “Yeah or if you know he has class until eight I’m like, oh I have until eight where I can work and get some things done.” Likewise, Mary would steal time when her husband had weekend work to attend to. If Nigel’s wife had book club, “and not interested or available for time together,” he would poach those times. Nigel explained “I would be more likely to, you know, not always, but to, to say, ‘Oh, I'll just, you know, get this little thing done that I wanted.’” When Alexa, Mary, and Nigel’s spouses were otherwise engaged in their work or leisure, these participants chose to control their time by using their mobile device for professional communication or work. Ben also enjoyed breaks when he had “time to kill” but also realized once he started reviewing emails it was hard to stop. Ben shared “once I start, I [can’t] finish until they’re all replied to or in their appropriate folder.” Nigel characterized his interstitial usage as time that was his own anyway; while he could

use it for other things such as “picking up a book,” he chose to engage with his mobile device professionally.

The previous stories were focused on times when other domain members were not present in the same space. Some participants recognized interstitial moments when participants were physically present in the same space with family members, but the members were otherwise engaged. Ryan and Rachel controlled how they used their time in the moments when their spouses were already engaged with their phone. Rachel shared

For example, if he, if he says, ‘Oh, I have to do something real quick for work,’ I’d be like, ‘Okay. So do I,’ you know. Like it will be, like, my opportunity to say, ‘Okay, well, if you can do it, then I can do it.’ You know, so, I mean, I, I tend to do that and, um, and sometimes, it’s, you know, sometimes it does. It’s just, it’s just a, it’s an instinct.

Accordingly, Ryan controlled his engagement by mirroring what his wife was doing.

Yeah. What I’ve started to do, actually, is, I’ll just ... I will just wait to check my device whenever Kim’s checking hers. So if I just ... if we’re sitting there watching a TV show or something like that, and commercial ... well, there really aren’t commercials anymore, but you know, if there’s like a quiet time in the show or something and I just kinda catch out of the corner of my eye that she’s checking hers, well, I’ll grab mine and check ... and check my mine as well. Or if she’s cooking ... finishing cooking dinner, um, and I ... and I’ve done everything I need to do, then ... and I’m not ... like, she’s busy doing something, so I’m not like purposely ignoring her, then that’s when I’ll do it.

Stolen moments or use of interstitial time for the participants helped them to feel a complete component of the domestic sphere as they believed they weren't directly interrupting domestic events.

***Domestic events.*** While almost all the participants spoke of their control in terms of responsiveness and using interstitial moments, they also remarked on the specific need to be mindful during moments in time for domestic events such as dinner, vacations, and special activities. Participants conveyed examples where they controlled their time by choosing to disable professional communication to focus on the domestic sphere. Sometimes this was successful and other times it was not; it tended to be situation and industry dependent, however, it was an area of interest for many participants and their families and friends.

***Dinner.*** This time of the day within the domestic sphere was nearly unanimous among contributors as an area of necessary control. While dinner time could include eating in the home, eating out, or even eating while traveling, this section focuses specifically on dinner at home or out at a venue. While participants passionately talked of their ability to control their professional engagement during this time to focus on the domestic sphere, they also knew this control allowed them to make choices on how they used their time. The choices included to engage or not to engage on their mobile device for professional purposes during the time devoted to this specific domestic event. For example, Alyssa touched upon examples of both dynamics related to dinner time. When she was at home making dinner, she could "basically ignore it [mobile device] for those first few, you know, first hour and a half to two hours ... I really enjoy cooking and so

that's kind of my sort of way to unwind from the day.” However, when she was out at a casual venue with family and friends, she controlled her time a bit differently.

I, when I'm doing something like that, like, you know, out to dinner I try to leave it in my purse. If I'm at out more casually, like for instance like at Grist House or something like, I might just take it out and look, check every, you know, 15 minutes or half an hour or so. And if I see, if I see I have an email, I'm gonna read it.

Other participants had strict rules to not use their time to engage while eating dinner. Adam shared that he and his partner had “started to institute a rule where you don’t have phones when you’re eating. So when there’s a—you know—so that there can be no interruptions.” While admittedly, Adam and his partner still had the phones with them at the table, typically in their pockets, the time devoted to the mobile device decreased upon instituting this rule to avoid professional usage during the dinner hour. Laura felt similar passion as Adam regarding the necessity to control and protect time.

We do eat dinner together and there's no mobile devices at dinner. It's a rule and it's a 100% and we stick to it. Nobody picks it up even if it's ringing and on fire. We don't pick it up. We're good. I'm confident about that one. We do not touch em.

Laura felt confident she controlled her time effectively by avoiding usage, “when we sit down to eat dinner, I kind of stop.” Lydia and Mark found themselves to behold the dinner time with family sacred as well and issued it a no device zone. Mark simply stated this about the dinner time at his home,



I think it's very frustrating because one of the things that I, we tell them when we sit down to eat is, everyone's phone has to be off. Like because otherwise, everyone's texting, you know, constantly and they're- it's hard to have a conversation. So I think that's one of the things ... we talked about getting a bowl and just putting everyone's phones in a bowl.

Unlike Laura's young family, Mark had grown children and primarily an empty nest, yet most participants, with or without children, instituted a non-device dinner zone and highly regarded avoiding their own professional communication within that control and protection of domestic time.

While Ben's family also had that rule, he expressed he made a personal promise to not fail within his leadership role and sometimes that promise changed his control of the dinner time decisions; sometimes his decision was to engage rather than disengage.

There are several times a week where we'll be, you know, mid-bite, mid-dinner and you know, I'll have to take a call, or I'll you know, see an email that I can tell by the subject it's urgent. And I get—I get reprimanded for having my phone out during meal times. So, it's just a very—again it's almost like an addictive bad habit. And from the sense that, you know, you think it'd be easy to say, 'nothing for a half an hour, we're family time, we're eating dinner.' And inevitably something happens and they're [work] trying to get a hold of me for something, and I—I've got to take it. It's not always a true emergency, you know, I would say, you know, eight times out of ten it can wait. You know, like I could just say, 'you know, call you back in five,' or you know, 'let me finish I'll get back to you,' or just ignore it for ten more minutes. But again I'm just I'm one of those

driven individuals that's in a high—fast paced, high speed industry that typically things can't wait if you want to stay ahead, and I just go ahead and do it, and get yelled at... There are multiple times a week where I've tried to make a conscious effort to say you know, at least when we're—'cause you know with— with both of us working, you know, the kids are in things. There's a lot of times where that half hour sitting down at the table together, that's all we have, you know until the weekend comes or until vacation comes, there's not a lot of quality time for us to just be us. And, so you add the mobile device on top of that and there goes that half an hour.

In Ben's situation, he fully controlled how he used his time during this domestic event, yet he opted to engage. This control and subsequent decision making directly related how he chose to use his time for professional usage. Further, it impacted the time otherwise devoted to his family dinner and time spent with individuals within the domestic sphere. He admittedly controlled vacations by allowing professional engagement during that time as well. Other participants had similar stories to share on how they controlled their managerial work while on vacation.

*Vacation.* This time in our participants' lives is often looked at as a means of rest and rejuvenation. Although, as managers, many of the participants had difficulty turning that time off completely to immerse in the restful experience within their domestic sphere. One way participants tried to control this was to strategically set aside specific times in the day to engage professionally with their mobile device. In this way, they believed they were not interrupting others on the vacation. Not interrupting others was important to participants so everyone could maximize their enjoyment of the vacation

without work interference. Kara and her husband found it difficult to fully unplug, especially on a recent two-week vacation, so they agreed to just sift through emails and clean out the junk to control what happened when they returned. Though participants set times aside for engagement, most participants took the phone with them to their destinations, even when on the beach.

Jared undeniably recalled he was a person that took the phone on the beach with him to maintain his professional engagement.

I am the person that puts my cell phone in a little plastic bag so I don't get sand on it and I bring it down to the beach and I read 30-40 minutes and I'm checking to make sure that I don't have any messages that I need to respond to umm which is probably not healthy but I do it anyway again not to be so I don't have ya know a litany of emails I need to respond to.

Jared, as previously mentioned, was highly responsive and controlled that by disallowing emails to accumulate, regardless of where he was geographically. Conversely, Cindy tried very hard on her own vacation to stick to certain times with which to engage.

Vacation is when I try very hard. My rules around vacation are just volume of emails. I try to check it in the morning and then I'm done for the day. So, before we do our beach time -I'll do a quick ... And I try to do that just on the mobile device.

By using the mobile device, Cindy felt it was quicker and less invasive to the vacation time than pulling out a laptop. In her case, she felt she controlled her time so there were less overall interruptions to the family's time. Additionally, she used the car ride to the beach, often a 12-hour drive, to professionally engage with her mobile device with the

hope of minimizing the usage while at the vacation spot. For the same reasons maximizing everyone's enjoyment on vacation, Ellen planned strategically to complete her work while on vacation to avoid disturbing others. She also attempted to use the morning time when her family was sleeping to complete her work. While she did engage, she admitted, "Yeah. I mean probably like when we're on vacation or if we're involved in something like I might feel less inclined to maybe do something right away." In that way, she controlled at what point during her vacation was the appropriate time to engage in professional communication.

Alyssa and Mike made similar remarks about the use of the out of office responder to control their engagement during their vacations. Mike recognized his vacation usage varied, but a recent trip to Florida to visit Universal Studios with his family was controlled by his use of the out of office message.

Well, I think it's situational where you know like...we took a trip to Florida in May...Not everybody knew I was here so I was getting...the same amount of e-mails that I normally get and I'm at Universal Studios with my kids and, you know I'm not gonna do it. I'm not gonna do it. I'm not in, I'm out of office...I just wasn't gonna, you know, allow myself to get sucked into things that, you know, people can kind of figure out on their own.

His belief was he controlled his time and related mobile device engagement by using the out of office responder; therefore, others would not expect a response. In that way, he could fully engage with his family on vacation. While Alyssa forgot to set the alert until two days into her vacation, it still didn't stop her from using her time to check and occasionally respond to email communication via her mobile device. In consideration of

extended family members on the vacation with her, Alyssa did make strategic decisions like Cindy and Ellen to control her usage to specific times in the day.

Like with like my parents and my brother and his fiancé, I really did not have my phone out at all. So, I tried to limit my usage to when we were in hotel room; when Josh and I were just in the hotel room. Like so I wasn't really doing it at dinner or at the beach, or you know, any sort of the group activities we were doing...the same goes when I go to my parents' house for dinner. I try and, and, and leave it away. So that I am present and, and spending time with them, but there have been occasions when I'll pick it up for something else or I will, and I will see an email and get distracted, and it's similar situation. My parents really don't get what I do.

Controlling the time of her usage to when she was in the hotel room away from other family helped her to maintain focus on the family, especially considering her parents didn't understand the mobile device engagement for her work. Mark's in-laws also did not understand his mobile device engagement during vacations, which included visits to his in-law's home.

When we go on vacation, I still take the phone with me. 'Cause there's still questions that people need, and I don't mind answering it when I'm on vacation. But probably like when we went down to see her parents in Florida, I took, I still had my phone and answered it. And I think that was probably, it was probably harder for her parents that, and, 'Why does he always have his phone?'

Despite his in-laws' questions, Mark was perfectly comfortable making that choice to engage on his vacation.

Karen felt the need to field emails while away on vacation due to the volume of emails she received. “I have entirely too much [emails] ... like this week I’m on vacation, there’ll be probably 3,000 emails.” So even while on vacation, Karen opts to use her time to sift through emails to avoid being overwhelmed upon her return. Due to delayed work remodels that extended into one of her vacations, she chose to control the situation by highly engaging via her mobile devices as needed while on vacation versus cancelling her trip. In that situation, Karen was thankful for the ability to engage via the mobile device. She controlled the situation by devoting time to work to field questions/concerns. While on vacation, she proactively forwarded emails to staff about road closures as information she believed needed to get out to everyone. Likewise, Ben shared he was on the phone at minimum every couple of hours to check in and clear out his inbox. “That’s very convenient. But it means being on the device when I’m not supposed to be working.” Ben, like other participants, recognized the time spent engaged in professional communication on vacation minimized work upon his return and allowed him to stay in touch with what was going on at the office. Thus, the control of time benefitted the professional sphere by allowing control over work to minimize work overload upon their return. Though the professional sphere and the participant’s workload benefitted, once again it was at the possible expense of the domestic sphere. Beyond vacation, Ben discussed the time devoted to family activities and how decisions with the mobile device also transpired in times when the family or children were engaged in special events.

*Activities.* Beyond dinner times and vacations, family activities encompassed family gatherings, sporting events, and children’s performances. These examples were

discussed by participants with respect to controlling those times and possible usage of professional communication with the mobile device.

Some participants talked about their strong attempts to avoid device usage while attending family activities, while others remained engaged; both decisions involved time devoted to professional mobile device usage and were controlled by the participant. For example, Lydia's son played travel hockey and she respected those times during his games and did not engage with her phone. Mike tried to separate work and home by excusing himself from a family activity as necessary to take care of any business and then returned as quickly as he could. When family was in for a weekend event, Karen was able to leave her email and enjoy time with her family and got to it after. There appeared to be no right answer on how to control the various situations as each participant's family dynamic differed.

Kara found herself controlling her experience with a family gathering in a unique way.

Yeah, if I have a lot of work going on and it's a family event that I know that one person's gonna be at and I feel like I just don't have time for them. The fact that that one person's going to be there that I struggle with relationship probably influences me to do the work. Like, if it was only the people that I love to be around, I would really try hard to make it. But, if it's one you're kind of dreading, you might choose to ...to do the work...at the function.

Kara controlled her time with this event through determining that because a certain person at the function was a relational challenge, that pushed her to engage with her

mobile device professionally to avoid the situation. While others professed to protecting times for various activities, Kara opted to engage.

Ben believed he had a situation under control with a special family event, but he found it was transformed into a challenge due to a specific mobile device feature. Ben elaborated on how he controlled his time and engagement with respect to children's programs.

There really are no negotiations, other than, unless we're at a, say one of the kid's school programs or you know a special event that's only gonna happen one time or whatnot. I will actually put my phone on do not disturb for that program, for that hour. I don't know, we've talked about that—last thing you want to do is to get up-get up in the middle of the program and go take a phone call about something that could've waited another half hour.

Interestingly, Ben pointed out even while he put his phone on do not disturb, the uniqueness of most families these days was they do not use separate cameras.

I understand how important those moments are and you can't get them back. I guess the other side part to that is...nobody carries a camera—or a camcorder anymore either. So your phone is that. So you pull out your phone and say, 'oh, this one event's happening. This is only gonna happen once. I wanna get a picture or a video of this.' So you do, you take the picture, you take the video. Well, that's on screen. Oh, there's the envelope. Oh there's a text message. Oh there's a voicemail. So now it's, quick hurry up swipe down. Check it real quick. You know and—so now you're—you're kinda—you need that device to take your picture, record your, you know, program your baseball game, whatever it is, but



oh hey while I'm here, I'm gonna go ahead and check this e-mail. I'll check this text. And now you—next thing you know, you're ten minutes into a conversation...It is a distraction, because you can't help but look at it...So that's the hardest part. Taking it out to take a picture or video and then putting it away without looking at it.

While Ben felt he was controlling his time at the domestic event, the situation with the camera usage challenged his ability to stay focused on the children's program due to the professional alerts that popped up on his mobile device.

Mobile devices offered convenience and efficiency to allow for timely responses and control of decision making regarding the participants' responsiveness with device within their domestic sphere. The control they had over their responsiveness surfaced not only with their own decisions, but the expectations participants held regarding the timing responsiveness of others. Additionally, their mobile device enabled them to manage and/or monitor professional situations that included emails, texts, apps, and mobile device features. Participants found value in monitoring, or helicoptering, work and communication via their mobile device to advance workflow and use their time effectively. Ultimately, decisions on how they controlled their time included the recognizing the benefit of interstitial time which meant participants deemed their engagement was not an interruption to others. Other areas of control noted were time devoted to professional engagement during domestic events such as dinner, vacation, and family activities that required participants to work at achieving a stronger balance. Though the participant was 100% in control of their decisions on how to use their time, it is significant to acknowledge that largely the time was used to engage and benefit the

professional sphere at the expense of the domestic sphere and the individuals within it. While there were many stories recounted on how they sought control, they also recognized many areas that were out of their control.

**Out of control.** Participants shared areas of time devoted to professional mobile device usage that were out of their control and how challenges surfaced in establishing domestic balance. Areas that were typically out of their control were actual time, interruptions from others, and behaviors.

*Actual time.* Actual time includes periods of time such as the evening or the actual time that participants were accessible such as 24/7 availability, as well as specific times of day like a specific number in hours and minutes. The latter became significant when considering working with professionals in different time zones or when working with specific work deadlines. These three components (24/7, time zones, and deadlines) encompassed areas where participants confessed their time was out of their control.

*24/7 accessibility.* In the previous section, interviewees spoke of how they controlled their time by using mobile devices to prepare for the next day, however, they recognized the 24/7 accessibility also posed challenges that will be presented in this section. The in vivo code 24/7 was inspired by the many contributors that specifically used the terms 24/7, 24 hours, and even 24/7/365 with respect to their professional availability that was out of their control.

Though Ben found ways to control his usage, he simply never felt totally unplugged.

Things are just always happening. You know we're a 24/7/365 company so there's always an opportunity for something to happen or arise that they need me

for because again it never stops. You know, all you do is roll from one shift to the next. Seven days a week, you know, there's no shut down...So I have to be on top of everything everyone's doing. And unfortunately, again, mentioning the 24/7 and, you know, industry, we're sort of changing daily and the commodity we sell and, it's almost a necessity for you to be aware of that and on top of that, you know when we close the doors at five o'clock, business doesn't stop. It just means our staff goes home. You know, business continues to roll.

Having a managerial role, Ben's engagement with the business didn't end at the physical closing time and the general nature of Ben's business constantly changing in the moment 24 hours a day equated to time being out of his direct control.

In Kevin's field, he could control some managerial situations, but VIP clients are a "24/7 one" and he felt the communicative engagement with those particular clients was out of his control. Kevin needed to be available for those particular clients to maintain good business and the clients' choices on what time to reach out to him was out of his control. He responded regardless of where he was or what he was doing in his nonwork time. Juan shared a 24/7 managerial duty at his work regarding security calls. "I'm still the first one that gets called." Juan had a mobile device responsibility that was out of his control due to work directives from his boss. Though that dynamic interrupted his nonwork time, he was upbeat and expressed his thankfulness in having "gainful employment." Similarly, Mike was the Safe Schools administrator at his school; as such he received security alerts from any community or school member regarding potential school threats. These mobile device alerts came in at any time of the day or night and were out of his control, yet they required management from him. That situation

perpetuated texts and emails with other administrators to coordinate a plan of action.

Mike classified this situation, “If there’s a threat, I know what it is. And I know what we will do. Like if it’s a threat about violence, we will probably have a search the next day.”

Managerial duties described by Ben, Kevin, Juan, and Mike demonstrated scenarios where the 24/7 availability/accessibility were out of their direct control and they needed to react to the given situations. Being available meant time would be taken away from their domestic sphere.

Jessica and Rachel both had managerial functions as social media managers within their industries. Both ladies described the necessity for 24-hour social media maintenance. Janine elaborated on how she was the only one in her department running that function of her job. “So it is often a 24 hour, at least listening tool to make sure that there's not anything like crazy going on that we would need to respond to.” Similarly, Rachel felt the pressure to be monitoring social media 24 hours a day.

I have to monitor our school social media and I am always monitoring our school social media, which means, I have it set to notify me if there's a comment, if there's, you know, likes, or I don't care so much about the likes. But if there's a comment, immediately, I'm looking to see what that comment says. And for two reasons. One, I'm hoping it's something good. But, uh, two, if it's derogatory or if it, I mean, I have parameters for, profanity. So, the profanity, but if it's incorrect information, I like to correct as soon as possible.

Both ladies spoke of the importance regarding timeliness with social media to manage potentially damaging posts. Typically, that interaction occurred outside of normal work hours, which meant 24/7 management was required for these interactions; hence they

typically occurred outside of their normal workday and that timing dynamic was out of their control. Janine expressed the mobile device offered her efficiency in completion of this work, yet added pressure to be available 24/7.

I think in terms of efficiency it has helped, but in terms of the amount of work that a person has, it [amount of work] ... has ballooned because of the fact that you always have access to everything in the palm of your hands. And then there's no, there's no excuse for not knowing or not doing because you always have access. Because there's no excuse and the device made participants readily accessible, the resulting amount of work or amount of information that comes through the phone is out of the participants' control.

With respect to social media, Mike pointed out the inherent benefits social media had brought to his industry, but it means "we are accessible 24 hours a day."

I think the social media gives us a tremendous opportunity to build community with our—with our kids and our families than without it. So and it's—we—there are ways to build communities then but I think it's just easier now. Yeah I like it better the way it is now than it was 20 years ago.

Overall, even though the industry social media access to Mike was out of his control, he felt the benefit outweighed the 24/7 accessibility. He recognized the positive connections and communities that developed as a result.

Within 24/7 availability, specific times of the day were more prevalent than others with respect to communication. This was situation dependent and differed by industry. For example, employees in Tim's industry would reach out as late as 9:00 PM, yet clients typically only until about 6:00 PM. Conversely, Jessica received communication from

clients or potential clients at all times. Since her retail banking office closed at 4:30 and she did not have voicemail at work, the best way to reach her was in nonwork hours via her mobile device or email. As previously mentioned, she wanted to provide excellent service and clients expected instantaneous 24/7 response. She claimed “it’s a good thing and a bad thing because then they feel like they can call me at midnight about something.” Both the hours of her office and the hour at which clients contacted Jessica were completely out of her control. While the receipt of the message was out of their control, it is imperative to remember participants had control over their responsiveness. Another time challenge for the participants was experiences with varying time zones.

*Time zones.* Some participants worked for companies with subsidiaries or clients from different time zones. As such, their time availability to those companies was out of their control. This situation also transcended the official time zone situation to individuals that simply work different scheduled hours in the day.

The first components that will be reviewed are official time zones that equated to actual times of engagement that were out of the participants’ control. Some participants discussed the need to stay professionally engaged within their domestic sphere as they were working with people from a different time zone. Rich shared that challenge in the following excerpt from his interview:

Because the other thing that, sort of catches us, is time zones. A lot of times I'm working on projects, where I leave at 6:00 [PM], and those guys are working ‘til my 9:00 at night. And a lot of times I'm working with those folks. So you sort of have to, try to keep up with it because it really shortens your effective day if you

don't. Because you, you lose three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening.

Rich felt challenged by this uncontrollable loss of work time and accordingly had to engage during his evening time to manage anything that surfaced and needed to be addressed. Though the fact that his company within the engineering industry had offices and projects occurring in different time zones was out of Rich's direct control, he made sure if someone texted him or contacted him from work he responded fairly quickly due to the time zone dynamic. Ellen faced similar challenges within her managerial duties on research projects.

I mean sometimes like external sites because we deal with people that are, you know, like in California they're three hours' difference so sometimes I'm having to respond to people, you know, it's maybe four o'clock [pm] their time but it's seven here so I have to respond... So. And a lot of external sites have my cell phone so they'll call it.

Ellen lives in Eastern Standard Time and needed to engage well into her evening when projects required her input. Like Rich, Ellen's work constituents and their subsequent time zones were out of her control; it was necessary for her to use time within her domestic sphere to manage these external sites.

The other component to official time zones was simply working different hours and the uncontrollable challenge that presented to the domestic sphere. Landi and Nigel elaborated on that dynamic within their careers and the dynamic of managing relationships with contractors that worked different hours. Nigel managed a project where contractors worked 24 hours round the clock to complete a bridge repair. He explained

that was not an uncommon situation since the goal was to have the bridge open for daily traffic.

If they ran into an issue, we had to be available, and so I remember talking through a repair while at the playground on one Saturday morning, you know, just, just, kind of, using my phone. Actually, they sent me some pictures that I opened on my phone and we'd take a look at, and so that was ... you know, would've been very difficult to do without, without the phone.

In this situation, the time of contact was out of Nigel's control, but with the use of his mobile device, he managed the situation from the playground at the times the contractor needed him. Landi faced that same situation with contractors calling her at 6:30 AM "because they've started their work day already." While her situation was not as dire as Nigel's, it was still out of her control when other individuals were physically at work when she wasn't and they needed to contact her. Thus, the uncontrollable messages received permeated into their domestic time and space.

Dani and Ellen have direct co-workers or superiors that worked different hours and this altered their nonwork time to comply. Dani co-managed schedules with a colleague and because they worked closely together on this task, the communication occurred via text in her nonwork times. Like Nigel, Dani fielded texts when she was at the playground with her daughters. She recognized the convenience of it, but also the lack of control she had over that situation. Ellen had a similar situation with superiors at her work that were within her time zone.

So I work with a lot of physicians so their [chosen working] hours are not my hours, so they do a lot of work in the evenings throughout the night. So I'll get,



you know, email notifications to my phone and so sometimes if I can I'll handle it on my phone. Sometimes I have to go find a laptop, connect into my desktop to get information and send. So it just depends what the situation is, but I definitely, I definitely use a laptop and my phone outside of work to accomplish those tasks. Ellen went on to share the physicians didn't always understand the time situation when they were in the middle of a project and needed assistance.

They don't understand our lives...So they're always working 24 hours a day. And so they're used to everybody responding to them all the time. So like if I say, you know, get something at 4:00, maybe I left for the day and I don't see it again until say 9:00 the next morning. That's a long time to them, maybe not to us, but to them, you know, so they don't really understand staff versus, you know faculty. Though the lack of control Ellen had over her domestic time, she worked her best within these situations to offer her assistance to them.

Sheila managed a different type of uncontrollable situation in her work managing college apartment complexes. She faced challenges with the sleep habits of college students. Their needs interrupted her actual bed time and she recognized that many of their needs were less immediate than some of the other work situations presented. While she could not control the hour at which they contacted her, she simply responded "Well, I'm ready to go to bed, so I'll talk to you tomorrow."

As previous statements revealed, time zones and non-traditional schedules in which colleagues worked different times posed out of control time challenges for the participants. These situations often increased the time participants engaged with the mobile device for professional communication within the domestic sphere. Another area

in which they were unable to control their engagement with their mobile devices was professional deadlines.

*Deadlines.* Deadlines imposed upon participants influenced their mobile device usage within their domestic sphere. Ellen shared whenever deadlines came in, she had to adhere to them. She could not control her time engagement since she was unsure of deadlines and sometimes they surfaced last minute when changes needed to be made.

Sometimes there are times like we had like a big, submission for a paper, which it was the New England Journal of Medicine. So it was like a big deal and we had to make a change at the last minute. So my, the physician called me at like probably 6:00 in the evening and was like we need to do this and so we were up for the next 24 hours...everybody on the team was expected to do that. So we had a deadline.

For Ellen, those deadlines sometimes included 24 hours of mobile device interactions and subsequent computer work to accomplish the task; all out of her control and necessary to engage. Landi shared within her industry, deadlines were extremely necessary to adhere to.

I think that they expect us to understand that if you know if we've got a project with a really intense deadline. They [her bosses] would expect us to be doing whatever is necessary to meet the deadline. So if that means fielding phone calls in the morning or in the evening, not only would they expect it but I think I would be more compelled to do that.

While Landi was one of the participants that worked hard to achieve a balance between work and home, she knew she could not control her time when it came to established

deadlines. Laura also recognized the dire necessity to respect deadlines. “I had some larger clients and to be honest, I had to get stuff done for them. Like, they had deadlines ahead of me, they didn't care that I was on vacation, you know.” The deadlines that were imposed on Laura were out of her control and she engaged to meet the deadlines, regardless of the interruption to her vacation. Deadlines were recognized by interviewees as areas that were out of their control and challenged their ability to control their time. In the next section, uncontrollable interruptions to the domestic sphere are addressed.

***Interruptions.*** Participants could not control when or where they might receive professional communication via their mobile device. As previously discussed, participants could only control how they opted to respond or not respond. “There’s not really a specific way to manage it because you can’t control when someone’s calling you or contacting you,” exclaimed Jessica. Alexa explained, “every once in a while something crazy comes up and one of—and it happens for both of us, you know like, I need to do this right now, even though this is usually a time when we say like, no work stuff.” Alexa was referring to interruptions for her or her husband. She shared their response was to just to pout until the other person was done as they were not fond of the interruptions to their domestic space. In this example, relationships were impacted in the domestic sphere.

Participants recognized that notifications and alerts also became interruptions. Curtis found the mobile device vibrating in his pocket was an uncontrollable instant interruption. “You know it's vibrating and once you feel that buzz your mind just says, ‘I gotta check that!’” Ben adds he can’t control when “the little envelope pops up or it lights up—it lights up all blue when I have a call um, it’s very difficult to ignore.” Jared felt

that distraction when he was driving and that concerned him for not only his own time, but for setting a responsible example of time management to his children.

I think it is still very difficult when you know a message is coming through when you're driving not to want to have it in a place where you can pick it up and read it, but at least acknowledge that it's there...and the more I think about it that that concerns me more than anything because we talk to our kids about that all the time, about not being distracted, but we all are.

Jared continued that because the interruption was out of his control, "I don't know if there's a way around that." The messages Jared received while driving were out of his control and he struggled with how to manage his behavior of engagement vs. disengagement due to his desire to avoid distracted driving.

Lydia replied to her employees when she was interrupted with messages that they sent to her late at night.

I'm like, why are you working at 11:00 at night? You know, you need to go to sleep, we have to be here at 7:45 in the morning, you have to go to sleep. And so I think it's part of it is the interruption that comes, you know, email because it comes in and because flash was on your phone and this constant interruption.

Lydia recognized the need to achieve work in nonwork times, but in consideration of the interruptions that were out of her control she attempted to suggest some boundaries to her employees. Mark also challenged late night interruptions at the Christian camp he managed.

I had a phone call at 10:15 last night from one of the people that are staying here because their tub was draining slow...So when they call ... and then they told me

that, I think that's a little ridiculous. I even said to my daughter, 'I think that was a little ridiculous.' Well I told them, like, you know, they actually wanted to know if somebody could come over last night and I'm like, 'No, nobody's ... seriously, this isn't ... your room's not on fire. You know, you just have a little bit of water in your tub.'

Due to the uncontrollable nature of this communication, Mark was somewhat frustrated with the times and the types of interruptions he received within his domestic sphere. He expressed this frustration to his daughter in an attempt to vent his feelings about the situation, though he knew there would be no substantial changes to the dynamic. He further attempted to diffuse the situation by explaining to the sender it was not an emergency.

Carol felt there was no escaping the ability for others to reach her. With the mobile device, Carol could no longer hide from other individuals. "With the cell phone, no matter where I am, he [her boss] can find me." Carol shared examples of interruptions with questions from her boss related to industry banking and bill paying. Carol admitted before cell phones that interruption wouldn't occur, such as an interruption on vacation.

He'll call and say, 'What's the balance on that one loan we have?' He called California, it was 4 a.m. and he woke up the dog sitter, who in turn thought it was an emergency who called me, which was another 5 hours behind, in Hawaii for me to call him. And it was something about, did a check go out. So before you had cell phones that would have never had happened, he wouldn't have had the number.

While bothersome to Carol, she was unable to control vacation interruptions from her boss. Similarly, Rachel had a family celebration that was interrupted and not only was out of her control but served to substantially impact time within her domestic sphere.

Rachel received an important phone call from her boss in her nonwork time, which interrupted her son's birthday celebration and the subsequent follow up was required by Rachel caused her to miss part of the celebration.

I answered it and he's, and it was the superintendent and he said, 'Hey, school board members are really upset about this that, this article...I mean, now, it looks like we don't know what we're doing...I really need you to make sure that there's a printed retraction.' I said, 'Okay. I'll, I'll take care of it.' He said, 'And I need you to put something on the website about it...Because, you know, I don't even know how many people will even see their retraction.' I'm like, 'Okay.' So, I said, 'Okay. I'll take care of it.' And, so, as soon as I hung up, I pulled up my email on my phone and I emailed the reporter.

The interruption presented a need for Rachel to further access her computer to put something on the website. She said, "So, this was all, like, 5:00 or so and his [Rachel's son] friends are filtering in. We're supposed to leave by 5:15." Unfortunately for Rachel, the friends that were joining them at the Pirate baseball game started the celebration without her and enjoyed the cake and candles with Max. She was discouraged that her boss's call on her mobile device interrupted a special evening and she missed him blowing out the candles for a special birthday all due to an uncontrolled interruption in her evening from her boss.

These situations were out of the participants' control and largely impacted family moments. Participants only had control over their own behaviors and sometimes even struggled with that level of control.

**Behaviors.** Lastly, some participants had difficulty controlling their own behaviors in terms of time on the device. Participants felt “sucked-in” and displayed some addictive behaviors which they found very difficult, if not impossible to control. Further, they could not control others' behaviors or others' belief systems regarding time invested on the mobile device within the domestic sphere.

Sheila reluctantly expressed how she got “sucked in” to the mobile device easily during moments in her nonwork time. She believed her empty nest status also contributed to that behavior.

Like, looking for things to do and keep you busy and learn new things. But still, this is scary because it's like, ‘Oh, I ... I didn't ... I wanted to do something, but I didn't want to be completely overwhelmed and sucked in.’

Sheila's familial situation afforded her ample time to engage and she struggled to control time and to unplug once she got started. Nigel also struggled with controlling his behavior at times. “I do find that, like, it's once you've opened up email, like, it's, it's very easy to get sucked-in to, to losing lots of time.” Kara felt the same way about not only her behavior, but also her husband's behavior when they were attempting to limit mobile device usage while on vacation. “But, the best of our ability, we're not gonna be responding cuz then you get sucked-in right?” Finally, Rachel believed she got “sucked-in” and wished it were different. She explained, “I wish I wasn't addicted to the mobile device as much as I am, but I do prefer, I like ... I'm an information girl.” Because she

was responsible for monitoring and disseminating information on social media at work, she enjoyed the various modes of communication in which she could share information. The downside for Rachel was she deemed her professional engagement behavior addictive and found difficulty controlling that.

Participants were challenged in that they were unable to control others' behaviors. Sometimes those behaviors were belief systems conveyed about response expectations from others and sometimes those behaviors were expectations conveyed to *not* respond. Carol was well aware her boss expected a response from her "regardless of the time." While he never said to her "you should have the phone on you all the time." However, she knew that was his preference. "Now he thinks I'm always here by myself and I have no life outside of here, so obviously I should be able to answer his questions whenever." This was a behavior in Carol's boss that was out of her control. Other participants' bosses exhibit behavior that was contradictory to Carol's boss. For example, Ryan's director was an "avid emailer." However, she conveyed to the team

'I'm going to email you at all hours of the day, and you'll get things from me on Sunday nights. You might get five emails on Sunday nights.' She says, 'I don't expect a response from those during your time.' And so we're very in tune in that same ... in that way, like, 'I'm sending these ... sending these to you when I ... when I can, when it's convenient for me. But if it's an email, then I don't expect a response during off hours.'

Even if Ryan wanted to respond, his director's behavior was communicating that she preferred he did not. David was given similar direction from his boss. "I'm sending you this on Friday you're not supposed to do anything with it until Monday." While David



couldn't control that behavior or belief, he thought it was a nice gesture. Participants were challenged with their own out of control behaviors in terms of time and the behaviors and expectations of others.

### **Summary of Control One: Time**

The first subtheme of time was the broadest, which contained areas of control and non-control. In this section, participant experiences regarding in control areas of responsiveness, workflow, interstitial time, and time devoted to domestic events were discussed. Participants' discussed their control of their communicative responsiveness, use of mobile device to advance their workflow, and how they used interstitial time opportunities to control their engagement. These unexpected time slots were appreciated and often utilized for a professional check-in. Lastly, domestic events were times participants could control; yet this control didn't always mean avoiding engagement. The control factor was powerful in that the participants could choose to engage as needed.

As often as the participants could control their time, there were many instances where time was out of their control. These instances included actual time, interruptions, and behaviors. When participants were expected to be available 24/7, they were unable to control that expectation. Additionally, time zones, varied work schedules, and deadlines were challenges participants could not control. Interruptions via mobile devices impeded domestic spheres in multifarious times and spaces, all unbeknownst to the participant. Without knowing; there was no ability to control when interruptions arrived. Certainly, participants had options of response, but could not control receipt. Additionally, participants were unable to control the beliefs and behaviors of others such as bosses, but

some participants also struggled to control their own behaviors, due to getting “sucked-in” and unable to stop engagement with the mobile device.

With the mobile device, time was categorized as both advantageous and disadvantageous with the domestic sphere, namely due to control or lack of control. To work to control time, participants discussed parameters that could be controllable or uncontrollable, depending upon the situation. In the next section, parameters will be explored.

### **Parameters**

The second subtheme of Control is Parameters. When participants were faced with issues of controlling or not controlling time, many determined informally or formally that parameters needed to be developed. Sheila shared after she started her new job managing a college apartment building, she was excited for the new position and excitedly exclaimed “Yes, I want to do this and now, as you get months into it, I'm like, hmm, there's got to be some boundaries.” Sheila quickly realized being readily available to the clients was a draw on her domestic time and she even had conversations with her assistant on how boundaries could be instilled. Like others, she realized she needed to consider some parameters for usage. Parameters referred to parameters (sometimes called boundaries) within the domestic sphere designed to specifically address professional communication via the mobile device. Though Ryan used his device for professional communication within the domestic sphere, he openly shared, “I think ... probably my goal is to do no noticeable work at home.” Kara summed it up appropriately in stating “I still very much have, to the best of my ability, I try to keep work at work and home at home, but those lines are blurring for sure.” Sheila, Ryan, and Kara identified their goals

to develop parameters to control the work:family balance; largely, parameters were participant controlled and self-set versus formally negotiated. Though, at times parameters were out of the participants' direct control, instead others individuals and work expectations contributed to their development. The first area will present contributors' experiences when they were in control of the parameters.

**In control.** Participants discussed ways in which they self-developed parameters and used various techniques to form a border of sorts around their professional mobile device usage in the domestic sphere. Other times, they controlled the parameters by making verbal announcements to others rather than engaging in discussions and negotiations regarding domestic parameters.

**Self-developed.** In terms of self-developed parameters, interviewees expressed subtle and more deliberate ways in which they used mobile device or software features, mobile device location in the home, and limited information sharing to extend control. Participants controlled their situations by developing and adhering to parameters, at times successfully and at times unsuccessfully. They did this by first recognizing the need for parameters, like Nigel realized.

I feel like work, work is ... the mobile device itself has no problem taking over every moment of your day. You know, like, you are completely connected.

There's always something in my inbox I could do something with, and so it's, it's up to me to decide, like, like work is gonna stop and I'm gonna be focused, on people here.

He posited that an active decision on his part took place to set parameters. Kara realized parameters needed to be in place and she allowed too much of her professional

communication to spill over into her domestic sphere. “I genuinely believe that I am the maker of my own destiny. If I really don't want to do it, I don't have to answer to anybody except me.” Kara further expressed

The mobile device is probably one of the reasons why those lines between my work and, and personal life are starting to blur a little bit. I've actually created a sort of guidelines and rules for myself...On the weekends I will check my work email once a day...In the evenings, I no longer check my email after 8 PM, my professional email. The weekends I had realized... I could get caught up with, like, consistently checking my email...I like am never really unplugging, I'm always thinking about work...I had sort of, like, self-imposed...One time a day...The eight o'clock rule I'm pretty adamant about.

Kara had reached a point in her career where she passionately built and adhered to those parameters. In recognition of the blurring lines that developed between work and home, she took control of the situation and set a hard time of 8 PM and once on the weekend days. She needed to disconnect to take control of her mobile device engagement through developing a parameter which offered her a stronger balance. Ann emotionally shared while she developed some personal parameters, overall it was not easy.

It's very difficult...I can't say that I do it well, I think I do manage it better in terms of the use of the laptop versus the use of the phone. Having your phone with you, you know, I could be at a basketball game and I'm checking my phone or checking my email or something like that, yea I probably don't do it well.

Probably the only parameter that I am able to put on it is you know I do one last check at night and then if anything else comes through I don't deal with it in the

morning but truthfully it's very difficult to put any boundaries on that because it's so accessible.

Where Ann viewed the accessibility of the device as the challenge to adhering to her parameter, ultimately her engagement is in her control. While Kara set a hard time to her parameter, Ann expressed she does one last check at night.

Mobile device features or software features also played a role in establishing parameters for participants. Alexa's key parameter was to use a flagging system versus full engagement with her emails.

It's allowed me to kind of, just go in real quick. Two seconds. Click. Flag. Okay, now I can go back to my family life. And it keeps me from getting yelled at too much because I'm not sitting there taking twenty minutes to respond to an email. So I think that's really helped... 'cause it's taken that necessity away of responding right away to every little thing that happens.

Alexa's approach to establishing and controlling her parameters was to selectively turn off notifications, thus limiting the reach into her domestic sphere. Even though she had a systematic approach to emails, she felt overwhelmed by other notifications.

Like *GroupMe*, for example, all the students are ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding and I'm like, okay, no. I'll just deal with that later. So I make it a habit to go in and check the *GroupMe* periodically since I don't get the notifications.

By turning off the *GroupMe* notifications, she took control of communication with students and decided to deal with them later by limiting when she checked the app. This is significant as individuals consider simple techniques to set parameters and balance

their domains. Similarly, Lydia shared, “The other feature I have my phone at like at nine o’clock at night and it longer signals notifications to me.” Rather than controlling select notifications as Alexa opted to do, Lydia turned all notifications off to protect the time between 9 PM and 7 AM for herself and her family. Jessica, being in an industry where she got multiple interruptions in the evenings, simply shut her phone off when she went to bed. In this way, Jessica enacted control to set a parameter around the ability of clients and business associates to reach her.

Clearly, many participants utilized features such as flagging and do not disturb to establish parameters, however, Ben assumed he was in the minority amongst mobile device users to set these types of parameters.

I’m—I think an exception to this rule. I have—the only alert that I have set up on my phone is my phone vibrates when I get a text message. Everything else I have on silent and if it—it’ll come up on my screen, and show a little display.

But I physically have to open the phone, you know to check it.

Interestingly, Ben thought parameters themselves were unique; he did not think others made attempts such as only leaving phone on vibrate. Though as in aforementioned examples, many participants spoke of various approaches to establishing parameters. Curtis and Mark operated in a similar fashion to Ben. Curtis explained, “I really, I mean, what I do is I - I usually turn my phone on vibrate, and I leave it upstairs.” Mark had his “on vibrate if there’s... and I have to look at it if there’s an emergency call, I’ll take an emergency call. But if it’s not, I don’t answer or text or anything.” Cindy was a bit more deliberate than Ben, Curtis, and Mark. Cindy “disconnected my work email from my smart watch so I don’t see it buzz every time it comes through. That took a little bit of

learning” It wasn’t something she was able to achieve early on, but as she determined she wanted to protect her domestic time specifically at her son’s sporting events, she took control of the situation and developed this parameter for herself. Because each participants’ nonwork space had a different dynamic of individuals and how time was spent, their control of the parameters were different.

Placing the phone in a specific physical location in the home was a tactic that worked well for other participants in their desire to self-set a parameter. Some put them in another room immediately upon coming home while others did so reactively. Dani, Tim, and Mark put their phones in other rooms to avoid interruptions or personal temptations. Jared shared how he set a physical parameter rather than notification restrictions.

I do my best to try to keep it away from my immediate vicinity so I’m not tempted to look at it or you know respond to something...so a lot of times I’ll charge it downstairs so it’s kind of away from me. So that kind of separates it a little bit.

In an effort to control his usage, Jared took a proactive approach to a physical separation with his mobile device. Conversely, Jessica reactively set a parameter.

If I feel that both of us [her and her daughter] have been on our phones all night and we haven’t been talking or spending any time with one another... You know, I’ll plug it in and turn it off.

Jessica extended her parameter of turning off the device when she went to bed to also controlling specific situations where a strategic decision was made to unplug and engage with her daughter.

One of the widely-used methods where participants established parameters was to be selective with sharing their information. This selectivity was both in terms of the participants' mobile device number and limiting acceptance of followers and friends on social media from their professional sphere. Dani determined she needed to get rid of *Facebook* completely to develop manageable parameters.

Since I've gotten off of *Facebook* a couple of years ago, texting is one of the ways that I keep in touch ... it narrowed my circle down of people I keep in touch with, with. Which is what I wanted to do. I felt like it was a big time suck....I felt like I was wasting so much time looking at posts that I didn't care about.

Dani found there were only about 10 people she was interested in networking with. To control her time and engagement, she established a parameter by removing herself from that social media site completely. Participants reflected deeply on their own usage and found ways that personally worked for them and then took control of the mobile device and/or related apps that caused them to feel unbalanced between work and home. Nigel controlled his contacts by simply only sharing his cell phone with certain professional contacts. With 10,000 people in his company, he selectivity narrowed the pool of possibilities, much like Dani did with the removal of *Facebook*. Kevin successfully limited his nonwork exchanges to only a handful of clients. "Five people. The special...the VIPs." He chose key individuals that were central to the success of his professional domain. Jessica had a larger pool of clients than five, but she only wrote her number on her business card selectively for certain clients, not all clients.

If I feel like it's a business client and I feel like they were someone who has questions about a loan, I'll give them my cell number. They'll text me. We get a



hold of each other that way. Or they'll call me at night. Now, a lot of people work during the day also, so they can't discuss, if they have a job, if they're a nurse, or I have a psychologist that I deal with. And he, he can't talk to me during the day, then they'll call me at night 'cause I will actually email them and tell them, if you cannot reach [me], you know, if you can't discuss this during the day, feel free to call me at night."

Though Kevin and Jessica had vastly different numbers of professional contacts to control, they set parameters that worked for their own unique situations. Lydia limited the parents and staff that had her number to control and have parameters around her domestic time. Similarly, Adam worked to selectively share his number, but also put

More emphasis on work than I do at home. It's terrible to say but it's the truth...I spent most of my adult life not with, you know, a romantic partner with a family, with all that stuff, so that was my focus, but the truth is I don't do a good job.

With that said, Adam selectively shared his cell phone number with instructors that directly reported to him. He aspired to keep a separation and shared the few instructors that had his number also interestingly respected the parameter. "I would like to—I mean as much as I have a hard time doing it, I would like to be able to keep them as separate as possible." These self-propelled limitations, whether easy or hard to maintain, aided many participants in controlling their professional engagement by lessening the amount of people that could potentially contact them.

Various techniques were used such as limitations of sharing personal information, limiting where the phone was placed in the home, and even using features on the phone to establish a parameter. One participant, Janine, took this to a different level by

voluntarily taking a work demotion. This was in response to extenuating family issues that included overall family mobile device usage and the control of her public relations workload, which included 24/7 accessibility and monitoring social media.

I had been director of PR and marketing for the college up until August of last year and then moved down a level... I did that voluntarily because I wanted to be able to have a much lighter workload because of family issues...my workload did dramatically change...Because of that, um, some of the other things in our lives changed, like I never would leave work until it, I would work from 6:00 AM until at least 6:00 PM and then we'd go home, we'd eat dinner and then I work more.

That has completely stopped.

This extreme move was in response to establishing a stronger parameter around her domestic sphere by limiting the need to be using her mobile device extensively for work purposes. Interestingly, of the participants, most parameters were self-controlled and established without discussion or negotiations with others. The next parameters were not only independently set, but also verbalized to others in the domestic sphere to establish how the participants controlled engagement situations. The following section explores verbal announcements used by the participants with respect to parameters.

***Verbal announcements.*** Mark shared “I don’t negotiate very much” when discussing on how he builds parameters outside of work. Other participants communicated with their personal network of individuals by simply announcing their engagement needs when establishing short- or long-term parameters. It is important to remember when participants controlled their parameters that those parameters included both time to connect and disconnect. Those verbal announcements were primarily

conveyed to spouses, significant others, children, and sometimes even extended family. They were made in the moment and enabled engagement that took only minutes or the announcements were made in advance for professional engagement that took a few hours of domestic time. The overall intent was to control professional communication during nonwork time. These announcements allowed others within the domestic sphere to know and understand the time and engagement parameters the participant established and enacted.

There were several occurrences of participants that announced they needed a few minutes to engage, thus they spontaneously set parameters to allow for time to work and communicate professionally via their mobile device. Admittedly, they were not negotiations, rather the participants stated what needed to occur and when it would occur. Mike explained from his perspective.

If we're getting ready to leave to go do something and I said, hey I gotta take care of a quick work thing before we go...it's usually something that will only take five minutes. And handled it, and moved on.

In Mike's announcement, he established a time parameter so he could tend to work then return his attention to his family. Juan faced the same situation, "But they're minimal...in duration. So, it's like, 'hey let me take care of this for a second and then we can get back to whatever.'" Likewise, Lydia, Ben, and David experienced the need to establish a short-term parameter for time on the mobile device. In David's case, "I need ten minutes to do this. Okay just give me ten minutes then I'll come help you with that or I'll play with you or I'll work on that with you." That was an example of a typical parameter to one of David's sons. While he and his wife considered formal negotiations for their family, they

believed the brief announcements worked better for controlling engagement parameters in their family dynamic.

Sometimes participants found parameters communicated changed during the execution. Laura offered announcements to her children such as

Give mommy ten minutes and it'd be like ten minutes, which really means an hour....I just need ten minutes for you not to bother me and then we'll go. And then you know, that will turn into an hour or two.

Laura shared her children could not tell time yet, so she was able to set a parameter that seemed shorter to her children, but allowed her more time for professional engagement. Similarly, Laura was in situations where an announcement offered a reward to the family. For example, if the children adhered to her announced parameter, she would take them sled riding.

That was hard because I would be with calls with clients and they're screaming and I'm like, 'Oh my God.' And then the negotiation [reward] will come in. 'If you be quiet, I'll take you outside riding.' Well, I knew I wasn't taking them out sled riding. That was absolutely not going to happen. 100% not happening and, and so, they'd be like, 'Okay.' And then I'd get bundled up and I feel so bad and I would be like, 'Go out there and wait for me.' You know.

While Laura discussed offering this reward in her announced need for time, David spoke of the necessity to adhere to his announced parameter. In that vein, David called his communication to his teenage son a "negotiation of time," however he was announcing the outcome, not negotiating.

Let me use this time for this and then I'll give you back time after. My youngest son...he's a basketball guy so, come out and play, shoot hoops with me, dad. And that's that would be a negotiation. How about if 15 minutes in then I'll go out and while you're waiting can you clean your room or something?

David shared the parameters presented to his son were typically taken well, however, he further shared keeping up his end of the bargain was paramount.

But only I think when I've been able to get his trust that I will follow through with that second part. Earlier when I was trying when that would happen when he was younger, there was a lot of disbelief and disappointment when I would say something like that.

Rather than Laura's announced sled riding reward, David learned though relational experiences the value of verbalizing a parameter, but then also to adhering to what he established.

Ellen made announcements to her family, but they were for slightly longer periods of time.

So they understand like there's times when they come in the door from school and I'm like, 'listen, I'm going to be on a conference call, you know, make yourself scarce. Keep quiet.'...like, 'don't come talk to me for the next whatever, 45 minutes.' So they're, they're used to it because, I do a lot at home and at work.

Ellen found ways to control her usage within her nonwork time by communicating the parameters to her children and thus limiting domestic interruptions into her professional engagement.

At times, participants gave notice to develop parameters for something later in the day or later in the week. Lydia communicated to her husband “I’m going to need an hour or two in the middle of the day where I can just sit and work.” Mary established the same pattern in her home in which she announced time needed on a particular weekend day. Announcing engagement parameters for later in the week allowed individuals within the domestic sphere to tailor their schedule and activities accordingly.

In addition to announcing professional parameters to individuals within the domestic sphere, participants mentioned the additional benefit of communicating domestic parameters in the professional sphere. Lydia articulated she set healthy parameters both at work and at home. While unexpected, it was important to understand how individuals controlled parameters within the professional sphere as well. Lydia thought “it is healthy for people to set a time where, you know, for them, like I’m not working after this hour.” Working in an educational setting, she reflected on the benefits of communicating domestic parameters to teachers and students. Janine also saw the value in communicating her domestic parameters at work. Janine’s family had recently made significant changes in their nonwork time to set strict parameters around mobile device usage to redevelop bonds within their family. During those changes, Janine informed colleagues “I may not answer your email tonight, it may be tomorrow and you know, making it clear that, you know, I may not make a post on social media tonight if, you know, if I can’t get to it.” Like Lydia and Janine, Landi believed in communicating domestic parameters both at work and at home. Landi elaborated on several discussions she had with professional contacts so they were equally aware of her parameters.

I think that I've been able to demonstrate to myself that I can draw pretty firm boundaries. And I found ways to effectively communicate those without impeding my ability to move up in my workplace. I think that you know some people think that by always being available that there's an advantage there and I don't think that's necessarily true. I think it means that I need to be efficient with the time and I'm dedicated to my work tasks but that it doesn't necessarily mean that I need to constantly be connected.

Landi worked to establish parameters through clear communication "upfront" with professional colleagues on how she managed her time at home while still exhibiting commitment and dedication on the job. Landi believed in open lines of communication at home regarding established parameters; she claimed there had not been a need to establish any negotiated boundaries, but she "self-monitors" and set parameters accordingly.

Verbal announcements regarding parameters were customized to fit the need of the individual (participant), their family dynamic, and at times included discussions with professional colleagues to develop healthy and respectful parameters. Parameters in the realm of the ones discussed were self-developed and sometimes verbally conveyed were a means of establishing guidelines to control the participants' balance between work and home. The next section will explore parameters that were out of the participants' control.

**Out of control.** Participants realized some parameters were out of their control and developed naturally. Other parameters developed due to work influences with unwritten expectations that impacted decisions the participants could make in their nonwork time. Lastly, a few participants formally developed written parameters with

other members within their domestic sphere. In all those variations, the participant was unable to have complete control over the development of parameters.

***Organic development.*** There were some situations presented by participants in which parameters naturally developed within the home. Dani discussed her decision to primarily use the computer for work at home rather than the mobile device. She shared her phone distracted her daughters and they “wanna play on the phone.” Because of that dynamic, the limitation organically developed to limit the mobile device usage in the presence of her girls. In a further discussion about parameters, Dani shared in regard to parameters on protecting certain family times at home “I think my mom and I just like know that should be the case.” Dani’s mom lived with her and her two young daughters and while they have not had any formal conversations, parameters had naturally developed. Curtis’ nonwork time parameters organically developed due to the addition of children to his domestic sphere.

I don't feel like I have to like, make this boundary...I mean my wife played a role in that...especially when we had the kids ... I think it was ... just a no brainer at that point. If you have your priorities straight, then it's just the natural kind of progression.

Curtis believed as his nuclear family grew that the progression of limiting mobile device usage naturally evolved as well. Some participants spoke of using time in their car for professional work communication. However, Ann shared her and her live-in boyfriend used that time to have face to face conversations.

Yeah I mean I think it’s probably more me feeding off of him because he’s not on it [mobile device] while he’s driving so I tend to find myself to be a little more



connected and have conversation without that so I think the car even though we never really established that when I think through. I think that that's the probably another location that that boundary just seems to exist and probably from me picking up on him not being able to be on his cellphone.

Ann did not control this situation with a self-created parameter, it was not discussed with her boyfriend, rather it developed naturally. As pointed out, some parameters had developed naturally, while others contained some informal discussions or unwritten expectations from the professional sphere.

*Unwritten/informal.* Participants acknowledged unwritten guidelines from their professional domain that intended to promote or protect mobile device engagement in their nonwork time. The condition was out of their control; it was important for participants to consider those informal guidelines with respect to established domestic parameters.

Several participants felt the pressure to be involved in nonwork times, even though it was never articulated to them formally. Mike and Ann explained there was a 24-hour response expectation within their industries and when considering the weekend, that equated to an unwritten guideline to be engaged over the weekend from home. Ellen talked about experiences with what she deemed “more of an unwritten thing.” There were components of Ellen’s work that “becomes emergent and they [professional colleagues] have to contact me.” In those situations, Ellen felt compelled to comply, thus impacting how she could set domestic parameters. Cindy did not have any formal rules within her industry, but felt the unwritten pressure. When asked if there were unwritten rules in place, she shared, “If I had to be honest I would say yeah.” She was unable to convey

what would happen if engagement did not occur as she allowed that unwritten guideline to permeate any possible parameters at home. Cindy and her husband talked about setting firm usage parameters at home, but with respect to a variety of situations to include unwritten professional guidelines, they had not formally established any. Although unwritten, these participants understood the expectation, but they were not formal directives.

Two of the participants, Rachel and Janine, had public relations roles and responsibilities for social media. Janine added “they don’t ask you to do that” in regard to engaging in your nonwork times. Rachel shared her perception “I would say it’s just more or less understood.” In other words, it was a component of her job. In a congruent field, Janine said “there’s not a direct directive, it’s a perceived directive.”

It's kind of frowned upon if you don't look at it and at least respond to it in some way that you've, you're working on it or that you've seen this and you'll address it at another time. So, you know, making sure that I'm checking that there's not anything major happening by, by email.

Janine went on to share she had been questioned in work meetings “why wasn’t that handled, you know, last night.” Hence, her belief system unwritten guidelines indirectly controlled her domestic parameters through her needs to engage, rather than Janine controlling it. Ryan had experiences with his co-workers regarding informal conversations on how their professional communication evolved. Within their industry/office, they recognized emails could wait, but texts or calls were urgent. “You won't find it written down anywhere. It's something that I think we all just sort of did, and then we've all kind of discussed it ad-hoc, you know?” While the evolution of the action

plan was out of Ryan's direct control, it enacted control that supported domestic parameters.

In all those situations, recognizing and working through those issues enabled participants to have a better understanding of how organically developed or unwritten guidelines influenced their domestic parameters in ways they could not control. It is important to recognize those when establishing parameters that are in their control. The idea of necessary written and more formal parameters is explored in the next section.

***Written/formal.*** In some cases, participants determined formal parameters needed to occur in the home and as such, the domestic domain members had a discussion to develop and agree to parameters. Because these examples are formal and involved others' input, they were out of the participants' sole control.

Jessica, who shared 50/50 custody of her daughter with her ex-husband, had a situation in which a dispute with the ex-husband over the daughter's cell phone usage overflowed into parameters for Jessica's professional usage as well. The dispute began with a phone provided by the father and his expectations for the daughter's usage while at Jessica's home. This situation ended up in court; the decision posed by the judge was that Jessica could control boundaries in her home. She bluntly shared this, as it was instrumental in how it further developed into a formal contract Jessica also followed professionally.

That kind of made me think about my boundaries with my cell phone too. So that we shouldn't be on it 24/7. We're not having impactful, you know, relationships and time together if we're both on our phone constantly.

Jessica elaborated on the usage and its influence on relationships in that her and her daughter discussed options and made a formal agreement.

I found that the couple cell phone contracts my attorney told me about it, and I went online and printed out a bunch of different contract samples...and yeah we found one that we—that we both could agree upon and then we checked off the rules that we wanted to follow. Some of them didn't apply 'cause she's older, but, we came upon it together, so...it's on the refrigerator.

In order to establish parameters, they both reviewed and signed the contract. This formal agreement was out of Jessica's complete control and instead was inspired formally by a court decision and included the influence of Jessica's daughter and formal agreements found online.

Janine faced a defining moment when her daughter attempted suicide and realized the immediate need for change within their domestic sphere, which included mobile device parameters. Some of those parameters were verbalized announcements from Janine and others were out of Janine's control and formally negotiated. Along with Janine's voluntary demotion at work to minimize her mobile device engagement, the family used a therapist to mediate formal negotiations of parameters.

We didn't want phones at all after we got home from work. We wanted them gone for the day. But completely understood that that was not um gonna happen...we negotiated amongst each other with essentially our therapist as the mediator to talk us through how best to come up with the timeline.

Janine shared that the therapist assisted them in finding parameters that worked best for their family and ones they could all adhere to find time to focus on each other. Janine

passionately and firmly shared they were parameters she professionally and personally could live with, though Janine did not control their development.

### **Summary of Control Two: Parameters**

Parameters looked different in the participants' lives as their managerial demands and their domestic spheres all looked different. Participants primarily believed in the success of the parameters as they typically were self-set rather than negotiated with other domain members, as such were primarily in their control. Participants readily initiated verbal announcements within their domestic sphere regarding the need for short-term or long-term professional engagement time. By doing so, participants felt they could accomplish necessary professional communication and return to the domestic sphere in a timely fashion. For Nigel, any successful parameters began with belief in the necessity of them. He asserted valuing the importance of parameters was the "key." As a family, Nigel indicated "generally, we do a real good job...of holding those boundaries and I think key is recognizing we set them for a reason, like, that's, that's very important time."

While being in control of parameters was the participants' preference and typically the manner in which they were set, situations presented themselves that rendered the parameters out of their control. There were times where formal negotiated parameters were warranted which took place with an attorney or even a mediator. Other times, informal, unwritten guidelines from the professional sphere influenced decisions on established parameters. For the participants, this could equate to pressure to engage. However, participants also spoke of parameters that developed organically and domain members adopted the behaviors as they naturally developed. These unfolded into primarily comfortable parameters within the families where this occurred.

## **Summary of Theme One: Control**

The first theme, Control, contained the subthemes of time and parameters. Time was both in and out of participants' control. Interviewees shared stories of considering the next day that included established decisions on how they controlled their responsiveness. In that realm, they carefully considered when and to whom to send responses in an attempt to achieve balance between work and family. Advancing workflow was an area of time interviewees controlled as they opted to both manage and monitor communication and progress to ensure success of themselves and their teams. This process looked different for each person due to the varied industries represented in this research. In this section, participants spoke actively about various apps used that aided them in their accomplishments to move work forward and to be prepared. Participants also controlled their interstitial time and their engagement within domestic events. While those items were in the control of the participants, yet they were unable to control areas such as actual time. When industries formally or informally expected 24/7 availability or operated with clients in different time zones, participants felt challenged to find balance with areas out of their control. Further, interruptions in their domestic time and space as well as others' behaviors and expectations were out of their control. Participants juggled time elements both in and out of their control to successfully fulfill their managerial duties and balance usage within the domestic sphere.

When participants considered time, they also considered parameters. Interestingly, parameters were not typically negotiated with members of the domestic sphere, rather they were primarily self-developed and sometimes verbally conveyed to others on what they needed or what the parameters looked like. These parameters

typically offered the participant time to complete professional communication or functions on the mobile device to complete work and then return their attention to the domestic sphere. Without negotiation, the parameters discussed thus far were in full control of the participants. Conversely, parameters that were out of their control were ones that naturally developed as a domestic habit such as not using mobile devices in the car. Also, informal or formal professional expectations of engagement in nonwork time proved to be out of the participants' control. Instead, they needed to manage those expectations while balancing the domestic sphere. Lastly, formal parameters imposed or mediated by others left little to no control for the participants.

As managers learned ways they could and could not control their mobile device usage in terms of time and parameters, their overall sentiments had the propensity to change. Not only could the participant's sentiments change, but also the sentiments of those around them within the domestic sphere. The examination of sentiments and their influence(s) on professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere is reviewed in the next section.

### **Sentiments**

The second theme derived from the data is Sentiments. To conceptualize these findings, it is imperative to revisit the terminology from Work/Family Border Theory. The border crosser is the individual that crosses the border between work and family, which in this dissertation was the participant. Additionally, the border keeper/other domain members are the spouses, significant others, and/or children that interact with the border crosser within the domestic sphere. It is significant to bring the terminology to the forefront again as the difference between the border crossers (participants of this

research) and the border keeper/other domain members (significant others/spouses/children) are integral components of the subthemes of sentiments.

The vantage points of these subthemes are both from the border crosser's sentiments as well as others' sentiments. With that in mind, sentiments are defined as the feelings and perspectives of the participant (the border crosser), yet also includes feelings of others within the domestic domain such as spouses, significant others, and children (border keepers/other domain members). It is important to remember participants and border crossers are used interchangeably as well as the term others is used interchangeably with border keepers and other domain members.

The usage of mobile devices for professional purposes within the domestic sphere led to emotions from both the user and the other individuals within the nonwork domain. It is important to this research to understand the feelings, emotions, and related perspectives to also understand how relationships are influenced. This theme and subsequent data addresses *RQ1*: How are individuals using the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere and *RQ2*: How are relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage? It answers these questions through sharing decisions made by border crosser and subsequent feelings that surface, but also through sharing perspective and verbalized comments by others unpack how domestic relationships overall are influenced.

This area was important to explore because of how the engagement decisions impacted the border crosser and the border keeper/other domain members within the domestic sphere. As a result, feelings erupted and perspectives developed, thus this



section describes the sentiments of those involved. The two subthemes for this section include Border Crosser Sentiments and Others' Sentiments.

### **Border Crosser Sentiments**

Within the Border Crosser Sentiments subtheme, the areas in which these participants were proactive and areas in which they were reactive are explained. Proactive encompasses the participants' expectations of feelings and how they proactively used the mobile device to manage those expected feelings. Reactive refers to when border crossers reacted to mobile device usage and related relational experiences.

Nigel announced, "I think I have a good, a good relationship with my mobile device." Nigel also read a book titled *Deep Work* which argued constant communication needed to be shut off at times to allow for deep work. For Nigel, deep work included his primary engineering duties rather than the mental toll of constant communication via the mobile device. He discussed the sentiments of others and alluded to his own in the quote below.

It's given me, I think, permission to, to shut down communication, which feels like something you shouldn't be doing, you know? I think it was emboldening, in terms of just saying, like, I think people ... people's natural disposition is that I should be available. I, I think people are just ... well, I, I can be available, so I should be available, and I, I think it takes, it takes discipline. It takes, it takes purpose to say, 'I'm not gonna be available for this better thing.'

The better thing Nigel was referring to was deep work within his profession and just reading that book gave him the confidence to be honest about his disposition and then be proactive with this mobile device usage to maintain a feeling of empowerment.

**Proactive.** While the control of checking, monitoring, or engaging resided with the border crosser (participant) in this research, the border crosser anticipated feelings and proactively made decisions to avoid unpleasantness. Specifically, the participants proactively made efforts to avoid feelings such as anxiety/stress and relational unrest due to conflict, yet they also shared stories of mindfulness.

Several participants mentioned the words “stress” and “anxiety” when they explained their feelings in certain situations. Earlier participants talked about managing their time with concern for the next day. This section illuminates the proactive manner in which engagement decisions proactively combatted feelings and related perspectives. Landi viewed the decision to engage as a “stress management tool” with respect to what would be waiting for her at work on Monday (next day), so she engaged on Sunday to manage possible stress. While Landi actively engaged, Rich’s perspective was that the engagement was a risk: reward “depending what the message is.” It could be that the message was bothersome, but he claimed “I’d rather take the risk of ... being less stressed the next day.” Conversely, Lydia preferred not to take the risk Rich took. When Lydia opened a work-related email on her mobile device had been bothersome, it caused her anxiety. She opted to proactively disengage to avoid anxiety.

Even if you're up, you don't need to be checking your email...I'm up that night thinking about it. Like you just need to set that time so that you're not stressing about things all night long and that you're sleeping and you know, taking care of yourself in that way.

While Lydia was awake, she disengaged to avoid stress, whereas for Rich, he believed the possibility of stress was worth the risk. The next paragraph also addresses stress and anxiety, but does not directly relate to the next workday.

Participants' motivations to avoid stress arose from different perspectives. Janine's motivation was to keep up with her email as she averaged about 200 emails per day. For her, "getting behind is stressful" so she combatted that by intentionally and proactively checking her email in her nonwork time. Similarly, Alexa emphatically discussed the many hats she wore at her job and she valued the ability to alleviate some of that "pressure, that anxiety" through her ability to stay organized with her mobile device. Since she could remain organized, she felt less overall anxiety in her domestic sphere. The less anxiety equated to better relational experiences with her husband and other individuals in the nonwork domain. Adam's overarching goal in life was to have "nothing to do." Accordingly, he said,

So like, if I—like—if—every day I have a to-do list and the shorter that to-do list is, the easier, like the less stressed I'm going to be. So if I can do something and get it off my plate, that's really why I do it.

Throughout these experiences, participants were being proactive with their mobile device usage to avoid unpleasant feelings or sentiments. This awareness helps us to understand how they are using their device, how their decisions are aiding their proactive efforts to avoid unpleasant feelings, and how the usage influenced relationships. Ryan's wife noticed the success of his stress avoidance tactics. She remarked about how much he was "able to enjoy my vacations and still get things done without being super stressed about it." He went on to state "I would rather know if there were problems than imagine there

are perhaps even bigger problems that aren't being solved.” By imagining possible problems, his anxiety level rose, thus was not relaxed overall. In that vein, Alyssa talked of experimenting with no mobile device on vacation to ward off an anxious sentiment, yet she claimed, “I think it would eat at me a little bit.” Like Ryan, she preferred to know, however, she surmised she would feel anxious not knowing. Thus, participants deemed proactively engaging or disengaging from professional usage of the mobile device helped them to avoid stress and anxiety.

Some participants tried to avoid conflict that led to relational strife. Rich and Landi elaborated from their mobile usage perspective. Rich spoke of his family (border keepers/other domain members) having the greatest power of influence over his professional usage of the mobile device within the domestic sphere.

I don't like confrontation. That's just my nature. So whether, whether I'm at work, at home. Wherever I may be, I don't like to have people yelling and screaming at each other. I'm more of, can't we all just get along, and let's talk about whatever the issue is, and resolve it that way rather than being in a constant state of unease...So um by me setting those boundaries between work and home, it seems to have no confrontation.

Rich's desire to avoid confrontations and related feelings or sentiments that erupted as a result was very important to him. Because of this importance, Rich proactively made decisions to avoid those situations that then further impact relationships when people are upset with each other. Correspondingly, Landi placed significant value in avoiding confrontation. She did this by proactively assessing her week and having discussions with her husband.

I think managing expectations is the biggest piece of that not being confrontational. I think what is hardest are the times when I'm not anticipating them and there have been times when I've had to back out of social responsibilities or you know postpone something that we've wanted to do as a family because work kinda seeps in.

Landi disliked changing plans and having work interrupt her domestic sphere, but she was committed to her architectural career and found the way she proactively addressed the situation resulted in avoiding confrontational situations and potential relational unrest with her husband.

From a slightly different perspective, having a mindful sentiment was brought to light by participants and occurred in two different ways. One way was mindfulness of others and the second way was mindfulness of self. First are stories articulating mindfulness of others; in most cases this meant participants being mindful of their employees' nonwork time even though the contributors chose to professionally engage with their mobile devices. One key way of exhibiting mindfulness of others was with proactive thoughts and actions regarding appropriateness of when to contact employees in nonwork time. Jessica remarked "I don't usually bother them unless it's something important for the next day. I try not to bother them at night." She attempted to be mindful of her employees' nonwork evenings and to express that sentiment to them through her actions in their nonwork time. Landi, Lydia, and Lisa mirrored that approach with their teams. Landi explained, "I try to limit that [contacting employees in nonwork time] because I want my project team to have quality time outside of work." Lisa deemed it "kind of rude" to contact her team after hours and she avoided that as often as possible to

display her mindful sentiment towards their nonwork time. Lydia showed her mindful sentiment by opting to use an app to manage her email usage to avoid imposing on others.

I use *Boomerang* for *Gmail* to send messages...a lot of times at night I don't send messages to people. I will boomerang them to go off the next morning so it's not like we're on email all night together. So while I'm on email I'm not trying to like infringe on other people's personal time and so it'll go up back during work hours.

By using *Boomerang*, Lydia exhibited her mindfulness towards others by not imposing on their nonwork time, though it is important to recall that she still opted to engage in her nonwork time. Jared, who was in a similar managerial role as Lydia within a high school, worked to maintain a mindful sentiment in his overall understanding of how others controlled their nonwork time. "It's probably separating how I operate versus how someone else is operating, being respectful to the facts that be people kind of operate differently and it still be okay." He attempted to understand others and while he was highly engaged in his nonwork time, he was mindful not everyone operated that same way. These examples articulated ways managers were mindful of their employees and thus, proactive with how they managed themselves. Sometimes this extended to being mindful of the context (for example: email, text, calls) in which individuals preferred to be contacted.

Having knowledge of professional contacts' preferences aided the participants in successful professional communication. This also allowed them to save overall time by using those preferences. Rachel recognized quickly how her boss preferred to be reached, "Our, superintendent prefers to use his mobile device for almost everything that he does.

So, I know that is the quickest way I could get in touch with him.” This knowledge helped Rachel mindfully manage her work and nonwork time when tracking her boss down for answers. Similarly, Tim realized “some people respond quicker to text, some phone call.” Like Rachel, he utilized that knowledge to be mindful of them and managed his work and time accordingly. Sheila, who managed a college apartment complex, kept records of how her tenants preferred to be contacted.

cell phone, mainly, but then also on the cellphone, we have email, texting, the website. So, that gets confusing sometimes and like, because you, with all 85 units, you're like, Okay, which, best suits this tenant to communicate? Because you go and you say, Okay, I need to inspect your apartment tomorrow...I have to keep everything, just noted on how it's best to communicate with each tenant, each unit. Because, if I email them and they don't use email, then, two weeks later, they said, I didn't hear from you.

Being mindful of her tenants' preferences allowed her to successfully get messages to them and efficiently follow through on her work demands. Janine was mindful in a similar way, but with public relations clients. She expressed she “prefer[s] to use the one that's going to make the most impact or get the message across most effectively, which is different for each individual project or interaction.” Basically, Janine shared her preference for mode of communication was their preference; thus she exhibited mindfulness towards her clients. Participants proactively reached out to others based on personal preferences to be considerate and mindful towards them. This sentiment helped participants have successful and timely communication exchanges.

Rather than being mindful of other individuals such as clients and employees, a few participants were mindful of self. Mary stated “I think as I’ve aged, I’m a lot more mindful that... maybe after six, seven o’clock that if a work colleague was calling me, I may not have accepted that, whereas ten years ago I probably would have.” In this example, Mary was mindful of her own time within the domestic sphere and how she worked to protect that domestic space more so than earlier in her career. This is important to understand and experience and time invested in a career altered Mary’s views of professional engagement with the mobile device. Adam admitted to having the most power of control over his usage; he was mindful of his “self-absorbed” sentiment. Adam elaborated, “I don’t have to...there is nothing that says I have to do this work on my own time.” Mary and Adam felt certain of their sentiments in terms of personal mindfulness. This is important as participants as border crossers understood themselves and how understanding influences both their decision making about professional mobile device engagement and its subsequent impact on relationships.

While participants exhibited proactive approaches to their sentiments about using the mobile device professionally, findings were skewed in the direction of more reactive rather than proactive behavior. Reactive referred to when and how the participant as the border crosser reacted to professional mobile device usage within relationships. The following section explores the nuances of reactive behaviors.

**Reactive.** Reactive in this section pertains to participants’ (border crossers’) reactions towards their own sentiments and/or the sentiments of others. These sentiments are a direct reflection on the participants’ use of the mobile device professionally within their domestic sphere. Sentiments acknowledged by interviewees included irritated,



anxious, hateful, guilty, worried, mood altering, and some hopefulness towards positive sentiments.

The first and most prominent reaction exhibited from participants was irritation. This included feelings and perspectives derived from frustration, anger, lividness, and annoyance as articulated by the participants. These statements demonstrate irritation toward industry situations, others, and self. Sheila and her husband yell at each other in their home when their mobile device usage gets out of control. Tim and David had similar irritating instances with their families. Tim recognized he felt angry when he made conscious attempts to put his phone aside and others did not. “Yes it can make you angry...you feel like you’re not as important as whatever’s going on the phone.” While Tim felt that way, David used a different technique to express his irritation. David directly asked the offending individual “is it okay to interrupt that time with your device, or should I just refrain and hold back and wait until a better time?” This was David’s way of pointing out the irritating behavior in a more indirect manner, yet reacting to the irritation he felt. Cindy and her husband both felt frustrated with each other when the professional mobile device usage robbed them of truly listening to each other.

Well, I think it's just more a matter of not listening or not hearing...I ask him something or he tells me something and I don't retain it because I'm in the middle of an email, reading or writing and vice versa. So then you have to repeat yourself and you get frustrated and, you know, it's, you never listen. Well no, you don't hear me.

These examples demonstrated the irritation that can arise due to mobile device usage in the domestic sphere. This irritation has the propensity to impact relationships. The next

passages dig further into participants' experiences with how misunderstandings led to frustrated sentiments. These sentiments were a direct reaction to the mobile device usage.

Jessica, who explained she used her mobile device actively in her nonwork time to manage client relations within her retail banking management position, shared a frustrating family situation when asked if the professional usage ever caused family conflict or misunderstandings.

Last night for example I was on the phone with a client and my daughter was having a problem, and she kept running out and wanting to talk to me and I had to, 'Hold on one second honey. One second honey.' And most clients are gracious enough to say, 'Go ahead and take care of what you need to and call me back.' Some aren't. So. When your child needs your immediate attention and and you're on the phone with a work client and you're, you know trying to juggle that.

Jessica explained she felt very frustrated when she was attempting to juggle both client calls and her daughter's needs. While she appreciated some clients' understanding, she also felt the client and family relationships were influenced by her frustration. Janine's family was heavily involved with their mobile devices; Janine reported both her and her husband actively engaged with the device for work in nonwork times.

Because we were so focused on our phones, we, we missed cues from one another...My daughter had isolated herself and would spend, you know, hours on the phone...I was exhausted just from ... work and work and work and then you're on the phone, work, work, work...We would, we would argue with one another...It got bad when like we're sitting at the table eating dinner and like I'd

get a text from Abigail, not she's like sitting across the table from me but doesn't speak but sends me a text at the table. So that really prompted like, we don't- what is going on here and you know, we would argue with each other because, you know, everyone was looking down at their phones and no one would look at each other. And it was just, it was everyone got frustrated and it was just like, you know, it was time for a change.

As a married couple, their professional usage became a source of frustration for not only Janine, but the entire family. They felt frustrated they missed cues from their daughter on how much this usage was influencing their relationship with her. The frustration stemmed from reactions to the device usage which later evolved into anger and overall irritation with each other. In final recognition of that need for change, Janine and her family made substantial adjustments in the home in regards to their professional mobile device usage. With the help of a mediator, they worked to manage necessary changes to resolve their feelings and overall relational unrest. While these were extremely frustrating family moments for Jessica and Janine, for some participants, this irritation was a direct result of industry situations.

Kara clearly recalled her thought process regarding a situation which was a turning point in her professional mobile device usage within her domestic sphere. Her story started with "I'm no longer checking my email after 8 p.m." Kara went on to describe a managerial special assignment she was working on. This job involved coordinating many people, collective organizations, and resources to successfully orchestrate this project. In fact, Kara passionately explained her situation as if it had just happened yesterday. "There was a three day period in the middle of the week where I

was, stayed up all night and going to bed in the morning.” In the meantime, she was still trying to maintain all of her work responsibilities. Personally, Kara was additionally challenged with living in a hotel for three months due to a water pipe break in her home. This perspective only served to escalate an irritated sentiment for Kara.

So, we had all that personal stuff going on in my life as well, and I had laid down to go to sleep and I had opened an email. And I don't remember what the email was, but I remember I was livid. It was a work email, and I was livid. I was mad, and I was angry, and I was up for hours because I couldn't go to sleep. And it was at that moment, I remember sitting on the bed.... I remember. I was so angry.

When asked about the contents of the email, Kara did not even remember what the problem in the email was; however, she shared “the better question would be why am I letting things like that from work get me so irritated.” The irritated sentiment in which Kara had about this situation became a defining moment of change for her. And as the story began, “I'm no longer checking my email after 8 p.m.” Kara felt she needed time to decompress from her day and enjoyed reading to relax, so as a result of her reaction to that one industry communicative experience, she rethought and changed how she was conducting herself within her domestic sphere.

Cindy also had a situation in which she had an angry reaction to a communication experience with a client, “more so around the content of the emails than the fact that I have to view the emails.” Cindy elaborated on the situation below.

I have a client that's a doozy right now...They...tend to send kind of scathing emails with half-facts. Then, you just get a little irritated. And the choice is you

either throw the phone, put the phone down or get mad at them. So, I choose [to] get mad at them.

Cindy shared she didn't always answer the emails, that it

depends on where my level of frustration with them is, or anger. If I'm just annoyed I will probably answer. Put my best professional voice on and send a nice email back. If it's pushed my buttons pretty hard I'm going to walk away from it and let it sit overnight, because I would probably say something really bad or stupid and get myself fired.

In this scenario, Cindy found a way to manage the situation by gauging her level of anger and then determined the proper response time to allow her anger to simmer. Cindy was among the many participants to experience varying levels of frustration due to professional mobile device engagement in the domestic sphere. Often these sentiments were difficult to overcome quickly, thus feelings overflowed into their nonwork time, space, and relationship interactions. For couples like Cindy and her husband, their communication was described as lacking due to poor listening skills. They, like others, recognized the situation and reacted by becoming irritated. Dani and Carol had frustrating experiences with communications from their bosses. Dani experienced a few times where high stakes work emails came in at "like 11:00 on a Friday night and I've been irritated by that." Whereas Carol expressed frustration when she was "trying to spend time with the kids and he's [Carol's boss] calling me about something that I have no answer for. These emails and calls not only interrupted the domestic sphere, but also caused Dani and Carol to have an irritated reaction. Karen felt similarly about certain emails received, but

her irritation really escalated by the removal of a previously company-paid mobile device stipend.

But now, they don't pay a penny of it. So it's 100% my personal. It did upset me.

Yeah. Quite a bit. Because, like I said, good example's when we moved back here and we didn't have phones for a couple of weeks. You know, it was just expected,

Oh, but you have your cell phone, so... You know, Can you call the college and find out this. Can you call this? Or ... You know? That kind of thing, and it was just expected.

Not only was it expected at work, but the unwritten expectation to respond in nonwork times further fueled Karen's irritation. Those participants felt a direct irritation with a communicative situation within their companies or directly from their bosses. These statements show how irritation developed regarding professional communicative scenarios that spilled over into the participants' nonwork time. This irritated sentiment extended also to direct reports or teams within the interviewees' offices.

Adam, Jessica, and Alexa all found themselves irritated in terms of decisions made by their employees. Adam felt irritated with an instructor that directly reported to him; this instructor gained access to Adam's mobile device number from a previous emergency call. Then, this instructor used the number to frequently text Adam, something Adam preferred he wouldn't do. "So the question becomes how do I—how I dealt with this person and basically I haven't. I've avoided it entirely, and just bitch about it." Adam's reaction was irritation by the situation and his strategy was to "bitch" about the situation. In a different vein, Alexa found herself irritated with people that were unresponsive or slow to respond. During a discussion about her desire to offer quick

responses, she shared how others' unresponsiveness "bugs the hell out of me." She further explained "...it drives me crazy, if I email somebody or I respond to somebody after work hours or something, I don't expect an answer until the following day." While Alexa didn't necessarily expect a response during nonwork time, her "neurotic" sentiments kicked-in when three or more days passed with no response. She pointed out she did what was necessary in her nonwork time, while colleagues did not always reciprocate. This lack of reciprocation or timely responses irritated Alexa. Jessica became irritated with her team due to their difference in work commitment; she worked in her nonwork time to foster success, yet this ethic was not matched by her team.

It's definitely frustrating because we should be a team...A team atmosphere and you know, but you can't make somebody work as hard as you and not everybody has the same personality or sense of urgency that you do. So you have to-you have to I guess view it that way.

As previously discussed, Jessica avidly used her mobile device in her nonwork time to complete work. While she attempted to respect her team's nonwork time and did not expect the same level of engagement she provided, she found herself sometimes feeling frustrated by their seeming lack of commitment to their job and their lack of engagement in nonwork time.

Manners in which participants used their mobile devices and observed others' usage caused irritation within themselves and/or within their domestic sphere. Another component is how an anxious sentiment formed.

Mobile device usage developed anxious feelings in participants that they characterized as anxiety or stress. Alexa described herself as "neurotic, I'm borderline

OCD.” As a result, she described how she would feel if she were unable to tune in at any time via her mobile device. “I would just be an anxious mess because I’d be like, what’s happening that I don’t know about?” She felt her phone was a “crucial piece” to maintain a less anxious sentiment towards work functions. Conversely, Rich discussed earlier he was proactive in checking his emails via his mobile device and he believed the risk of stress was worth the reward of knowing. Yet, he found his reaction “can raise his stress level in a point where you’re supposed to be sort of decompressing.” For Rich, it seemed like a double-edged sword of proactively knowing, yet reactively feeling anxious. Like Rich, Alyssa preferred to check even if the result caused anxiety. Alyssa also reacted anxiously to the amount of emails that accumulated as she preferred to keep her inbox “tidy.” “That little red number with the, of the unread emails gives me a bit of anxiety. I think maybe not seeing that number would be better for my, my mental health than, than seeing it.” For Alyssa, this anxious sentiment circled back to her desire to be prepared for the next day. Ellen didn’t necessarily feel anxious about the number of emails, but particular emails that “popped up” caused her to react anxiously. “I’m like, oh gosh, what is he sending, you know? It happened to me this morning when I woke up, I, there was a, a physician that I work with it, Alabama haven’t heard from him in a year and now it’s the minute I saw that on my phone this morning, I’m like, stress...” Those emails for Rich, Alyssa, and Ellen caused reactions of anxiety, though Ellen had another anxiety-producing situation that extended to her children.

I mean I was in a stressful situation...I was on vacation, but a situation [work] came up where they couldn't find something and they needed me and I was in a pizza place with my kids and all my nieces and nephews and I gave them money



to go somewhere else and buy ice cream to just stay away from me because I have to get on the phone and on the computer and I had to solve it right then...So they [kids] and they were then coming back and lingering and looking at me like when is this going to be over? 'We're ready to go.' But but like I said, they're kind of used to it.

Ellen explained her children were used to these types of interruptions in their domestic sphere, but "It was, it was very stressful for me because I wasn't in a place that was conducive for the situation." Because she had five kids with her and had to quickly figure out how to manage the situation, she reacted very anxiously when she received the initial text message. Ellen further elaborated on situations her kids were used to.

I mean, there are times when I'm sitting at the table and I'm like swearing and I'm like, and the kids are like, calm down mom and I'm like, this is not working and I got to get this done and something's wrong, you know, like, so yeah, I definitely probably stressed them.

Her anxious sentiment was exhibited and expressed through her swearing. That stress extended to car rides where she insisted they were all quiet while she took a call. Ellen's situation caused anxious and stressful feelings for herself and within domestic sphere relationships.

The scenarios described thus far can cause participants' moods to be altered. Alyssa regretfully opened emails in her nonwork time that proved to alter her mood in her evenings at home or when out with friends. At times this happened when she was innocently texting with geographically distant friends and opted to open an email alert. Another situation surfaced in which she was out with friends and opened an email

regarding a sensitive student situation. While Alyssa admitted there “wasn't even necessarily much I could do that day or that evening, but it was just knowing what Monday was gonna bring, in terms of sort of like the fallout.” This instantly changed her mood to the degree that she no longer wanted to be out with her friends and rather preferred to leave and go home as she did not believe her mood was going to rebound.

Laura discussed how her mood changed when she checked her email in the morning while on vacation. “I'll check it like 10 or 11 and I'll check it when I get home and I'll clean it out, but it does. It affects your mood.” If something happened in the morning that was conveyed to Laura via email, her day began much differently than anticipated. Based on her reaction and altered mood, when asked if she wished she hadn't checked it, she quickly said yes. She described herself as a “glutton for punishment” in terms of checking her email and having her mood altered as a result. Carol expressed her sentiments about how her mood became altered when she elected to check-in with work or due to vacation interruptions. Carol shared a time she was in Long Beach and her boss called on her mobile device to inquire why she didn't hire a specific individual that had submitted an application. While she answered his questions, she also felt “jeez oh man I can't believe. Yeah, it does. It wrecks your mood.” Carol's sentiments included that it was impossible to work without mobile devices, yet she felt dread towards them. Carol was not alone in that reaction.

While mobile devices certainly afforded participants benefits, sometimes they felt dread and hate toward the mobile devices or individuals' decisions when using them. Sheila felt her mobile device engagement influenced her children's behavior. “So, I feel like we've rubbed off on the kids, saying, Okay. It's okay to do that all the time for

wherever you are.” This articulated Sheila’s sentiments about how her usage and that of her husband’s had emulated it was okay to engage with your mobile device professionally in any time or space, even if it interrupted family. When asked how she felt about that reflection, she vehemently replied “Ugh. Hate it.” This sentiment of hatred in how mobile devices were used professionally impacted relationships due to the interruptions they presented and engagement habits that formed. Rachel also found she hated her decisions to engage.

I hate myself when I look at the stuff, because sometimes I don't get my mind thinking about work, and then, thinking, Oh, why would they send me this, or Oh, no, they need something right away. And, you know, so then, you feel like you have to help them out. But, you know, technically, I don't have to check that.

While she reacted with feeling hatred toward her decisions, she struggled to make lasting changes to her behaviors.

Some participants reacted with a guilty sentiment toward their subsequent mobile device usage. Ben confessed “I’m as guilty as anyone when it comes to, you know, using the device when I probably shouldn’t be.” He felt most of the time he could leave it alone, yet other times “most certainly I fall into that trap and I start checking it and once I start I can’t stop.” He recognized that propensity and expressed feeling guilty about the individuals that were impacted within his domestic sphere. Laura concurred she felt guilty about her mobile device usage in the evening. “I feel like we're an Apple store and everybody's got everything and everyone's heads down.” Laura explained time passed so quickly that she reacted to the situation by feeling guilty that it was then her kids’ bedtime. Ann, in an extremely guilty demeanor and tone, emotionally discussed her

distraction with her mobile device. She admitted she is “not as focused on conversations” due to her “constant pull to be checking the phone.” Ann went on to share a specific situation that caused relational conflict and a guilty sentiment.

Last evening my boyfriend got hired as a new head basketball coach somewhere and came home and wanted to talk about it. I was in the middle of sending an email that to me was important for work so although I was attempting to pay attention...was so easily distracted by the email on the phone. And that happens often.

Ann recognized her patterns and reacted with a guilty sentiment about the situation. She further confessed the mobile device usage was “probably more heavy on my side.” She believed that was partially due to their different career roles, but that realization failed to remove the guilt she felt when these situations occurred. Rachel made similar remarks about her usage in her nonwork time.

I feel like if I'm sitting there with my phone and...I look like a teenager always, like, looking at my phone. And then, I feel guilty, if, you know, he's [her husband] doing something around the house, or even if it's not something that we're doing together. Like, if we're, if we consciously make the effort to say, ‘Hey, we're going out to dinner,’ or whatever, then, you know, I, I try to turn all that stuff [mobile devices] off, you know. But if we're just, like, coexisting in the house or he's doing his thing, I'm doing my thing, I still feel guilty about it.

Rachel's guilt included the fact that her mobile device usage also took away from her home responsibilities. She found it difficult to fight her guilty reaction and admitted that

conflict sometimes surfaced within the domestic sphere as a result. While for some like Rachel, guilty sentiments surfaced, others simply felt worried.

Mobile device usage brought about a worried sentiment for some of the interviewees. Mark discussed when he found himself without his phone. “I’m at home and I don’t have my phone, I think I would worry that things aren’t going well.” Mark felt less worried if his wife, who also works at the Christian camp he managed, had hers due to possible emergencies. Alyssa found work communication caused her worry when “a challenging student situation or, or if I send an email at the end of the day with some kind of news or information in it that I expect a response to.” Alyssa explained those situations might be “weighing on me” and caused her to worry about the possible outcomes or repercussions. Prior to having children, Laura described her panicked feelings when her and her husband took a vacation and did not have phone service.

Both of us were a little worried... We worked at the same place, but then we were like, we were there for seven days and... I panicked first because it was like, Oh my God, when I get back, it’s going to be a nightmare. Like, this is going to be a nightmare.

As it turned out, they transformed their reaction of worry towards the lack of the service for the device and they found

it was like, awesome and we forgot who we were and what we were. Like because there was nothing. You couldn’t use a phone to get around. We drove around the island. We had no idea where we were going. It was fun again, you know.

Probably dangerous, but fun, you know. It, it worked out thank God

Laura's worried sentiments were validated when she returned to work to face 600-700 emails to address. "It took me a week to just sift, to not even really respond." Through Laura's worrisome situation of not being able to respond, she appreciated and valued the relaxation offered without access to her phone.

Like Laura who appreciated that time and thought overall she would be "more fun" and "more relaxed" without the mobile device, other participants spoke of similar sentiments. Feelings or possible feelings of being rested and recharged developed amidst discussions surrounding the possibility of not having devices. Ben felt he would enjoy a slower pace and what he deemed "quality time" with others.

I think it would feel more...rested because you're not constantly... you know—you know there's that mental stress factor...Even though you're not physically here, your brain is still engaged, until the time you go to sleep. So if that weren't happening, I think you actually get more rest and probably feel a little bit more recharged.

Ben's sentiment was he was lacking the ability to fully rest due to the engagement with the mobile device particularly to keep up with his work demands. Jessica and Mary both agreed their evenings would be more relaxed at night when given the opportunity to disengage and focus on others. Mary continued she would feel "...less uptight or anxious about work things, and maybe I might sleep better at night." Though opinions were shared on how participants might enjoy freedom to relax, most participants still preferred the mobile device as a regular communicative tool in comparison to earlier times when it was not an option. David compared the possibilities of not having the device to "cutting the cord" on the TV. He described that as "very freeing and liberating not to be tied to the

TV, we do have more time to use our other devices.” He explained that having the ability to do something with the mobile device created feelings such as anxiety or nervousness. In the absence of that ability, he expected a feeling of peace. With that said, that peaceful feeling didn’t sway David’s sentiments on preferring the phone. Dani felt overall the mobile device unified the co-workers in their department.

What's been interesting though, is that that conflict with our senior leadership has actually brought us, a lot of the faculty closer together. And we're all part of it.

But. And that, that closeness has primarily been developed [by] Messenger and through texting.

Dani firmly stated the mobile device tools have been a positive outlet for them. “It's like this like, secret place that we have to kind of form a resistance.” In this scenario, Dani spoke for herself, but felt others also perceived the mobile device as a positive force within their department.

### **Summary of Sentiments One: Border Crosser Sentiments**

Border Crossers’ Sentiments was explored from both a proactive and reactive viewpoint. The use of the terminology within the sentiments theme became more prevalent due to necessity of clearly differentiating between the participants and others in terms of their feelings and perspectives which influence overall relational dynamics. Proactively, participants attempted to avoid stress and potential conflict, while being mindful and considerate of others. The important outcome was that this proactivity typically was demonstrated through engagement with the device rather than disengagement and sometimes engagement included the use of specific apps. Further, proactivity included initiating discussions with members of the domestic sphere, but also

proactively considering others in the professional sphere and how they prefer to be contacted. Both of those examples equated to less stress for the participant. However, even when interviewees shared their proactive approaches, reacting to mobile device situations far surpassed the proactive examples.

Reactions occurred from many of the participants and they reacted with various sentiments. These included, but are not limited to irritation, anxiety, hate, guilt, worry, and altered moods. Participants passionately shared experiences that altered their moods and formed their sentiments regarding experiences with mobile devices used professionally within the domestic sphere. These experiences involved employees, co-workers, bosses, and members of the domestic sphere. Collectively, participants recognized the challenge balance brought forth. They both recognized and verbalized their sentiments to others and imagined feelings of rest and rejuvenation in a world with limited engagement with mobile devices. Beyond themselves as border crossers (participants), the sentiments of others such as significant others and/or children is the next important concept reviewed.

### **Others' Sentiments**

It is important to this research to understand not only how participants as border crossers incorporate the mobile device within the domestic sphere, but also how usage impacts relationships. This subtheme, Others' Sentiments, uncovers the border crossers' perceptions of others sentiments and actual behaviors to further understand relational impact. The term "others" within this subtheme represents border keepers and other domestic domain members which collectively comprise spouses, significant others, extended family, and children. By perceptions, exploration occurred surrounding how the



border crosser perceived the sentiments of domestic domain members. This is important to explore to understand how relationships within the domestic sphere are impacted. Additionally, participants offer descriptions of actual domestic interactions involving others' verbal and nonverbal behavior within the domestic sphere. The first section highlights perceptions of the border crosser.

**Border crosser perceptions.** The border crossers are the actual managerial participants in this research. As such, the interactions they had within their domestic sphere left them with perceptions of what others such as spouses, significant others, children, or even extended family thought or felt about their (participant/border crosser) mobile device usage. The perceptions funneled into overarching categories where family understood or family didn't understand. While participants within the areas where the family didn't understand actually explained those situations, some participants also described when relationships appeared impacted to the level of potential conflict. These first passages reveal areas where the family seemingly understands the border crossers' usage and the overall need for professional engagement within the domestic sphere.

Several of the participants voiced their family understood their usage. "Understands" was a specific in vivo code from the transcript data. Most spoke of families as all-encompassing, while others specifically pointed out spouses or children. Mike and his wife both had jobs that required a fair amount of nonwork time on the mobile device. He really tried to separate work and home, but knew "these are 24 hour a day jobs." Mike was referring to his school administration position. He was convinced his wife "understands the situation." He reciprocated he understood "she's in a similar situation where she works too and she actually spends probably more time on her phone

in nonwork time than I do dealing with work stuff.” As a couple, Mike’s perception of her sentiments was they both understood and respected each other’s roles and responsibilities. Lydia commented on her husband’s apparent sentiments as well. “My husband is pretty understanding and you know, I think as adults we can both manage the like give me five minutes.” Like Mike and his wife, Lydia and her husband seemed to understand and support the professional time needed on their mobile devices. Ben spoke of how he perceived his family’s sentiments with respect to his active mobile device engagement.

My family has also accepted the fact that—because of my role, because of the industry we’re in, because of our 24/7/365 there are going to be, you know, even when we’re on vacation, I’m going to be checking my email. I’m going to be responding to them. I’m going to be taking calls from time to time.

Ben didn’t believe the mobile device controlled his life and he did “a good job at keeping that family time separate from work.” Though he admitted, “the two are intertwined almost all the time just because of the role and our industry.” Ben appreciated the understanding he believed his family extended to him. While Juan had more limited usage in nonwork time than Ben, he also referred to perceptions of the entire family. He explained his viewpoint as follows:

So I don’t think—so to me it’s just something that I can accomplish quickly and then move back to, what—you know, being reengaged ... outside of the—the uh work environment. So I don’t think it impacts it very much.

Juan exuded confidence with his answer and his perceptions his nuclear family understood. Other participants extended their perceptions of their families' sentiments in a broader sense.

Like Juan, Ryan also confidently indicated his family understood his work involvement.

My family understands that for the most part I'm- I'm rarely ever disconnected from work, but I don't abuse that. And I don't abuse it, one, out of respect for them; but two, I don't abuse it because I don't wanna, you know?

Ryan disliked the feeling of possibly disrespecting his wife when using his mobile device professionally in the home atmosphere. His perceptions of his family understanding built on that philosophy as Ryan clearly articulated he did not want to abuse it "out of respect for them." Even with a challenging managerial position that was highly communicative via the mobile device, respect toward his family was even more important to Ryan to support their understanding sentiment.

In past visits with her sister, Ellen fielded necessary work calls. Ellen's perception of the situation was "I mean they're, they're fine with it, but I—I don't think it's like, you know, it's not so much. I'm sure there are people that it could affect, but I just don't think that it has." While Ellen knew with certain individuals, her engagement could be an issue, her assessment of the engagement occurring at her sister's home was the family understood and supported her. Mark spoke of extended family more in a sense of his own children that no longer resided with him. He believed for the most part they understood "there's times I have to answer it [mobile device]." Mark preferred to know when they came to town so he could balance work and family, but he did not always know so in

those situations, Mark felt they maintained an understanding sentiment about his workload. Lastly, Dani stressed “everyone just understands.” In her self-assured perception, she considered her biological family of her dad and his wife.

So, I think everyone just understands. Especially if I'm gonna have this fluid ... You know. One of the things that can enable me to have those fluid work/life boundaries is that I can check in every now and then, and just kind of move back and forth through each of those areas seamlessly. Everyone knows that's how I am or they're too afraid to talk. Say it to my face. I don't know. No. I think it's all right.

Dani explained her dad and his wife have high powered jobs and she believed that attributed to their understanding sentiment of her professional mobile device usage in nonwork times. In these many examples, the border crosser, thus the participant in this study perceived family was supportive and understood the participants' usage.

The next passages address areas where participants held a different perspective that their families did not understand their mobile device usage. Landi's mom was very cautious about Landi's mobile device usage in her domestic sphere due to family history issues of work/life balance. Landi believed her husband supported her, but she perceived issues with extended family. For example, she disclosed

I've had to maybe you know postpone a trip to visit with someone because a deadline has come up. I think that they my family understands my dedication to my work but obviously there's a level of disappointment.

This work toward her deadline included both mobile device communication and computer work, which resulted in Landi feeling as if she disappointed her family. Thus,

Landi's perspective was they [her family] didn't understand her decision-making process and engagement. Landi was not alone in that feeling. Other participants had similar remarks, specifically about vacations. Ben felt his extended family thought he shouldn't have to work on his vacation. He explained "they maybe view it as, you know, you're supposed to be on vacation and here you are working." He appreciated their concern for his vacation, yet he felt the obligation to stay engaged. Carol's family was irritated when she received calls or called-in to work, sometimes multiple times per day. Her sentiments were the family thought it was "ridiculous." Like Carol's perceptions of her daughters, Karen believed her children got mad at her due to a vacation experience in which Karen was highly engaged with her mobile device for work purposes. The fact that she had to keep leaving the family unit to run to the second floor deck of the beach house to get reception further fueled her family's anger. The behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, of her family while she ran up and down the steps to a better vantage point solidified to Karen that they had developed an unhappy sentiment and did not understand why she needed to handle these calls. Beyond vacations, Karen felt her one daughter specifically got annoyed with her during dinner. As a result of her daughter, Karen felt conflicted between work calls and her daughter's feelings. "Like, who do I make mad? You know. Do I make work mad or do I make my daughter mad? Overall, whether it is vacation or dinner, Karen felt as if her family, namely her daughters did not understand her mobile device usage.

Alyssa and Lydia both felt their parents did not understand the purpose for their usage. Lydia acknowledged she "can't go on that vacation and completely check out of work...So there are times where I think my parents are probably the least understanding

about it and I think that's probably a generational thing.” Likewise, Alyssa’s parents don’t understand her job and its mobile device demands.

I am present and, and spending time with them, but there have been occasions when I’ll pick it up for something else or I will, and I will see an email and get distracted, and it’s similar situation. My parents really don’t get what I do.

While Alyssa made vigilant attempts to avoid usage when visiting them, those times when she felt the need to engage concerned her parents and they conveyed the sentiment they didn’t understand her engagement. When members of the domestic sphere don’t understand, relational unrest can result.

Throughout those shared discussions, it is important to remember the sentiments were all from the perspective of the participant. The participants also elaborated on their perceptions of potential conflict. These potential issues included trust, uncharacteristically high volumes of work communication, and distance in spousal relationships. David earlier mentioned the necessity for building trust with his son regarding honoring his word. David shared the person in his family that seemed to trust him the least now was his wife. He felt he has worked hard to establish boundaries and honor boundaries with his sons, but he had not done as well in honoring boundaries with his wife. Thus, his perception of her sentiments was that she trusted him the least. From a different frame of reference on high volumes of work communication, Rich’s work communication grew rapidly due to an extreme situation with a bridge project he worked on. Since Rich’s stance was his family was “not to interrupt me at work. So...when I’m at home, they [his family] feel that they should get the same type of respect for their time, that I shouldn’t be interrupting their time with work stuff.”

Rich's bridge project cut into his family time during that process and his perception of his family's sentiments were they did not appreciate the lack of reciprocation of his guideline of keeping work at work and home at home. For Nigel, Rachel, and Laura, they felt their spousal relationships were challenged at times due to their mobile device usage. Nigel eloquently explained his perception of his wife's sentiments.

I guess the, the cost there that I am also aware of is, is time with my wife. That, you know, a lot of times is after the kids go down, you know, it's back to some sort of work communication, and so coming off of this big project, it's been a, an exercise for me in, in, you know, letting go and then recognizing things that don't really have to be done that night and can be done at work the next day, and so, that's something we'll try and do, like a movie night, you know, we'll watch a show or do something two times a week or so. So maybe there's a couple nights that I'm working, but, trying to, to find time there that I'm not always just firing something up when the kids go down.

Nigel's perceptions turned into actions to be present and invest in his spousal relationship. While Nigel did not think they had an actual shift in feelings of closeness, Laura did feel that shift in emotion with her husband. "I think, I'll be honest. You don't think about this until you do something like this so it's very interesting, but it definitely, my husband and I were probably a lot closer before mobile phones." Laura had an awakening the mobile devices were replacing time they spent together as a couple. She reflected on how they used to have a map and flipped a coin as to which direction they would go and they explored. She excitedly shared this adventure they embarked on. However, she felt now they "don't even talk" but they texted each other even in their own

home. Rachel's spousal situation was a bit different than Nigel and Laura's. Her perception was her husband had an unhappy sentiment with her keeping up or lack of keeping up with the house. If she didn't get done with the laundry or cleaning, "he feels that he has to take care of that." Rachel felt the mobile device didn't rule her life, but it does affect it.

You know, whether it's, you know, you're doing it one day or three days a week or whatever, you know, things add up. And, and sometimes, you know, I feel like, um, that I, I can't separate that. I can't find that happy balance between work and home.

Rachel struggled to find balance and shared her perception the mobile device sometimes came between her and her husband.

The border crossers' perceptions of other family members comprised those examples. It is significant to unpack their perceptions of others when understanding relational implications based on professional mobile device usage. In the next section, the other individuals' actual verbal and nonverbal behaviors tell the story and convey their sentiments.

**Actual verbal/nonverbal behaviors.** With lack of verbal and nonverbal feedback, perceptions could be correct or incorrect. In the previous section, participants illustrated their perceptions of their family members' sentiments on the participants' mobile device usage. The "others" for this section comprise spouses, kids, in-laws, and even close friends. While perceptions of others' sentiments can influence relationships because of how the participants perceptions make them feel, this section examines sentiments actually conveyed by others' verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Others refers to



other individuals verbal and nonverbal behavior in conjunction with the participants' mobile device engagement.

The spouses of the participants exhibited the most verbal behavior. In a couple of cases, these verbal comments were made in a helpful fashion, while others were more confrontational. Alyssa and Ellen's husbands made comments to them about their mobile device usage, but both ladies felt the husband's true goal was to help them, not discredit them for their usage. On various occasions, Alyssa's husband gently questioned the necessity of her mobile device engagement. "You're on vacation; you don't need to do that." Alyssa knew it was not a major conflict and she thought "he's trying to help me sort of ...step back from it sometimes." Alyssa complimented her husband on how good he was about saying "Is this really something that has to done tonight?" When he brought this to her attention, it made Alyssa rethink her engagement. While it did not always stop it, she gave more thought to her purpose. Ellen's husband felt bad she had to engage during vacation. Even though he had to do that in the past with his work, he was bothered for her when she had to. "Maybe Bill [her husband] would be like, 'you know, you shouldn't be having to do that,' you know, like it would just be like not bother him but maybe be upset that I would have to do that more so." Nigel's wife verbalized her feelings toward his mobile device engagement. According to Nigel, his wife said, "I feel very distant from you. You know, I feel like you're ... yeah, I ... you know, we're just ships passing with parenting and, you know, there's, there's, like, no time for us." Nigel felt without a conversation between spouses, it would continue to be a source of conflict. The mobile device usage was "just a rhythm I kept falling back into," admitted Nigel. When his wife verbalized her sentiments to him, "it took a little escalation to to really try

and hear it.” Nigel worked at establishing a stronger balance, but it was a work-in-progress and the recognition that addressing the situation was necessary within their marriage was brought to light by his wife. While Nigel’s interaction about her sentiments teetered between gentle conversation and escalation, other participants received verbal and nonverbal spousal feedback that was rooted in emotion.

Spouses showed varying levels of emotions toward the participants for their usage. Spouses fell somewhere in the middle of calm and heated. Dissatisfaction was voiced toward Tim from his spouse and an established boundary around their dinners out served to remedy the situation. When Kara and her husband were out to an anniversary dinner, they discussed the phone expectation in advance. Kara snidely imitated her husband’s part in that conversation as he made his point that she played a significant role in the mobile device interruptions. “he’ll be like ‘as long as you don’t get yours out first.’” It was overall a light-hearted discussion between spouses. Jared’s wife verbalized to him “you’re on your phone you know I’m talking to you pay attention to me you’re you’re on your phone” Jared said it caused a bit of tension with his wife, but she pointed the issue out to him. Curtis’ wife also advocated for his attention not only toward her, but also toward the children when he awaited an email from a client.

‘You know, when you’re home, can you spend time with your [family/kids]’... so

I put the phone down and ... I can zone out so that ... I may have been looking at it for about five minutes. And my kids are there, so they need the attention.

According to Curtis, his wife “will make sure she lets him know” if he was at the dinner table and looked at his email simultaneously. Ben was also “reprimanded for having my phone out during mealtimes.” Due to Ben’s work demands, “inevitably something

happens and they're [work] trying to get a hold of me for something." Ben admitted eight out of ten times the interruption could wait, but he typically answered and then got yelled at. He further described how the situation unfolded at the dinner table.

You first get the look, you know, you know, the look uh from the spouse and you realize you better make this quick...If it continues then you know, I get reminded of the—you know the policy about no devices at the dinner table...If it goes beyond that I better leave the room because it—it could get escalated.

Due to Ben's driven nature, he was in a "high—fast paced, high speed industry that typically things can't wait if you want to stay ahead, and I just go ahead and do it." He knew that the half hour a day for dinner was often the only time they could interact as a family other than weekends and vacations. "So you add the mobile device on top of that and there goes that half an hour." Ben's challenge became escalated when he got yelled at which was a clear indication of his wife's sentiments about his usage. This next paragraph focuses on heightened verbal comments.

Spouses and situations differed with respect to their support or non-support of the mobile device. Alexa's husband was both jealous and forthright with his opinions on her professional mobile device usage. He would question why students are texting her at eight o'clock at night. It causes some "weird dynamics relationship wise." Alexa responded by shushing him and said, "like go-go away, like it's fine" and she would manage the communication quickly. Because Alexa's husband was well versed with her work ring tone on her phone, when it went off, her husband would say "god dammit those damn work e-mails." Alexa spoke further to him. "It's fine. I just—just let me go on here real quick." She offered assurances she was not engaging, just organized quickly to

prepare for the next day. Laura used her mobile device in the car while her husband drove. Because she looked at her phone for long periods of time, sometimes when she looked up, she was shocked to see a car so close to them and she would comment about it to him. His snarky response was,

‘Well, if you weren't working the entire time and had your head up, you would know that’.... He's like, ‘You just think that some of things had happened because you lift your head up in there, there's a car around passing.’

She admitted he was right, but she further shared “I'm not going to tell him that, but I'll say it for this study. He's, he's right.” Like Laura, Rachel's husband made comments to her. When she allowed her mobile device usage to impede on her household chores, their conversation ensued with her husband's initial comment about the laundry.

‘Ugh, I guess I got to deal with this laundry.’ I'm like, ‘What do you mean you're going to? I said I was going to handle that.’ ‘No, I got it.’ Like, Okay. ‘I was going to take care of that as soon as I did something, you know, whatever.’

Rachel added “he doesn't come out and say, ‘Hey, are you doing something for work or you're just browsing the Internet?’” Rather, he made an instant comment about the work he would have to do that she was not handling. Rachel felt her husband's annoyed comments were a double standard to the amount of time he was distracted by his work. Another area that at times became contentious for participants was verbalized comments from their children as they communicated their sentiments to the participant (border crosser).

Children that made comments toward their parents came from various age ranges: adolescents, teenagers, and adults. Karen's adult daughters regularly questioned her motives.

'Do you really have to do that now?' You know, that kind of thing. 'You are not getting paid. Why are you, you know. Dealing with work now? You're outside of work. You're not working.' You know, 'Stop doing that.' And, you know, those kind of things. So, yeah. I knew how they felt.

Carol's two adult daughters did the same with her, "Why are you calling in? Why don't – you're on vacation. You shouldn't have to call in." Carol qualified this situation by comparing her job to theirs and neither of them had to answer to a boss on a regular basis like Carol did. It was clear what Karen and Carol's daughters' sentiments were; they did not agree with the work ethic and commitment that impeded on their nonwork time with their mom.

For some of the participants, the children were teenagers. Mary's now adult daughter began giving her "flak" as a teenager regarding her mom's mobile device usage. That usage robbed her of her mom's full attention at important times. Mary went on to share her daughter "begrudged her for taking calls, you know during family time in the evening." When her daughter's career day at school arrived, Mary's daughter told her "I don't want you to come for that because nobody's gonna want to do your job." Her daughter elaborated on her sentiments that her job was nonstop and someone was always calling or needing her. Mary regretfully recalled "volleyball games where I would have to excuse myself out of the gym and take a phone call." Mary's absence did not go unnoticed by her daughter. Mary explained her feelings "so I at that time did not do a

good job in my career balancing that. I do regret that.” For Mary, her daughter’s sentiments had not changed even though she was now living independently. “So I think that she still gives me a lot of flak.” Sheila’s teenage children enjoyed reminding her of family rules that she broke for professional conversations on the mobile device. “Mom, we don’t talk on the phone while we’re driving.” They added, ““We’re going into the movie theater. You don’t need your ... You’re not going to answer your phone in the movie theater.”

Adolescents and young teens served to be emotional and needy of their parent and verbalized their feeling of discontent to participants. Jessica said

Sometimes my daughter will tell me, ‘You’re on your phone all the time. You’re not paying attention to me.’ And if she does, the phone gets turned off immediately. So, I have to, sometimes, realize. I have to think about how much time I’ve spent on the phone, versus how much time I’ve spent with her. She’s thirteen so she doesn’t want to spend a lot of time with me, but, but there are times she does and—and there’s times that I wanna spend with her too.

For Jessica, those comments by her daughter served as a harsh reminder she was spending too much time on her mobile device. Rachel especially felt bad about how her usage impacted her youngest son. At times, he waited up for her so she could say good night; their evening routines became thrown off due to her work engagement. Not long ago, Rachel’s youngest son questioned her regarding her work commitment and the expectations of her bosses. Her son asked, “Don’t they know you have kids?” Her son’s sentiments were another harsh reminder of communicative commitments and how they impacted relationships. Mark’s one daughter tended to be protective of her time with her

dad. Mark noticed the “facial expressions” and he could tell when things bothered her about his mobile device usage. He gave an example of a 10:00 phone call he received and how he imagined she would react. Mark imagined she might say, “You realize it’s 10:15?” He explained, “that’s just how she is.” Not only his daughter made comments, but so had Mark’s in-laws.

Visiting with in-laws and/or parents in tandem with mobile device usage became a source of contention for some participants as other family members made comments regarding their mobile device habits. Mark’s in-laws questioned his wife “Why does he always have his phone?” Mark didn’t mind fielding questions while on vacation. “I still take the phone with me ‘cause there’s still questions that people need [answered].” Mark was agreeable to communication, though Cindy was disgruntled about a situation that happened two years ago while she attended a family wedding.

And while we were at the church service my phone exploded. There was a contract that we were trying to get here that was in question. I had like four voicemails, text messages, and emails ... Until I came out of a one hour wedding. and I saw this so I had to step away from the wedding, which made no one happy. Myself included.

While Cindy was unhappy about the scenario and interruption, she went on to share that her mother-in-law shared her sentiments to Cindy. “It was more like, ‘Can’t you ... You can’t get away for a minute’ or something like that.” While the comment did not go unnoticed, Cindy recognized that both held different work ethics and her mother-in-law’s previous career did not have the same level of pressure. Alexa and Landi’s mothers occasionally made comments to them as well which clearly articulated their sentiments

about their daughters' mobile device usage. Alexa's mother pointed out "this is family time." Alexa rebutted with "It's not gonna be the end of the world," though she continued in sharing, "But it's—it's the end of the world to her." They had different sentiments about the professional usage of mobile devices and like Alexa's interactions with her husband, she stood strong on her tactic of flagging communication that minimized her time and allowed her to re-engage quickly. Lastly, Landi's mother was sensitive to Landi's mobile device usage due to conflict her mother and father had about work/life balance. Unlike Alexa's mom, Landi's mom was a bit less confrontational with her comments.

She'll occasionally say something. I wouldn't say it really comes to a discussion but she'll just sort of you know give words of advice to you know just make sure you're monitoring that or you know don't be on your phone all the time.

Landi understood the root of her mom's sentiments that came from experience and a caring demeanor. Her mom didn't want to see issues within Landi's family that her mom faced within her own marriage.

Finally, sometimes these behaviors came from friends. Alyssa worked in an educational environment. As such, she felt her friends that worked in different industries failed to understand her industry's communication challenges.

I don't think necessarily [they] kind of get the nature of this job and how, kind of how emotionally invested you get. And so I've had friends I think be confused in a minimum about why, like why I'm checking my email, why I'm so upset or concerned or worried about whatever it is that's in that email.



Once when Alyssa was out with friends, she received an email and subsequent texts from her boss regarding an ongoing and difficult situation at work. Earlier, this was discussed in light of how these messages changed her mood and she no longer wanted to be at the event with friends. One friend in particular began making comments to her such as "I don't understand," and "You don't need to worry about this now." These comments angered Alyssa. Alyssa ardently described the situation as this friend intervened both verbally and nonverbally during Alyssa's attempted remote management of the situation. While she knew her attention to others had quickly diminished, she also continued to communicate with her boss.

That's when she [her friend] was like taking [the mobile device] I think I was in the middle of texting and she was like, 'You don't need to worry about this now. This is a Saturday. It's your personal time.'

Alyssa was very angry that her friend took her phone and she angrily rebutted.

I took it back and I was like, I, that, like ... 'That's my boss I'm texting.' ...I tried to sort of say like, I, don't think you're understanding. And, and in hindsight, you know, maybe she's right. Maybe ... there wasn't anything I could do about it at 7:00 on a Saturday, but it was, you know, it felt very immediate.

Her friend's verbal and nonverbal behavior in conveying her sentiments about Alyssa's usage was upsetting to Alyssa. Once her friend intervened and the altercation occurred, Alyssa opted to leave the event. For Alyssa, the sentiments that her friend held impacted their relationship and the event itself.

### **Summary of Sentiments Two: Others' Sentiments**

The Others' Sentiments subtheme encompassed feelings and perspectives of the border keepers. This subtheme uncovered the border crossers' perceptions of other individuals' feelings and perspectives. Also, it shared the actual verbal and nonverbal behavior of these other individuals such as the spouse, significant other(s), extended family, children, and friends. These behaviors were directed towards the border crosser.

The border crosser's perceptions involved whether or not the family understood the participants' mobile device usage. Some border crossers argued the family understood, some were perceived as not understanding, and yet others had concerns for potential conflict. Interestingly, the border crosser perceived children, even adult children, more so than spouses not understanding their usage. Additionally, they perceived their parents as not understanding. Often the perception was the spouse understood as they traversed similar issues of juggling work related communication in their nonwork time and space. Regarding actual verbal/nonverbal behavior, this was widespread and varied between spouses and children, as well as an extreme example with a close friend that physically took her friend's phone. Participants' feelings varied between upset and understanding to other domain members' reactions to their mobile device usage.

### **Summary of Theme Two: Sentiments**

The second theme, Sentiments, encompassed the subthemes of Border Crosser Sentiments and Others' Sentiments. The participant in the present study was the border crosser and "others" are border keepers/other domain members such as spouse, significant other, children, and extended family. In some cases like one of the examples

shared, a friend could be an “other.” Because the subthemes in this section are entitled as per terms from the Work/Family Border Theory, it is also important to remember that participant and border crosser are used interchangeably.

Border crossers shared accounts of times when they were proactive with mobile device usage and times they were reactive to mobile device usage. Both enabled them to determine their level of engagement; sometimes it was to engage more and other times it was to disengage. Each situation, industry demand, and participant differed in the participants’ determined level of engagement. As for being proactive, they described situations in which they avoided stress and conflict, yet also attempted to be mindful of others. Being reactive to mobile device usage exceeded the examples of proactive behavior. Participants reacted with some of the following sentiments: irritated, guilty, anxious, worried, and hateful. Along with each of those came passionately narrated stories of personal experiences that led to their sentiments. Because it was deeply personal and caused strong feelings, a shift in thinking occurred and/or relationships were impacted.

Beyond the border crosser, others’ sentiments illuminated this section. First, the perceptions held of the other individuals by the border crosser were highlighted and discussed. These perceptions focused on whether their domestic domain members understood their usage patterns and why they engaged in their nonwork time. Largely, children and parents were perceived as not understanding, whereas spouses seemingly understood as per the participants’ perceptions. An effective example of those findings was Carol and Karen’s children and Landi’s mom. When it came to assessing nonverbal/verbal behaviors of others, a few spouses were helpful, while other spouses

and family members tended to be more confrontational in expounding on their sentiments.

These words and actions among other variables proved to be influential to the participants. The next section emphasizes various elements that influence the border crosser's decision to use the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere.

### **Influences**

Influences is the third theme that is consequential concerning this data and research. Influences expound on the actual thoughts and experiences that indirectly or directly influence the participant (border crosser) to utilize or not utilize their mobile device for professional purposes in nonwork time. Influences as a theme functions to answer *RQ1: How are individuals using the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere?* And *RQ3: How are expectations established for usage within the domestic sphere?* These expectations can be self-directed, other-directed, and/or industry-directed. Influences encompass the following subthemes: Border Crosser and Domestic Sphere. Within those subthemes, participants shared experiences that served to validate their decision-making process and overall mobile device engagement. The first section will be devoted to the border crosser.

#### **Border Crosser**

The border crosser is the participant in this research and of particular interest is their mobile device usage within the domestic sphere. However, influences to their usage and non-usage surround them within the domestic sphere. This next section focuses on the subtheme Cognitive Influences which equates to the participants' understanding of self: personality, reputation, and work ethic.

**Cognitive influences.** In this subtheme of Influences, Cognitive refers to how participants' thoughts and acquired knowledge impact their decisions with the professional mobile device usage. Data from the interview transcripts showed that the border crosser's self-assessed personality, desired reputation, and self-perceived work ethic influenced their professional mobile device engagement. Personality traits are uncovered in the next section.

**Personality.** "OCD," "Type A," and "want-to-know," these were manners in which participants described themselves during the interview process. When Ben opened his emails, his personality shone through as he confessed if he opened one, he must open all of them.

If I have 18 emails in my inbox, I will open all 18 and reply back to the ones that I can quickly reply to or delete the ones that I know I don't need to reply to or put them in the folder they belong in. But they all have to be cleared before I can walk away from it. And I don't know whether that's OCD... I can't just check one.

Regardless of what was going on around him, Ben opened and addressed all emails which convinced him was driven simply by his personality. Much like Ben, Rachel described herself with the acronym OCD. She also was compelled to check and address easily accessible emails even though she understood it was not required. She explained, "It's an OCD thing....I don't have to check my emails...But because it's right there on my phone, I just click the button and see my emails". Rachel identified her self-driven nature and found it challenging to find balance between home and work as a result. Ann also recognized that challenge in her life due to her personality.

I think it's my personality. My personality is task-orientated. Stick to timelines get things accomplished so I do I do think it's definitely self for that pressure and you know just for I'll just use the word sanity.

Ann's perspective is she had the most control in her decisions to engage and largely that control connected to her personality. Like Rachel, Jared realized his organization never gave a directive to be engaged with emails or other work functions via his mobile device. Jared said, "our superintendent she always says to us try to you know carve that time off for your family, so it's actually the opposite, that's more me being me." Jared referred to his personality and its direct influence over his decisions to engage.

Beyond OCD distinctions, other participants like Dani, Alyssa, and Mary announced they were Type A. Dani discussed herself as having the most power over her mobile device usage due to her personality. "I think a lot of academics we're very type A. So. We just, you just wanna get stuff done. You wanna check off your list and you just wanna, like, move forward." Dani put herself in that category of Type A academics and noted that trait played a large role in her engagement decisions. Mary liked to "keep things moving" just as Dani desired to move things forward. Mary acknowledged

I'd say at this point in my life I'm pretty type A, I'm pretty driven. I feel like there's something in me that I just like to, you know, keep things moving ... I've never been the type of person to, you know, just lay on the couch all day or... things like that, so.

Mary reached a point of self-awareness "at this point" in her life and bluntly recognized its powerful influence over her. Alyssa recognized this and even chuckled about it.

“I’m someone who likes, I like control. I’m very type A and so I think, there’s a part of me that really likes being able to say like, ‘Okay. I know, you know, now I know.’” Alyssa preferred to be “in the know” and this feeling resonated with a few other participants whom did not label their personality, but understood its complexities.

Ryan, Ellen, Karen, and Mark discussed their personality traits in the context of mobile device engagement decisions. As Alyssa preferred to be in the know, so did Ryan.

I think it’s my motivation and desire to know things. I wanna know what’s going on, I wanna know what’s not going on.... I wanna know and then I wanna do. But for me, I think knowing is more important even than doing.

Accordingly, Ryan engaged regularly with his mobile device in nonwork times due to his personality and his desire to simply be in the know. That gave him peace of mind. Ellen also made decisions with her mobile device such as enabled push notifications so she always knew what was going on.

The cell phone was not her first choice when in the office, yet “when I’m out and about I do like to be able to get my emails, which is probably a bad thing, but like I like to know what’s going on at all at all times.” Ellen resisted a smartphone for a long time due to the simplicity of earlier devices. However, now her perspective differed. “I have to say I feel so like I, I like knowing all the time what’s going on, I do.” In Karen’s positions, she believed she needed awareness of everything that happened. Her multi-faceted role required her to disseminate information to others. In that role, when she received emails from various individuals, curiosity drove her to know what was in each email, so she regularly engaged due to her innate personality trait of wanting to know. While Mark recognized his managerial role also required him to

know many facets of the organization, he attributed his personality traits to his dad and grandfather. “My dad was like that, my grandfather was like that...I kinda like to be that guy if they need something that they can call and I can go and help them.” Mark enjoyed both knowing and being viewed as dependable. Participants like Mark made decisions based on what they cognitively thought others would think of them; their ability to stay in the know was ingrained in their personalities with no regard as to whether they were in nonwork time or not.

Interestingly, these participants understood and embraced the components of their personality that impacted their decisions and their expectations of mobile device usage. They fully expected to use their resources to stay abreast of work communicative functions. Not one of the participants showed any apologetic demeanor regarding this personality trait; they simply understood themselves, yet at times some worried about their overall reputation. The next section explores desired reputations and concerns for what others think.

***Reputation.*** Participants felt concerned about their reputation and what others thought about them. As such, they made mobile device engagement decisions that occurred in their nonwork time to maintain or boost their reputation within the professional sphere. In consideration for her reputation, being needed was paramount to Sheila. However, she was not sure it was a positive attribute. “That’s scary. Yeah, that’s not a good thing.” While she questioned her motivation for making engagement decisions to feel needed, other participants felt confident in their desired reputation, which included both credibility and caring undertones.



David, Alyssa, and Rachel spoke in the areas of desired reputation of being a caring individual. David's industry does not actively pressure employees to engage in nonwork time. However, "I'd like to seem responsive and I care, but I also want to be seen like I care." He engaged in tasks and communication beyond the official workday to build a caring reputation within his roles and responsibilities. Alyssa felt similarly about her exchanges with parents and students. She wanted them to like her, but also to know she cared enough to work hard to remedy situations.

I think a lot of the times I'm worried about what that parent or what that student thinks of me... am I gonna make things worse by not giving them a quick response? I think, and a lot of that is, you know, my own, like I said this personal expectation of like, I have to be helping everybody at all, all the time and, and doing everything I can possibly be doing to make the situation better.

Alyssa questioned how her response time would reflect upon her reputation in terms of both caring and working hard. This realization was impactful in decisions on how she used the device professionally within her domestic time. Rachel, who explained it was a challenge to balance her mobile device usage between work and home simply worked to be a good employee and wanted to be perceived that way by her boss.

I've had, you know, a situation where, you know, the job [Rachel's current job] was eliminated for a short period of time, I feel like, you know, there was enough time without me working in this position full-time that they did miss all the extra little things that I did. So, like, I, I just feel like I, you know, want to be the model employee.

Rachel desired to maintain this position and to be viewed as a model employee that cares deeply about her job. This desired reputation partially fueled her mobile device usage and engagement even when it caused conflict within the domestic sphere.

Beyond caring attributes, participants wanted to be viewed as credible employees. In efforts to be seen as credible, Ryan wanted to learn about a new boss' expectations. This helped not only him, but the entire office. "Now that we have a new Chancellor coming on board, this is actually something that I'm going to intentionally have that conversation with- with the team regarding, because we wanna know what his expectations are." Ryan's planned discussion with the new Chancellor included responsiveness in nonwork time. Ryan believed the knowledge of the expectations helped bolster his reputation by enabling him to meet expectations. Also, it helped the office transition more smoothly. Given the consideration Ryan gave to understanding communicative expectations, Alexa also took pride in her quick responses and how that reflected upon her.

There's always people everywhere you go who are like talking crap about somebody like, 'oh I sent them an email and they didn't respond to me for three days,' and, 'well I tried to call this person and they never called me back,' and you hear that all the time from everybody and that seems to be people's biggest complaint sometimes about people is that, 'well they don't respond, or they don't respond quick enough or they didn't get back to me at all,'

Alexa considered those complaints she heard when she made decisions about her level of engagement. "I think about those things because of those types of feelings that people have in general about communication." Alexa did not want to be viewed in that light. She

saw “countless number of colleagues” with complaints registered against them due to their lack of response which directly impacted their reputation. Alexa combatted that through her professed “neurotic” nature and her well-developed flagging email system. With those resources, Alexa built and maintained a positive and credible reputation with her colleagues and supervisors. Like Alexa, Tim managed his engagement and earned a good professional reputation as a result. He made efforts to “maintain credibility with the people that you work with.” Tim attributed his positive work relationships to his strategic responsiveness. From a different perspective, Carol wanted to have a credible reputation, but built on the ability to stay current within her company. While she admitted to sometimes fighting the technological changes, she also valued the modern connections such as the mobile device.

I want to be prepared when somebody asks me something. When my boss wants to know something, I want to have that answer. I don’t want to feel like I’m getting too old for the job. There’s a lot of young people out there.

Carol’s knowledge of this made a large impact on her mobile device decisions, especially those regarding accepted calls and messages after hours and on vacations to answer questions. Carol’s desired reputation fueled her overall work ethic. Carol, like others, considered what others in their professional sphere thought of them, hence their overall reputation, as they considered their engagement. The next section explores stories on self-perceived work ethic and its influence on participants’ behaviors and decisions.

**Work ethic.** Work ethic for participants included many feelings and aspirations in their professional sphere which impacted their mobile device and expectations within the domestic sphere. Laura shared her work ethic was just a habit especially within

management positions. “I feel that there's work that has to be done and my mentality is you got to do it. It doesn't matter what time it is or if you're home or you just got to get it done.” She admitted she always actively engaged in her nonwork time due to managerial habits. Nigel hoped for effectiveness within his work ethic and like Laura that meant “being available at times that people need me.” Alyssa and Ann also considered availability to others as positive work ethic. Alyssa deemed it a “personal expectation of availability.” Ann concurred it was personal and she realized there are not stringent consequences for disengagement in her nonwork time, but there was also a level of pressure to be sure she was accessible as well. Both ladies worked to display effective work ethic and ensured their availability reflected that work ethic. While those varying summations of work ethic attributed to their specific mobile device engagement, participants expressed feeling responsible or obligated toward their professional sphere.

One way in which participants felt responsible was to that of the team or company overall. Ben shared “at the end of the day, ultimately the company’s responsible for my decisions.” He, like others, did not take that responsibility lightly and did what it took within his professional sphere despite interruptions within his domestic sphere. Like Ben, several other participants felt a distinct sense of responsibility. Mark quantified “90% of the time there’s people here on camp. So I’m ultimately responsible for the people.” He took that responsibility very seriously. Bonnie felt accountable to her team and work efforts and she felt she “should answer them, even if it’s something very quick.” In this way, Bonnie felt she held up her responsibilities. Mary and Rachel worked similarly. “I don’t like to let anything slip through the cracks and there are a lot of people depending on me to get things done,” shared Mary. She did not disappoint anyone professionally

and successfully managed her responsibilities. Rachel felt “partially responsible” for situations when they are short-staffed. “It’s the way that I do things.” In knowing her personality and work ethic, Rachel remained engaged at work and in nonwork times to accomplish tasks for her industry. As Landi gained project manager roles, her feelings of responsibility increased.

I do feel responsible for the success of the project I’m working on. Feel responsible that my team has direction. I think my office has done a really great job of modeling that if the team makes a mistake the manager falls on the sword and accepts responsibility, even if you’re not the one that technically made the mistake.

With that knowledge, Landi accepted her responsibility wholeheartedly and exhibited dedication to her professional sphere both in work and nonwork times. For Sheila and Juan, they also accepted the responsibility in stride as an important component of their work. Juan knew “it’s the role” he accepted as manager, and Sheila felt responsible to check on things even if it is in the middle of the night. Both Juan and Sheila maintained the role of being the emergency number for their industry. Kara recalled a quote “an old mentor of mine” said. This mentor shared Kara had “an overdeveloped sense of responsibility.” For Kara, this overflowed into response time decisions and her overall sense of urgency. While Kara had made some changes that were discussed earlier in respect to parameters, she still maintained a strong work ethic within her industry and management position.

### **Summary of Influences One: Border Crosser**

The exploration of the border crosser's own cognitive influences occurred in this segment. Cognitive influences comprised self-assessment of personality, aspired reputation, and nuances of work ethic. Within personality, participants shared the complexities of their personalities and how that impacted their engagement. They expressed their concerns for their reputation and simply how others viewed them. By and large, the reputation concerns were from a professional perspective, not a domestic one. Decisions were made to ensure redibility and caring qualities were emitted. Lastly, responsibility and obligation to the industry drove overall work ethic, which in turn influenced level of engagement. It is important to recall these variables are all in the participant's thoughts, and thus are cognitive influences. The next subtheme looks outside of the border crosser and examines the domestic sphere as an influence.

### **Domestic Sphere**

The second subtheme of influences is Domestic Sphere. The domestic sphere is defined as the time and space devoted to nonwork individuals and the border crosser's professional mobile device usage within this time and space. The first area is titled Domestic Border Keepers. Data revealed the level at which domestic border keepers/other domain members such as spouses, significant others, and children influenced participants' usage. The second area of influence discussed is Industry Permeations which are components of the professional sphere that permeate into the domestic sphere. These permeations comprise the second component of the domestic sphere that poses an influence on the border crosser.

**Domestic border keepers.** Participants had families in some capacity whether it was parents, spouses, siblings, significant others, and/or children that assumed the role of Border Keeper within the domestic sphere. Participants shared stories on these border keepers and their influences over the border crosser's behavior in terms of their mobile device usage within the domestic sphere. Largely, the stories elaborated on children as an influence, though some participants discussed spouses and parents. The next passages will present participants' explanations on how children influence their mobile device usage.

Children of all ages had influences on the border crosser's professional mobile device engagement. Even a participant that currently does not have children reflected on assumptions of how his decisions would differ if he did have children. Adam opened discussions about how he possessed the power of his mobile device decisions, yet he added "if I had kids, particularly small kids that this would be a very different conversation." Upon being asked why he felt that way, Adam added, "because kids— exert an influence even just scheduling their stuff that I have never experienced, never will experience." Adam imagined there would be a push and pull to balance children's needs with his own. Sheila concurred with Adam's reference to small children. Sheila was an empty nester with a job that required extensive communication in nonwork time. However, she volunteered "If my kids were younger, I probably would not have taken this job." For Sheila, in reflection of when her children were young, this managerial job would have required too much attention away from them, as Adam surmised in his earlier statement. Other participants elaborated on experiences with young children and mobile device usage. Dani and Nigel deliberately made attempts to abstain from usage because

their children viewed them as a toy and it became a struggle to use them for work while children wanted to play on them. While Dani's children associated the computer with mommy's work, if Dani was on the mobile device too long, the girls said "'We wanna play on it.' I just let them send people emojis and then they're happy." Dani's solution was to stop on the mobile device and allowed the girls mobile device playtime. She agreed "it's not difficult for me to put my phone away." Nigel's children also saw the phone as a play object.

So phones for my kids have become a play thing, and so I am ... maybe that helps.

Like, I'm very aware, if I pull out my phone, my three- year-old is going to want my phone, and so it, it, it helps keep me from doing anything on my phone in their presence because it immediately, like, leads to an argument about when am I ...

have phone time, you know...that aids in my decision to not have a phone around.

For Nigel, his children's desire to play on his phone influenced him to not use it. He also admitted when the family had a great weekend "playin' in the sprinkler" or other fun activities, that he easily left the mobile device alone unless there were extenuating work circumstances. However, after the kids went to bed at "around 8:00," that was Nigel's opportunity to "come down, check my phone...what's there to respond to and...to stay connected and...move things forward for the next day." Clearly the children's' schedules influenced his times on the mobile device for work purposes. Landi's child was still a baby, but she thought ahead to how a bedtime could be the transition from family to necessary work engagement. She asserted "I would like for them [children] not to feel like they have to compete with my phone for attention." Considering Landi's child is quite young, she is already considering that child's (and possible additional children's)



future influence over her engagement with the mobile device. For parents like Landi, the balance between the mobile device and parenting presented a struggle for them. The struggles didn't end at young children, other ages will be presented in the next passages.

As children got a bit older and in organized activities, participants shared different challenges. Like Nigel's young children, Lydia also worked around her children's schedules.

I think I can look and see, okay, this is when I have a window of time to sit there and work because my son plays travel hockey. There are times where I'm gone the entire weekend and it's hard for me to lose an entire weekend to not be able to work.

Earlier Lydia shared her and her husband could give each other the time needed to engage, but she considered her son's schedule carefully as it influenced her time to dial-in as she did not want to miss those moments and memories. Ben agreed with Lydia's approach and explained he worked around school events because "they're only this age once. They're only gonna do this one thing once." These children's events that he clearly did not want to miss or be distracted during greatly influenced how he balanced his professional mobile device engagement. Curtis shared "I would do anything [work] at any time. I didn't have kids." After kids, Curtis' focus shifted as did the way he approached his nonwork time. Having children made Curtis "realize more" that boundaries were needed.

I think everyone needs that boundary. And it doesn't matter what profession you're in, I think your time is your time, and your employer doesn't own you after work. And I think that would, I think it goes a long way here with just mindsets

and, I think it would do well for every profession. Understanding that some, you can't get around it.

Curtis realized professions had different demands and challenges, yet he firmly believed established boundaries were vital and the arrival of his children influenced that thought process. Laura's school-aged children influenced her in various capacities.

I'm trying to be a good role model for them. I've caught myself to where I'm like... leave everything in and I won't even bring, like we'll go to the pool and I'll leave my phone like in my bag, like on the bottom.

Laura attempted to disconnect based on her children and family activities. While they heavily influenced her thought process and at times she succeeded, but other times she did not. She confessed during evening board games she multitasked between the game and her mobile device for work. When her children called her on it, "I put it down and I paid attention for a little bit and then I turned back;" thus, an example of unsuccessful mobile device disconnection for Laura.

Children aged in their teens and beyond continued to be a major influence on the participant's decisions. Janine, like other participants, quickly announced her teenage child was the basis for her mobile device engagement/disengagement decisions.

Accordingly, when asked which family members offered the most influence over her engagement decisions, Jessica confidently answered "my little one, my thirteen-year-old or my older daughter too if she needs something." As previously articulated, Jessica spent a great deal of nonwork time engaged in professional communication via her mobile device, yet her children were her greatest influence. "If I have a function, a family function or if I have a swim meet or something important going on with my family then

work is gonna have to take a back seat,” Jessica adamantly shared. David shared similar sentiments about his young teenage sons. His primary reasoning for their influence was “I think it’s because I feel like I have less time, less time like in life. Overall, but they’re not gonna be here forever.” David recognized his wife will not be here forever either, but the “time is more precious” with his children so he placed them as more influential. Mike was in an interesting dilemma with his children and his managerial position.

I might get a phone call from somebody and I’ll go outside, ‘cause...my kids go to school here, they ask questions and I—they—they know the answer I’m just like, ‘I can’t tell you.’ But they’re, they—my kids are savvy enough, they know what I do for a living and—and they watch the news and they see school shootings and...I would get a phone call and I—I’d step outside or I’d go somewhere else in the house. And my oldest son will say, ‘dad, what are you talking about? Is there something wrong at school?’ and so that’s been a touchy thing for—for me over the last, I don’t know, I’d say six months. With some of the issues that have happened. I try—try to navigate that with my kids has been, at times, difficult. More difficult than most people think. I do try to—I really try to keep things separate.

As a school administrator where his young teenage sons attend, the location of his mobile device engagement was influenced by actively considering his children. For Mike, there were locations within the domestic sphere in which he avoided engaging.

Similarly, Cindy chose not to engage in specific locations because of her teenage sons, including the car.

So when I'm in the car I ... My oldest is 14, he's getting ready to think about driving and so I need to set the example the phone is in the purse and it stays in the purse. So, there's those chunks of time where I make sure I don't engage so that I can engage with them.

Rachel also recognized those important times with her sons. Rather than in the car, like Cindy's example, Rachel mentioned her boys enjoyed talking with her before they went to bed. "Like, so, sometimes when, when it's that late at night, then, I know my kids are older, but sometimes that's the time that you want to, to sit down and talk to your kids." Overall with family relationships, Rachel tried not to "do that [engage on mobile device] whenever they're with me and they want to talk to me, or we're together doing something. I, it takes all my energy to, to put the phone away, in my purse, or wherever."

Even though Rachel found it difficult to put the phone away, her children and their time together made a profound impact on her decisions with the device. Rather than considering all his children like Rachel did, Mark mentioned his one daughter and her distaste for his mobile device usage. He specifically considered her with his engagement decisions.

I'm more careful when I'm with her answering phone calls. Well, I won't take a phone call that I don't have to. Like it's more, for me sometimes, I'll look at the text and I'll either call or text right back. My time spent with her is probably a little different than my other daughter because she doesn't understand the ministry as well.

In respect for that relationship with his daughter, Mark considered her before professionally engaging on his mobile device.

Earlier in this section, Cindy discussed her teenage boys in tandem with her decision to disengage when in the car. When Cindy was asked how her children's influence over her usage compared to her husband's influence, she shyly shared, "probably kids over husband." Her reasoning process was described as follows, "well only because he's managing the same issues and the work stuff comes in for him too and he understands it a little bit more than the kids do." Discussions in the next paragraph are from other participants about spousal influence.

Children clearly played the primary role of influencer on the border crosser's mobile device engagement. Jessica was one of those individuals, but when it came to adults influencing her, she responded "The others can wait, they're adults, they can wait." For Jessica, her children were the influencers and she believed adults should be able to understand. However, some participants noted their spouses played a larger influential role. It is important to point out Ryan, Alexa, Alyssa don't currently have children. Ryan happily shared his life had changed completely upon getting married later in life.

I say that because before I was married, I had gave absolutely no second thought to using my own personal time on work, whether I was checking emails or sending emails or whatever. It wasn't even ... it wasn't even a moment's hesitation. Once I got married and- and realized that my time was not just my own and it sort of ... everything just changed.

While Ryan's wife is expecting a baby soon, at this point, he attributed his decision making on mobile device engagement to both himself and his wife. Like Ryan, Alexa shared "If it was just me chilling all by myself, I would probably never stop working." Alexa's husband clearly influenced her decisions and perhaps her problem-solving

technique to flag emails to quickly organize. Alyssa explained her husband preferred she did not engage and she did consider that preference, though he was influential, she admitted she could not always disengage. The following participants referenced their spouses or adults in their lives with respect to mobile device influences.

While Laura and her husband were both actively involved with their mobile devices in their nonwork time; Laura named her children as primary influencers. Though she also shared “I should say it, if my husband asked me to put down my phone, I would put it down. He's just never, I don't think he's ever asked me to.” Laura reiterated that her husband had never asked her and her children were the only ones that could truly get her to stop. Other than spouses, there were times participants considered the entire family or a parent.

Jared and Landi referenced family holistically influencing their decisions to engage or disengage. Jared explained,

If it's something that I know can wait yea if there's a message that I know I can get back at some point in the evening, if I'm with my family doing something and I can get back the next day and it's not pressing I'm okay letting it go.

In that light, Jared was influenced by the entire family's activity rather than just children or his spouse. Landi also pointed out family events influenced her engagement decisions. She intentionally blocked out and protected time for those activities. Additionally, Landi's mom played an influential role in her decisions. “I would say ughh again because of my dad bringing work home, I think my mom is probably the other person just because she's you know watching for family habits.” Landi's mom was sensitive to her family's

mobile device and work habits due to past experiences and is thus influential to her decision-making process.

Children were shown in this section to play an instrumental role in the participants' decisions to engage or disengage professionally via their mobile device. Among the reasons shared for the children as main influencers were attending kids' events, giving appropriate attention and time, acting as role model, and appreciating limited time with kids. Though these were chief concerns for Cindy and others, Cindy added

I think they, they have to understand, as they're getting older too, that this is probably a reality of the world they're going to live in too if they go down a professional path versus a trade path. They're going to have similar, if not more demands on them.

Cindy referred to preparation for their future. Other participants discussed spousal influence and even a parent. Children, by far, had the greatest influence over the border crosser. Beyond domestic border keepers and other domain members are industry permeations that find its way into the domestic sphere and influence the participants' mobile device usage. The next section is devoted to exploring that concept.

**Industry permeations.** Participants were cognizant of areas in which the industry permeated into their domestic sphere through the advent of the mobile device. Industry Permeations certainly included client phone calls, work insights, or actual work brought home as characterized by the 2000 Work/Family Border Theory, but with the mobile device those permeations are increasingly accessible. Unlike the earlier permeations, the mobile device brings other permeations not earlier considered. These permeations

surfaced as physical items such as a company-paid mobile device, industry growth concerns such as business competition, and employee concerns such as salary vs. hourly and benefits. Laura expressed

You just can't get it done in eight hours. You can't and you'll kill yourself if you try, you're in meetings all day so you have to find other times to get it done and, and it's interesting because my former CEO and I, I'm up early, like I'm an early riser so he would email me like midnight and then he would email me at three. And then I would email him back at like 4:30 or 5:00 and he'd email me back. One day I said to him, 'Do you sleep?' Because at that point, he's literally, and he's like, 'I, I sleep in between there.'

Laura, like many managers, had multiple meetings throughout her workday and the mobile device enabled her to keep up with communication in nonwork time. Laura further explained that increased management hierarchical levels equated to more demands to juggle. Dani was assigned to a mid-career coaching program "to talk about everything, work/life balance and all." Because Dani's next promotion would be to full professor, the coach recommended Dani refrain from checking weekend emails.

Additionally, the coach

wanted me [Dani] to put on my [email] signature, that, 'I'll get back to you within 48 hours.' But I never did it 'cause I was afraid of what my director would say. And. I also didn't like that, because sometimes, it might be less or more.

This coach recognized areas of industry permeations in Dani's life and worked with her to establish parameters to better manage her time. These two stories highlighted the need



for recognizing industry permeations and finding ways to manage them. The idea of the company-paid phone as an industry permeation will be discussed next.

Participants discussed their fully-paid phones, monthly stipends, use of two phones, removal of company-paid phones, refusal of company-paid phones, and personal phones as their only option. When using any type of mobile device, company-paid or otherwise, the industry readily permeated into the domestic sphere. Because the domestic sphere is not contained to the four walls of the border crosser's home, the mobile device enabled the industry to permeate into any space the border crosser (participant) was in at any given time.

Company-paid phones, while recognizably a nice perk for employees, seemingly came with expectations. Those expectations permeated into every crevice of the domestic sphere. Landi conveyed the feeling clearly, "as I moved into more management responsibilities, my office pays for my cell phone umm and there's a bit of an implication there that I am meant to be available." Even though Landi attempted to maintain a healthy work/family balance, the company-paid phone challenged her ability to do so. Like Landi, Rich shared "I think there's an underlying expectation. Like if the boss calls, you like, you should pick up." While Rich said there was not an official written policy he was aware of,

I'm sure if my boss was calling me and I didn't pick up, he would be ...

questioning me the next, the next day or the next time we talked or the next time

he called me when I did pick up as to why I didn't.

Rich felt that pressure and kept his phone on him and/or checked it throughout the evening in his domestic sphere to address any situations that arose. Rich and Landi

maintained only the work phone, whereas Sheila, Carol, and Nigel managed two phones. Sheila's work phone had tenant contacts and pictures of information necessary for her to answer questions when she was in her nonwork space. "I have everything uploaded...everything I need to do my job." When asked if her company directed her to be available 24/7 since it was a work phone, Sheila replied, "No. They actually ... It's more of a thing that I'm struggling with, because they say, 'Go home. Turn your phone off.' So, they're okay with it." Despite their advice to Sheila, "they have the ... number right up front on the billboard." Her work-provided cell phone was also the emergency number and was displayed on the highway billboard. The public display of her number forced industry permeation into her domestic sphere.

While Sheila felt there was a bit of a double standard between the company's directive and the number on the billboard, Carol wholeheartedly believed she was given the work phone so "that way they can control me." Carol recalled that prior to cell phones, "that would never have happened. He wouldn't have had the number." Carol referred to times when her boss tracked her down on vacations. "Which is why they pay for the cell phone," explained Carol about the company-paid phone and the ease at which her boss reached her thus permeating into her domestic sphere.

Carol was amenable to carrying two devices. However, Nigel was ready to downsize to one. "It just felt like I was just carrying too much." When asked which one he would opt to leave at home, he replied his personal device would remain at home. While he sometimes missed personal calls and emails, he preferred to carry only the one device and opted for the work device. The actual impetus for getting the work phone was that

we agreed to be on call several weekends through the summer, and, you know, the specific evenings where they were working through the night, to make sure your phone's loud and on, you know, so that they could literally wake you up at 3:00 a.m. if you needed to and, and respond.

With that said, he enjoyed the ability to check-in throughout the evening and weekends to monitor and manage emails and other work communication. While these examples focused on company-paid phones, other industries offer that perk with a monthly stipend in the employees' paycheck.

Like a fully paid phone, monthly stipends gave participants the feelings of expected connection which directly correlated to an industry permeation. Mike, who received a stipend for his phone, claimed "I think there is an expectation that if there's an issue outside of work time, you take care of it and you don't-you don't let it go." While Mike tried hard to keep work and family separate, he admitted it was hard, especially with that unwritten expectation. Ann and Jared also received stipends and concurred that with the stipend comes an underlying expectation to remain available in their nonwork times. In Ann's case, there was a directive. "I actually do believe that there is something in writing in our agreement yes because of the contribution to, that the expectation is that we would be available at any time for work purposes." For these participants, the industry permeation into their domestic sphere was substantial due to the monetary assistance for the device.

Two of the participants who had company-paid mobile devices had that benefit removed. As a matter-of-fact, Jessica said it was taken away because "some of the other managers complained they didn't have a phone so they took it away." Jessica qualified

that her position in the company was at a higher level than most branch managers, but their complaints were heard. She didn't comment to an expectation when the company paid for it, nor did she complain. Jessica couldn't achieve what she had without her mobile device, so she willingly used her personal device instead to remain fully engaged. Conversely, Karen was very upset with her company when they took her stipend away. "The Dean took away that, except for some real strategic people, I feel like I shouldn't have to use my phone, because it's my phone." She reflected on her earlier stipend. "I think that's when I felt more obligated to reply was when the company, yeah. 'Cause the company was paying a good portion of it." While Karen remained engaged in her nonwork times, the stipend gave her that increased obligated feeling and allowed the industry to permeate her domestic sphere. Karen preferred the stipend if the company expected engagement, not all participants felt that same way.

Kara refused a company phone due to the obligations to answer and respond that came along with it. She imagined how the company felt.

I have given you the telephone, you know, we pay for that for you. I feel like I would expect that, right, as a company if I was giving an employee a cell phone. I have provided you a cell phone for the purposes of me being able to reach you whenever I need you and I kind of feel like if I keep my own personal one, I have the right to decline at any point right? It's my personal phone. I see that you're calling, and you know what, it's dinner time. And I'm not going to answer you.

Kara did not want to feel "beholden to the organization" and allow the industry to permeate into her domestic sphere to that degree, so she opted to only use her personal phone.

While examples illustrated varying degrees of company benefits with phones and participants' feelings without benefit, other participants readily used their personal phones to conduct business affairs in their nonwork time. Those participants were highly engaged for other reasons which also allowed the industry to permeate into their domestic sphere in increasing ways.

Opportunities or fear of missed opportunities (FOMO) caused participants to maintain mobile device engagement within their domestic sphere. "I think that if you want to move up and I've, I mean, I'm proof, if you want to move up, you're going to have to be there. You got to put your time in." Laura passionately declared her reasoning about how putting in time equates to earned promotions and professional engagement at the expense of domestic time and space was necessary. Sheila made decisions to maintain job security and she believed through the mobile device she learned new things.

How much do I want to learn? How much do I want to be committed to ... how many dings do I want to have on my phone to say, 'Oh, there's something new out. I need to look at it.' I think it's also, along the lines of job security too. You're like, 'Well, I should probably learn that, so I don't get behind.' Or someone comes to me and says, 'Can you do ... Do you have this capability? Well, if not, we'll have to hire somebody else.'

Thus, using the device in nonwork times enabled Sheila to feel competitive in the work force to keep her job. Beyond personal promotions and job security as an industry permeation that drove mobile device engagement up, several managers worried about missed business opportunities.

Even with widespread industry representation, concerns for missed opportunities were prevalent among participants. Jessica saw other branch managers miss opportunities due to disengaging in nonwork time. “You can see the ones who are, the ones who, we—we’re staff ranked and we have a score card. We—were our branch is number four in the bank last year out of four hundred and some branches.” Jessica’s branch was a small branch considering her earned ranking. Through her accounts of competitive concerns, Jessica argued the industry permeated into all areas of her domestic sphere in order for her to remain competitive and to succeed. For Jessica, being available in the evenings on her mobile device allowed for individuals unable to contact her during the day to complete business deals. Typically, “you’re not gonna be applying for a loan when you’re sitting at your desk at work or if you’re a nurse taking care of a patient or ...a mechanic under a car.” Jessica meant she needed to make herself available when potential customers needed her or they would move on to another person or place that was available.

Jessica emailed responses at night and answered calls. “It’s immediate answers and then they [bank customers] can make decisions quicker.” All her mobile device time permeated her domestic sphere. Kevin and Mary, both in the financial field, agreed with Jessica regarding her references to business competition. Mary articulated her engagement beliefs and practices.

There are some industries that there aren’t those expectations. I feel like in—in sales and in—in—insurance it’s highly competitive right now, and there may be times when me taking that call at night could have influenced us getting a sale that occurs at eight o’clock the next morning.

If Mary didn't allow the industry to permeate into her nonwork space at night, perhaps she would lose the sale.

The possibility of losing a sale or a client was concerning to many managers, Ben especially expressed his trepidations. Ben reflected on a slower-paced world when "things didn't have to be— today." Ben believed technology overall created these instant expectations. "Right now. Yesterday.... You know you wait that long nowadays and your—you get run over. You know your competition will pass you up." During the interview, Ben shared a specific example.

Maybe a customer's looking for a freight weight quote from us or, you know, asking questions about a proposal we had submitted and I—in—in today's world, you know, you can't wait until tomorrow. Unfortunately it's, they want an answer yesterday and if you wait, a lot of times you lose the opportunity.

He also learned that during certain times of the year, the industry permeated his domestic sphere more so than other times. At times, this occurred while he attended an event or a show, the industry didn't stop due to his domestic schedule. He found he would continually think about the situation and checked his mobile device frequently for updates or he sent updates.

If it's one of those times of the year where, you know, things hit the fan or I just got done with a situation and I'm waiting for more, information before I can make a decision and I'm walking into that event right then and there. I'm thinking about it in the back of my mind the whole time and I'm just—I'm tempted to just every five minutes... do I have that update yet? Do I have that update yet? And then as soon as that's over I'm really looking to see if I have what I need so that I can

then reply, forward, you know make the call to the next person in mind. So, it definitely is a frame of mind, scenario. That device will tell me whether or not I can relax and enjoy the show.

The accessibility to the mobile device caused the industry to permeate into Ben's nonwork space. While these examples were certainly positive business concerns, the data showed that the device influenced the industry accessibility into the domestic space.

Two participants, Juan and Nigel, engaged clients via mobile device communication and social media in their nonwork time to foster business connections.

Specific example is we have our financial institution that we use through the business, has, you know, business relation, managers that I would communicate non-work related items. In this case in point, fishing. So, you know, we're we would, you know, I would create that relationship non-professionally basically, you know, to help with professionally. So, you know, I follow up with a guy that says, 'hey, how'd you do?' and, you know so outside of work....Now we have a better connection, you know, with ourselves. Personally, that can help foster our business relationship.

In that scenario, Juan worked to build a relationship with a client through mobile device communication. That work communication was the industry permeating into his nonwork space.

Similarly, Nigel stepped out of his comfort zone with social media and a client when his wife accepted a friend request on Nigel's phone. Though at first uncomfortable, it became interesting to Nigel.



You know, he's out riding with his son and, you know, he went on a bike ride with his grandfather, and so it's, it's kinda nice to, sort of, see... it fills out a person a little bit, and so I, I can see a little bit of value there.

Nigel's original concerns surrounded seeing clients and them viewing him in a "multidimensional" way and this was "new territory" for him. Considering Facebook had a history of information and pictures of Nigel, he was unsure of bridging the gap to accepting work colleagues and clients on Facebook. However, when asked if rapport between others improved through this, with a surprised tone, Nigel said, "That's interesting, it actually does, yeah. And, and, you know, this is, this is, you know, pretty recent territory for me." He went on to share that his wife also accepted a co-worker.

I saw he was at, like, a Jimmy Buffett concert last weekend havin' a lot of fun, so now I, kind of, have the sense for, you know, 'Oh, you like Jimmy Buffet,' you know, and I, I enjoy Jimmy Buffett too, so there are probably, you know, good advantages, and, and a big piece of that I'm learning about, you know, with clients, is, you know, an authentic interest in, in them as a whole person, you know, and so, you know, maybe I should accept more, more clients. So, you know, as we talk about it, I'm recognizing that there's nothing bad about, and probably something good about, knowing a little bit more about people that way.

Nigel learned that investing in others via social media helped to learn about each other in healthy ways. By managing these communicative experiences in his nonwork time, the industry via his clients and colleagues permeated his domestic sphere.

The final area in which participants spoke about industry permeations was how a salary versus hourly pay scale impacted the degree of industry expectation to engage in

nonwork time. Curtis thought “there may be a difference in like a salaried versus an hourly employee.” He was speaking in terms of demand for being engaged with mobile devices in nonwork times. While Curtis didn’t work a corporate job, he felt their demands in off-peak hours could exceed his electric contracting industry. Several interviewees used the word salary or exempt when they discussed the level that the industry permeated into their domestic space via the mobile device.

Like Curtis, Carol doesn’t work in a corporate environment, yet she is a salaried management employee. She said,

I know not only is my boss calling me, but he’s calling our yard foreman, he’s calling his two sons that work there also. So, it’s not just me he’s bothering. He’s bothering them, and that is their family time, and I think that if you’re at work, you’re entitled to be away from work. Our guy—we have union guys. When they are off the clock, they’re off the clock.

While Carol understood that as a salaried employee her work can extend the day, she felt irritated that her boss reached out to them when they were hourly employees. Sheila and her bosses had conversations about salary versus hourly employees and how that changed their expectations of her. She recognized she was truly a salaried employee; she responded to that recognition.

I think you just shape it into the position that you want it to be, and hopefully the owners and the bosses will be okay with that. But, that’s like a touch and go thing, I think. We meet constantly about that. And [talk] just about my thoughts on the position and their thoughts, and we come together and make a decision and kind of happy medium.

Sheila referred to overall negotiations with her boss to balance their expectations and what she saw the job being. She spoke as if it was a positive experience at attempted work/life boundaries.

In most participants' cases that discussed salary, the overwhelming message was salaried employees are expected to get their work done, not get it done in 40 hours. Cindy explained, "The concept behind salaried employees is you do what needs to be done. And sometimes that means you stay late. Sometimes that means you answer an email off hours. So, that's kind of the mentality." With that mentality, the industry permeated into many areas of the salaried employees' domestic sphere to get their work done. David concurred "especially in a salary position, I think you have an unspoken pressure to be involved during nonwork hours." Tim's company handled the expectation somewhat differently.

There's no directive, it's we're basically judged on getting a result so as long as you're doing whatever you need to do to get that result. I mean I could have you only contact me 8-5 but I don't have that rule. I have more of an open door policy and more of an open door approach. And principal redid the way that they give people time off so we don't...have PTO they have flex time off, so you just kind of take it when you need it but you're held responsible to do your job.

Simply put, within Tim's industry, you are judged on what you do and held accountable for that. If that meant the industry permeated into your nonwork time in a broad and complex way, then that was the expectation.

Janine said, "If you're not getting paid to work, you shouldn't have to work."

However, she added "it's often that unwritten rule that, you know, it's part of your job and

you need to take care of it, or you know, you're well you're salary, so it doesn't, it's, you know, you've got to do your job.”

Jessica felt differently than Janine, but she worked in a different industry with different reward systems. She has multiple sales goals and worked hard to earn her money and rewards.

I get a salary ... I'm exempt. So, I earn quarterly bonuses. If I do not make my goals, I do not get a bonus. And there's nine goals, so your bonus could be a lot or it could be a little, and as a single mom I rely on the bonuses to live on, basically.

So, the harder I work, the more money I make.

Jessica welcomed the industry permeations as the outcome was quite lucrative for her.

She recognized the challenges of being salary or exempt.

You're pretty much expected to work a 40-hour work week plus whatever is necessary and they have that verbiage in there [in a contract] so that it encompasses anything. However, it's unrealistic to expect somebody to be on-call 24/7 without giving them some sort of stipend for that. So, I work, and this is interesting because I'm on salary, so I can control my own schedule here.

In other words, she left for appointments as needed and made that time up in her nonwork time without a pay deduction or need to schedule an official day off. This was a perk for Jessica especially considering how much the industry permeated her domestic sphere.

### **Summary of Influences Two: Domestic Sphere**

Children were shown in this section to play an instrumental role in the participants' decisions to engage or disengage professionally via their mobile device. Among the reasons shared for the children as main influencers were attending kids'

events, giving appropriate attention and time, acting as role model, and appreciating limited time with kids. While spouses and other family members were influential, children far surpassed this influence on the participant based on the experiences shared.

Participants were cognizant of areas in which the industry permeated into their domestic sphere through the advent of the mobile device. Industry permeations certainly included client phone calls, work insights, or actual work brought home as characterized by the 2000 Work/Family Border Theory, but with the mobile device those permeations are increasing and easily accessible. Unlike the earlier permeations, the mobile device brings other permeations not considered earlier. These permeations surfaced as physical items such as a company-paid mobile device, industry growth concerns such as business competition, and employee concerns such as salary vs. hourly and benefits.

### **Summary of Theme Three: Influences**

Influences was the third theme that developed from the data. Encapsulated within that theme were two subthemes: Border Crosser and Domestic Sphere.

Cognitive influences played a role in the level at which the participant opted to engage with the mobile device professionally within the domestic sphere. Personality traits included self-expressed OCD or Type A, as well as the recognition of task-driven individual. Due to those acknowledgements, participants admitted professional usage increased in the domestic sphere simply because of who they were as a person.

Other areas in which participants self-analyzed were their desire to maintain a good reputation and to be viewed as possessing good work ethic. These areas in which participants concerned themselves with what others perceived of them influenced their level of engagement. They aspired to be viewed as both credible and caring. To be

viewed as credible, the participants desired to be responsive to emulate that trait.

Similarly, responsiveness showed a participant cared about the industry, thus engaged in nonwork time to validate that.

Regarding influences from the domestic sphere, the border keepers and industry permeations were paramount as influencing engagement or disengagement decisions. Rather than spouses and other family members, children reigned as most influential within the domestic sphere. Their influences captured the participants' desire to be a good role model, to assert the appropriate amount of time with children, and to ensure focused attention at children's events. Participants ranged in success rate at these aspirations, however, the children were ranked higher than other individuals based on the voices and stories of the interviewees.

Industry permeations complete the domestic sphere subtheme. While individuals contributed from diverse industries, common permeations that impeded the domestic sphere through participants' thoughts and/or actions included the nuances surrounding the origination of the phone (for example: company-paid, stipend, personal device). Next, opportunities or fear of missed opportunities became a chief concern for participants in which those thoughts and subsequent actions via mobile device engagement permeated the domestic sphere. Lastly, the dilemma of working salary vs. hourly and how that status influenced company expectations of engagement and subsequent engagement in nonwork times.

Not only are the industry permeations important to the Work/Family Border Theory, but the domestic permeations into the professional sphere are talked about in the

next section in terms of how the mobile device was possibly used in the professional sphere (work) for nonwork purposes.

### **Nonwork in Work**

Theme four evolved from the data to better understand the Work/Family Border Theory model. In consideration of the first three themes: Control, Sentiments, and Influences that encompass significant data related to professional mobile device usage in the domestic sphere, it is relevant to also present participants' statements about their domestic mobile device usage in their professional sphere. While this theme does not directly answer any of the four research questions, the data aids in a stronger understanding of the Work/Family Border Theory along with the advent of mobile devices.

Participants' testimonials equated to three areas of usage in that realm: logistical, moderate, heavy. Logistical is defined as limited usage to maintain relationships or household. This includes very brief texts, occasional check-ins, rare to no usage of phone feature and content surrounds family/household logistical answers to questions of what, where, when, or how. Juan conveyed clearly, "what do we need here, what do we need there...where do I need to be, how do I need to be." Of the 32 interviewees, 24 indicated logistical domestic usage of the mobile device while in the professional sphere. Moderate is defined as logistical usage plus sending pictures and moderate social media/app/Internet usage. Of the moderate usage range, 7 identified characteristics that applied them to the moderate category. Heavy is defined as fluid usage of nonwork and work throughout the day. This could include areas discussed in logistical and moderate,

but extend to usage of multiple nonwork apps. Regarding heavy usage, 2 of the participants fell within that category. Their stories will be explored in this section.

The first and largest area of nonwork usage was deemed logistical. Participants had varying comfort levels with even the logistical usage at work, however, most enjoyed the ability the mobile device offered to maintain the household. Spouses had brief check-ins regarding groceries needed and/or children's status updates. "Do you need me to pick up anything for dinner?" or "What time do we need to be at the game?" were questions typically exchanged between Juan and his wife. Dani and Cindy found it useful for brief coordination of children. Dani explained "I do a lot of that kind of coordinating.... I don't engage in like cultivating relationships over texts during the work hours." Dani believed it helped with logistics of her two young daughters. Cindy maintained brief check-ins and social permissions "My son texts me yesterday, can he go mini-golfing with friends?" Mike appreciated the quick attendance to children's needs the mobile device afforded him. "That can happen quick and easy and free up time for other things." By "other things" Mike was referring to work concerns.

While Mary doesn't have children at home to manage, she saw some value in the brief logistical texts to her husband or mom.

You can easily, you know, just send a quick text back versus being disruptive. I think it's important, so we've got 25 people that work in our office. I like people to refrain having personal conversations. You can have those at work. But I like to have you, you know, go to the kitchen for that. Or find a conference room. I don't want to disrupt, you know, the 25 people so I love texting for that. There are a lot of open cubicles, and even if you have an office, like I have an office. The



ventilation or the insulation isn't sufficient. Like you can hear anything anyone says.

Mary preferred to respect the employees within her professional sphere by minimizing interruptions to their work.

Ben and Nigel had similar belief systems as Mary, but theirs also extended to expectations of work focus and commitment. Nigel shared,

I would say, like, you know, when you're at your desk, you're working, and so I understand, you know, similar to a phone call home or, you know, something where you're making a connection that needs to be made, like, there's a, there's a level of interaction I'd expect, you know, texts back and forth and things like that, but, you know, streaming videos and, you know, being on *Facebook*, and things like ... I really would struggle to see... seem like a big interruption from what you're being paid to do when you're there.

Nigel himself used it sparingly for check-ins and used his lunchtime for Internet reading such as "*New York Times* and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*." While he understood and supported brief interruptions, he would call out an individual for overuse.

I think if I walked over and somebody was doing that, working on my project, I would say something, you know, like, 'Hey, like, you know, you can do that at lunch,' you know, 'let's try and stay focused on work here, you know?' But I can ... because thankfully I, have not had that happen on somebody who's workin' on one of my projects...I think some sort of a policy has been talked about, it's just hard to, ... I don't think it would've hurt to express that, and then you'd have something to be evaluated against.

Nigel's company didn't currently have a policy, but situations were handled one on one as needed. Like Nigel, Ben tried "to keep it to a minimum because that's what I expect my staff to do." Unlike Nigel's company, Ben's company devoted a few pages in the employee handbook to personal issues to include mobile device usage expectations. Ben used his for gleaning brief input from his wife to tie-up loose ends, but proclaimed "it's not used that critically."

Some individuals maintained the stance that when they were at work, they were at work. Jared was one of those individuals.

I don't usually [engage in nonwork during work], when I'm at work I'm at work.

Usually my wife and I will check-in maybe, if we're lucky once a day, but that's just to make sure we're getting the kid we're supposed to get at a particular time.

While Jared's check-ins were extremely limited, the purpose encompassed, like other participants, household/family maintenance. Rich maintained a similar philosophy as Jared's.

I think everybody sort of knows, during work time ... you know, it has to be, fairly important to text or call me on my cell phone, knowing that I'm typically engaged in, in other stuff. Yeah, I think, I think just over the years. You know. Everybody sort of knows that when I'm at work, I'm working.

Rich went on to share that this mindset began early in his career pre-mobile device.

So my wife knew ... She knew, only, she could only call me at work if like, something like tragic happened. Like, I need to talk to you right now. Something bad's going on, or something.

While Rich preferred to not be bothered at work, he acknowledged the ability for others to reach him if something happened at home or with his elderly mother.

Carol didn't like being bothered at work even when her daughters sent her pictures of her grandchildren. Carol replied "I am at work....those kinds of interruptions just irritate me." Carol detailed the interruption with a work scenario.

Well usually it'll come through when I'm on the phone with a customer trying to schedule a pickup or figure out why he's got an issues or the material's too big for the truck. Things that you really get involved in and then you hear that beep of the text. And it's—you're programmed to look at it, and it's a distraction, and I don't like it. A lot of times I have people in and out of my office on a steady stream, and that text interrupts that when I'm talking face to face with somebody else. It's an intrusion and I don't want to say that phone is more important than you are. Carol preferred to keep her focus on her busy work day rather than becoming irritated with nonwork communication via her mobile device.

Adam didn't mind brief texts from his partner or other family members like "hey what do you want for dinner" or even a brief emoji, not anything "deep" though. However, he turned off the sound and preferred not to use the phone feature.

I answer and he's [Adam's partner] just talking about something that's going on at his work and he's like, 'oh you sound sad,' and I'm like, 'I'm just stressed,' and he's like, 'so how's your day going?' I'm like, 'I don't have time to talk,' like. You know, but it's like—so that's one of the reasons I don't use the phone phone part, or...I turn off the sound because the interruption...it bugs me so then I get snappish.

Adam felt the mobile device fostered domestic relationships in a very simple way within his professional sphere.

Ann didn't get annoyed like Adam, but she got anxious upon engagement with personal email on her mobile device.

I don't often do personal email because I get a little anxious about that while at work on my phone, on my phone, so I would probably say texting and calling would be the main.

She didn't mind quick text check-ins, but felt uncomfortable with nonwork email while she was at work.

Just all the parameters because our phones are connected to work so we are expected to be accessible at all times using our phone you know the district pays a very very small portion for for the cell phone itself so I do like take that into consideration when I'm working.

When asked if she was concerned about engaging with personal email on her company-paid phone out of work, she emphatically answered, "No." Ann added, "So that's that's interesting yeah when I think that through saying it out loud I'm not, it's really when I'm in the walls of work." For Ann, she found the mobile device connectivity uncomfortable when engaging with her personal email in her professional sphere, so she avoided that level of engagement.

Unlike Ann's demeanor about personal email, other participants lightly checked their personal emails or managed doctor appointments during interstitial moments. David remarked, "occasionally when I'm in-between something or waiting to start a different project or different task, I will check my *Gmail*, which is not my work mail." Ellen used

hers to check a sports app for her son's baseball team to gauge schedule changes. Tim and Landi both contacted extended family that were not geographically close for brief check-ins or status updates. Bonnie, Karen, and Lisa revealed their brief usage to manage doctor appointments for themselves and/or family.

Ryan and his pregnant wife had a system of check-ins. He admitted to quick check-ins four to five times per day. "How you doin'? What's happenin'?" However, I know if I get a call from her during the day, then it's important, because... she doesn't want to bother me ... during the day unless it's important. And so that's kind of the unwritten code that we've come up with, is if I see her calling in the middle of the day then I'm gonna take that call no matter what, and otherwise she'll text me and she knows I'll get back to her, or I'll text her. And-and hers is the same way. She knows I won't call her during the day unless it's important. When Ryan was at work, he was very busy, so this system allowed them to limit interruptions, yet know when urgent situations arise.

The stories chronicled in this section illustrated the largely logistical and quick usage of the mobile device and the participants' preference for that level of usage. Some extended that into more moderate usage. While the moderate mobile device user engaged logistically, they differed from the aforementioned individuals in terms of their comfort level, frequency, and engagement. Their usage surpassed those at the logistical level. Mark, like other participants, made brief check-ins with his wife, mother, and children; however, he also ran a second business via his mobile device while at work.

So we remove trees and so I'll get the, the other guy that I work with, the dealer we have, he handles most of the calls. But then he and I are talking back and forth a lot setting things up.

While Mark managed a camp, during that worktime he also texted frequently with his business partner to set-up jobs. Laura extended her logistical usage to *LinkedIn*. "I get an alert. I'm always on LinkedIn. I'm always looking for the opportunity." Additionally, Laura and her husband were building a new home in which her husband was primarily coordinating. "If I need to make a decision of what color the counter top is going to be.... He *FaceTime's* me" Laura added he also sends pictures and was a great way for her to add input to home decisions while at work.

Beyond logistical questions like "who's letting the dog out," Kevin also received pictures regularly from family while he was at work. "He's [Kevin's dad] always sending me pictures when he's on vacation or something. So he'll take pictures of mom sitting on the beach, the sunset." Kevin interacted with his parents regarding their vacations or other situations on a regular basis while at work. Janine and her family engaged in a photo game throughout the entire day. "We also have our funny every day we, we text each other all day long and funny photos and ...then at dinner we, we vote on which photo was best." During a typical day during the school year, they sent up to 15 photos, while in the summer months that increased to "probably 40." Additionally, on Tuesdays, Grandma takes the six grandchildren to an activity or volunteer experience. "She'll send like photo updates of the kids throughout and send it to the six parents and so then we communicate back and forth with her during that Tuesday with the photos, which is

really cool.” Janine enjoyed that ability to engage at a higher level, albeit during her work time.

The final level of usage was deemed fluid and heavy usage throughout the workday, thus multitasking regularly between work and nonwork functions. Jessica and Rachel both fell within this category. Jessica regularly communicated with daughters and family. Jessica asserted that the mobile device “definitely” fostered and maintained family relationships. She used *Facebook* and her personal email regularly to stay connected with family and friends.

If someone in my family has a question, they can get a hold of me instantly via text or email...Most of my family does not live close so we can reach each other that way. My family does banking with me too so they can—they can contact me if they have questions about their accounts or need a loan or something like that. My older daughter, she works various hours so we can reach each other via texting and she might send me a text or a call and if I have time I'll take it or I—I'll tell her I'll call her back. So that's normal.

For Jessica, that fluid work and nonwork was “normal” protocol. She also actively used an app to communicate with her ex-husband.

I communicate with my ex-husband via an app called the *Our Family Wizard*...It's a domestic relations app or website that we communicate through so that all of our communication is recorded and documented forever, which is a good thing...Not something that, you know, not something I'm proud of that I have to communicate through, like that we can't get along and we have to communicate through a website so, we, any communication at all has to go

through there. If we're going to get if Rose wants to pick something up or if we want to... needed a certain time or switch a day or if he decides he wants to send me multiple messages about myself, he will do so on there too.

Jessica further elaborated that she received a text notification if the app had a message and she regularly used that to maintain relations with her ex-husband regarding any communication about her daughter.

Rachel also actively used her mobile device for nonwork in her professional sphere. Internet browsing, *Facebook*, *Facebook Messenger*, *Snapchat*, *Fitbit*, *Amazon*, *Weight Watchers* are all personal areas that she tended to via her mobile device while at work. Additionally, she remained abreast of her sons' grades and communicated with her traveling husband. "Today, he even sent me a text that showed his location and how long it would take him to get home." She didn't spend a great deal of time talking on the phone, but realized its availability if needed. Overall, Rachel felt that the mobile device allowed her to maintain relationships, as well as the family/household.

*Snapchat* was one way Rachel enjoyed maintaining a friendship. "I can keep a *Snapchat* streak with my friend who lives in Ohio. So, every morning I *Snapchat* her." Among the previously mentioned apps that Rachel regularly used, she purchased sports tickets just last week and regularly used the *Teamz* app and *Google Maps* regarding coordination of her sons' baseball endeavors. While Jessica and Rachel actively engaged in nonwork communication in work time, there were overall three levels articulated and explained to understand managers' perspectives on their nonwork mobile device usage within the professional sphere.



#### **Summary of Theme Four: Nonwork in Work**

This unexpected theme of nonwork in work offered findings to both further understand the dynamics of the border crosser and other domain members as well as the origination and strength of the borders themselves.

Within this theme, 75% of the nonwork usage in work time was deemed logistical. By logistical, participants meant that they maintained relationships and household dynamics through brief interactions of when, where, and how domestic events or needs are being organized and/or executed. For most participants, they were accepting of this level of nonwork engagement in their work time. The remaining 25% had some increased mobile device engagement for nonwork usage, but only 6% were fluid in that the nonwork communication activity was regularly occurring in work time and space.

Participants had varying reasons they readily enacted borders in their professional space versus their domestic space. For some participants, adherence to company policies and respecting the mobile device stipend was relevant. Others shared they were simply very busy at work in meetings or attending to employees and clients leaving them little flexibility to invest significant time to personal communication. Contributors shared feelings of guilt for being paid for time in which they spent managing personal issues. Lastly, interviewees discussed their preferences of focus and minimizing interruptions to allow for that professional focus to occur. Interestingly, contributors that shared experiences for the latter two reasons often allowed permeations into their nonwork time (domestic sphere). Overall, this unexpected dynamic offers greater understanding of the overall theory and provides a basis for future research.

## **Summary of Findings**

Four themes developed from the data: Control, Sentiments, Influence, and Nonwork in Work. Time and parameters were both in control and out of control for interviewees which posed challenges to their overall work:family balance. From those challenges emerged various sentiments from the participant (border crosser) and their families, friends, and colleagues (other domain members). These sentiments shed light on feelings and perceptions as a result of professional mobile device engagement. When managing borders and engagement, it became clear that the border crosser was in control of their behavior, yet multifarious influences contributed to their decisions. Sometimes those influences were internal such as cognitive thoughts about themselves and how others view them. Other influences were external in terms of the role other domain members such as domestic border keepers (spouses/significant others) and industry permeations play in their decision making. Lastly and unexpectedly, nonwork in work was illuminated by participants as they discussed the manner in which they managed mobile device engagement within the professional sphere.

The first theme, control, chronicled manners in which participants retained or lacked control of their mobile device engagement. Time was a major area in which control was enacted. This exemplified the border crosser was mainly in control of their responsiveness, interstitial time, workflow management, and the potential overflow into domestic events. Though, they were also challenged with experiences they could not control. These included time zones, deadlines, and overall accessibility. Participants were unable to control others' behaviors and their reach into their domestic sphere. When participants considered their inability to control some areas of their time, they considered

development of parameters. Chiefly, parameters were self-set with little to no negotiation with others for their creation. While it was noted that some surfaced naturally or were formally created, most were informal and entirely controlled by the participant.

Sentiments, the second theme that surfaced, reported the participants' feelings and perspectives that erupted from professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere. At times, the border crosser was proactive in their usage decisions to avoid unpleasant experiences with other domain members. That being said, they were primarily reactive. Sentiments developed out of their reactive behavior which included irritation, guilt, and worry. Not only did the border crosser (participant) perceive others' sentiments, but other domain members verbally and nonverbally conveyed their sentiments. These sentiments served to influence relationships within the domestic sphere.

The third theme, Influences, uncovered two main areas of influence over the border crossers' engagement decisions: their own cognitions about themselves and how others view them and the external influence of other domain members and industry permeations. Participants considered the nuances of their own personality and their desire to foster a positive professional reputation as they determined when, where, and to what extent to engage with their mobile device. Additionally, other domain members played a role in their engagement decisions, yet surprisingly the most powerful domestic domain members were children instead of spouses and significant others. Lastly, industry permeations such as work-paid devices and salaried employee statuses influenced their level of engagement.

Nonwork in work was the final theme. This theme does not directly answer any of this study's research questions, but was important to increase the understanding of Work/Family Border Theory. Most participants simply used the device logistically for brief interactions to maintain the household when they were all in various locations. Managers in this study discussed the challenges they faced to remain focused at work and how that impacted their ability and desire to remain domestically engaged while at work. This unexpected theme laid the foundation for one of the many areas for future research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The goal of this dissertation was to explore the incorporation of mobile devices for professional (work) purposes within domestic (nonwork) spheres and the subsequent influence on relationships. This chapter reveals significant findings concerning how mobile devices are incorporated, thereby domesticated, within our nonwork life.

Additionally, the impact of the themes Control, Sentiments, and Influences, elucidate the border crosser's parameters and permeations within each sphere and propose the need for the Work/Family Border Model to evolve due to the influence of the mobile device on the overall balance between work:family.

This research was important to conduct to further understand the experiences of individuals as they continually make efforts to find balance between work and home to enable success in each sphere. Accordingly, this dissertation also sought to examine the parameters that further impacted relationships through the lens of the Work/Family Border Theory. While this study contributes to the field of communication by allowing further understanding and application of the Domestication Theory, the contribution reaches beyond the domestic incorporation of mobile devices to also report how the individual managed the borders between the two spheres (professional and domestic).

In consideration of balance between these two spheres, this exploration considered that management challenge, yet also the associated engagement decisions in terms of whether the professional communication was individually-induced and/or organizationally-induced. The findings extended beyond advancing communication theory to practical knowledge and applications which individuals use with mobile device apps and features that serve to create parameters and manage expectations within

everyday lives. This information is important for both individuals and organizations as they continue to traverse these challenging situations. Concepts covered within this chapter include theoretical advances, borders, industry permeations, proactive vs. reactive behavior, announcements not negotiations, relational impact, and nonwork communication in the work domain. These considerations are compared with the foundational Work/Family Border Model and a proposal is made to update and further research the model. To confirm terms and vocabulary relevant to Work/Family Border Theory, the domains in Figure 2 are considered work domain and family domain.

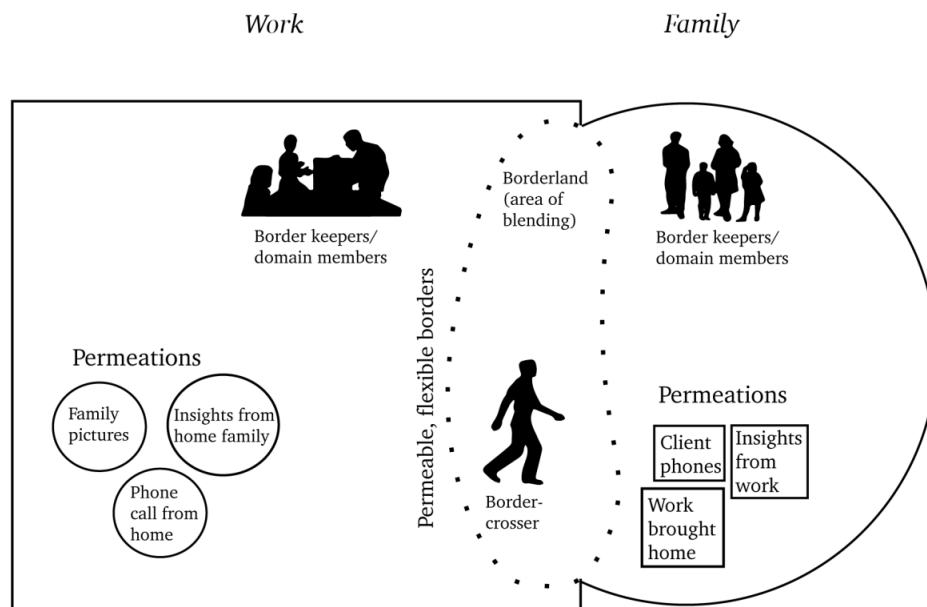


Figure 2. Work/Family Border Theory's pictorial representation. Adapted from "Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance," by Sue Campbell Clark, 2000, *Human Relations*, 53(6), p.754.

The terms related to this study for the work domain is professional sphere and for the family domain is the domestic sphere. These terms are used interchangeably, yet represent the same concept. This chapter concludes with limitations and suggestions for future research directions.

## Theoretical Advances

This dissertation sought to understand individuals' mobile device professional communication experiences through Domestication Theory (DT), specifically the phase of incorporation of mobile devices within everyday life. Domestication Theory informed the research as to the why, how, and when incorporation of professional communication within the domestic sphere took place. Pierson (2006) looked at professional domestication of mobile devices, but in a different context of telework and working at home. This dissertation took that work to a different level and explored professional domestication with individuals who physically work in an office. Delving into how individuals incorporated their professional usage into their everyday lives stretches our theoretical understanding of how the mobile phones are domesticated.

Domestication Theory transformed that notion of taming wild animals to domesticating a new artifact within new surroundings (Berker et al., 2006). That new artifact, in this case, was the mobile device used for professional purposes, whereas the new surroundings comprised the domestic sphere. Hynes & Richardson (2009) posited that an influential component of domestication is the individual's attempts to incorporate technology into their surroundings in a way that goes unnoticed by others. This study found support for that important component of the theory through the control thematic findings such as the participant's (border crosser's) use of interstitial time to engage professionally while members of the domestic sphere were also engaged in some other fashion. Data derived from the participant interviews answered questions for *RQ1: How are individuals using mobile devices professionally within the domestic sphere?*

With the increasing responsibilities for the growing numbers of individuals attempting to balance the complexities of work and home, the need for research was evident (Clark, 2000). In her study on Work/Family Border Theory, Clark (2000) recounted an exhaustive list of complexities that included divorce, mobility, geographic distance from extended families, increase of women in the workforce, and social values such as the father's role in the home that inspired inquiry on work/family balance. However, the mobile device was not part of that list. Through the participants' reflections and experiential learning regarding professional usage of mobile devices within the domestic sphere, this research delved into how the mobile device altered our view of the Work/Family Border Theory in light of managing borders and achieving balance.

The Work/Family Border Theory provided a framework to understand the complexities concerning conflict and balance with which individuals and organizations faced (Clark, 2000). It is important to communication research to advance the current understanding of the Work/Family Border Theory by ascertaining the mobile device's impact on the width, strength, flexibility, and permeability of established borders and how that theoretical model's interpretation has evolved through the advent and rapid infusion of mobile devices. This being the broader theory driving the research, data through participants' voices answered the following research questions: *RQ2: How are relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?*, *RQ3: What expectations are established for professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere?*, and *RQ4: How are expectations negotiated to establish a border between professional and domestic spheres?*



## **Borders**

According to Clark (2000), lines or borders (See Figure 2), convey “when domain relevant behavior begins and ends” (p. 756). Behavior in the sense of this study referred to the act of engagement or deliberate disengagement with the mobile device. Further, Clark (2000) posited within the border area or borderland, domain exclusivity was absent. However, she added when permeability and flexibility were exhibited by individuals, blending occurred in the border area. In the findings of this dissertation, the behavior did not have a definitive beginning and end as presupposed by Clark, nor was it confined to the border area as illustrated in the model (See Figure 2). Participants preplanned engagement to prepare for the next day, yet also sporadically took advantage of opportunities to engage professionally. The goal of these engagements surrounded advancing work efforts and the mobility of the mobile device afforded the participants the ability to move in and out of engagement within various domestic times and spaces both intentionally and interstitially with seemingly no established boundaries. The next section will expand on the types of borders supposed by Work/Family Border Theory. It will also articulate the subsequent findings from this study that allow communication scholars to understand the borders currently and the proposed changes inspired by the mobile device’s addition into this dynamic.

In the Work/Family Border Theory, significant types of borders are temporal borders, physical borders, and psychological borders (Clark, 2000). Rather than set time parameters that provide a definitive division between work hours and nonwork hours (when one ends and the other begins) as articulated by Clark (2000), findings showed fluidity between the work and family domains.

A key concept in this study that created fluidity was the fact that salary pay was a managerial characteristic articulated by participants. Since salary equated to being paid in task time, the mobile device shifted work hours based on personal workflow and organizational expectations. Many participants expressed that salary or exempt status meant you are paid for a job not for hours worked. As exemplified by Tim's statement that he was judged on bottom line results, so he used whatever time and space necessary to achieve those results, thus blending the two domains as needed. Participants discussed hourly versus salary pay scales and how those different pay scales influenced expectations of engagement in nonwork time. They further recognized salaried employees' work can extend into their domestic sphere as necessary. With that in mind, the mobile device offered the convenience for border crossers to engage within every corner of the domestic or nonwork sphere at any time of the day or night, thus removed that absolute temporal border. Many participants discussed their temporal availability as 24/7, which was out of their control along with interruptions and others' behavior/expectations of them.

This is important to communication research as the mobile device became domesticated for professional purposes and as a result the domestic sphere was considerably changed. For this research, this was highly relevant within salary jobs. As Dani said, "it enable[d] me to have those fluid work/life boundaries is that I can check in every now and then, and just kind of move back and forth through each of those areas seamlessly." Along with that temporal change, familial and interpersonal interactions that happened in times devoted to domestic activities faced new challenges including feelings

of alienation, fear of being phubbed, or diminished importance due to use of the device for professional purposes.

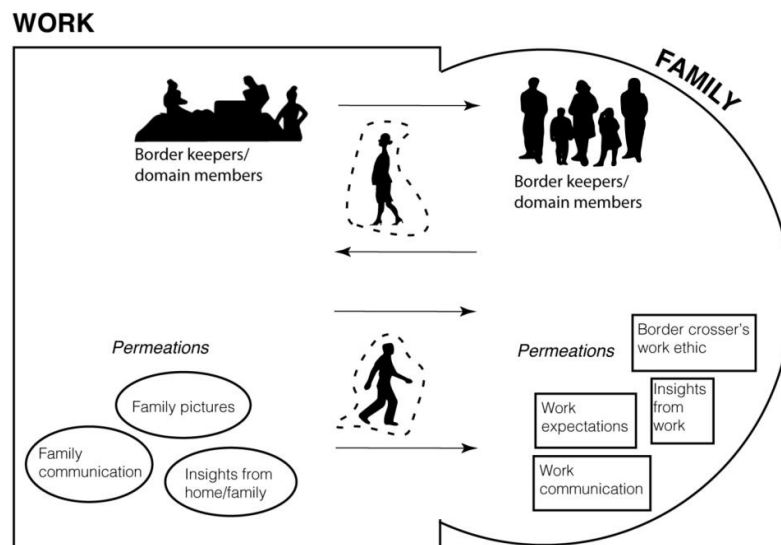
The physical borders comprised walls and offices physically separating the domains (Clark, 2000). In this study, participants worked in a physical office not at home. With that in mind, the researcher assessed the influence of the physical borders considering the influx of the mobile device. The mobile device broke down physical walls of the workplace as determined by the participants' chosen engagement. Work readily moved in and out of the domestic sphere in any physical nonwork space through utilizing mobile device communication via apps, emails, texts, calls. Most participants kept their phone physically on them throughout their domestic sphere, including on vacations and at children's events, and findings showed they were in control of engagement time and space. This ability to be in control enabled them to consider where they engaged, who they responded to (bosses, for example), or how they managed their time with flagging systems, apps, and/or postdated emails. Unplanned downtime, deemed interstitial, proved useful to participants in engaging seemingly without interrupting others in their domestic sphere. Consequently, the physical nature of having the mobile device on them afforded options that surpassed what a physical wall could impede. However, these engagement options were often shared in light of advancing physical work at the expense of the domestic sphere. This was important for the researcher to consider in proposing a new model to suggest new communication concepts to the Work/Family Border Theory.

The psychological borders in the Work/Family Border Theory included determining appropriate behaviors, emotions, and cognition that were present in either of

the domains (work and family) (Clark, 2000). An example of this was when a person used work insight to enrich home life and vice versa. Within Work/Family Border Theory, the individual was said to create the psychological borders. This dissertation research corroborated that notion related to mobile device usage. Arguably the individual, otherwise known as the border crosser, determined their mobile device engagement level and associated behavior within each domain. Findings showed that the individuals determined their engagement, thus created psychological borders based on the temporal and physical characteristics noted, as well as considering the forthcoming industry permeations. Results from this dissertation advanced the understanding of direct or indirect organizational influences and the border crossers' cognitive understanding of those influences as they determined their physical and temporal engagement via the mobile device.

The nuances of the borders and the crossing between domains by border crossers is relevant to this dissertation because it examined individuals' intentional decisions to communicate professionally within domestic spheres and the related implication on relationships. In general, Clark (2000) maintained "borders will be stronger in the direction of the more powerful domain" (p. 758), but this dissertation study found borders were raised and lowered based upon the overall control of situations and time, sentiments, and influences from border keepers and other domain members. For example, while professional deadlines and time zones altered borders, so did time allotted to family dinners and vacations. The passing between domains became more fluid than definitive beginnings and endings; the web of usage widened physical and temporal borders in that they became all one fluid area. This finding correlated with Dery et al. (2014) when they

claimed the border between work and home domains were increasingly unstable with less recognizable and firm boundaries (Dery et al., 2014). The domestic sphere seemingly maintained weaker borders. Individuals moved in and out of professional communication without negotiation. It is important to understand that rather than one domain having dominant power, situations shifted that power and altered borders in the moment at the discretion of the border crosser. This is one supporting factor in the researchers' proposal of removing the borderland area in the original model and placing the border around the border crosser to determine engagement during any time and space (See Figure 3).



*Figure 3. Proposed updates to Work/Family Border Model. Adapted from “Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance,” by Sue Campbell Clark, 2000, Human Relations, 53(6), p.754.*

#### Summary of Changes to Work/Family Border Model

1. Removed border area and created borders around border crosser illustrated by dotted lines
2. Added arrows to illustrate the fluidity of the two spheres
3. Altered Permeation: Client phones became Work communication
4. Altered Permeation: Work brought home became Work expectations and Border crosser's work ethic
5. Altered Permeation: Phone call from home became Family communication
6. Addition of a second border crosser to represent female gender identification
7. Addition of a third adult in domestic sphere to represent friends or other family

Beyond the establishment of the temporal, physical, or psychological borders were the characteristics of the borders specific to blending, permeability, and flexibility. Blending occurred with high degrees of border permeability and flexibility according to Work/Family Border Theory; conversely, impermeability and inflexibility limited blending (Clark, 2000). An example of Clark's concept of permeability and flexibility surround family routines, such as a husband that worked at home, but also helped his wife with children's morning routines while also beginning his workday. In referring to Figure 2, that crossover was said to happen in the borderland between temporally leaving the family domain and entering the work domain. Thus, this borderland area was not exclusive to either domain. However, the findings in this dissertation showed that the borderland is not the sole area of blending. Particularly in the domestic sphere, participants shared the when, why, and how they regularly allowed professional permeations to blend into the domestic sphere. Participants willingly sacrificed the time they controlled to engage to move work forward, thus further exemplifying the fluidity of the proposed model. While Clark offered explanations of permeability, she did not include the infusion of the mobile device. Permeations were also described as psychological in that negative emotions from work can spillover into the home environment (Clark, 2000). This happened on a regular basis with the mobile device. Even just the sight of an email or call could be mood altering. According to participants, there were 24/7 possibilities to engage and the mobile device allowed that to happen in any space.

Clark (2000) discussed the potential of border flexibility based on temporal, physical, or psychological borders. This means that the flexibility alters based on when or

where a person works, as well as psychological insights and emotions. Because this study recruited managers that worked in a physical office, most had set hours, thus the physical and temporal flexibility was not readily explored. Although Dani, Landi, and Nigel did speak of some temporal flexibility based on their staggered start and end times, which impacted their borders and subsequently their domestic sphere. This finding suggests an interesting exploration opportunity for the future.

### **Industry Permeations**

The Work/Family Border Theory argues that the borders between the domains are permeable (Clark, 2000). Clark (2000) highlighted three permeations into the family area on her model (See Figure 2). Those permeations included client phones, insights from work, and work brought home. While calls from clients and work brought home were apparent, insights from work will be further clarified. According to Clark (2000), insights from work referred to situations when an insight from an experience at work is applied to an experience at home. For example, a manager applied a successful production time technique from work to a hiking trip with a group of scouts. In this sense, the manager used insight gained from work and transferred that insight to a situation in his nonwork time and space. Findings in this study included the advent of the mobile device and succeeding cognitive concerns and industry influences. As such, this dissertation proposes additional permeations that influence not only the borders, but also relationships within the domestic sphere. With immediacy of information being one reason individuals carried phones with them (Rendle-Short, 2015), participants made engagement decisions on their level of responsiveness and their use of interstitial time for professional mobile device usage. Thus, the mobile device and the border crosser's decisions to engage weakened that border and allowed for permeations to reach into all areas of the domestic

sphere. These subsequent industry permeations into the domestic sphere are important as communication researchers continue to study how mobile devices influence individuals and their relationships not only from a familial and interpersonal standpoint, but also from an organizational standpoint. As illustrated in Figure 3, the permeations on the model continue to include work brought home, but collapsed it into both the new work expectations and the border crossers' work ethic. Client phones were transformed into work communications.

### **Work Expectations**

Based upon the findings of how temporal borders in this research looked different than the original research by Clark, one of the proposed additions to the permeations into the domestic sphere is work expectations. These expectations encompassed salary pay status, the unwritten expectations industries impose on their employees, and the areas of time and parameters that were out of the participants' control. Participants explained they were paid a salary and this caused the level of engagement expectation to increase. Thus, the industry permeated into the domestic sphere in terms of mobile device communication. In consideration of the prevalent domestication of the mobile device for salaried employees, the proposed Work/Family Border Model is directed toward individuals with that career dynamic. Participants spoke of using the mobile device beyond its inherent communication abilities to accomplish work, thus "work brought home" accurately collapsed into "work expectations." Laura shared simply the number of meetings she attended limited her ability to "get it [work] done in 8 hours." Therefore, communication via her mobile device occurred in her nonwork time to complete work and keep up with the overall demands on her time. While salary scale and the



expectations that came with that dynamic were out of the participants' control, Jessica was amenable to the increased engagement and supported the salary expectation. For her, the increased engagement improved her chances for increased bonuses.

In addition to salary considerations, the unwritten expectations to be professionally engaged via the mobile device permeated into the domestic sphere. Many participants felt this unwritten pressure, and one even coined it a "perceived directive." This was not written anywhere, yet this expectation permeated into their domestic sphere and played a large role in their engagement decisions. Not only did participants discuss expectations of them, but expectations they have of their employees. To combat work overload managers could opt to communicate usage expectations to their employees. By doing this, employees felt less pressured and regulated and monitored use of mobile email (Turel et al., 2011). All the participants in this study were managers and some spoke of extending expectations to their direct employees, though they also recognized that it didn't often stop the person from replying from their domestic sphere as those communicative dynamics were out of their control. Bosses tended to be a response priority; thus a few participants shared ways they managed that level of communication via postdating emails or using apps to control the timing of communication. Accordingly, participants expressed appreciation when their superiors offered communicative expectations. Through receiving or offering communication of expectations, participants felt some control of that permeation.

As communication scholars seeking to understand organizational communication and how work expectations alter the domestic sphere, this research sheds light on how both the dynamic of the organization and the managers' imposed expectations can

potentially stress familial and interpersonal relationships. Understanding this dynamic provides a gateway to further research how organizations use the mobile device to conduct work outside of the physical and temporal work space.

### **Work Communication**

While the original Work/Family Border Model posited client phones are considered a permeation, this dissertation proposes to replace that with a more all-encompassing phrase of “work communication.” Due to the influx of professional communication via mobile devices, there are many areas of work communication that far exceed client calls and are out of control to the participants in this study. Client calls have expanded due to the mobile device into emails, texts, social media posts, and calls from not only clients, but superiors, peers, and direct reports. Thus, the researcher expanded the options to the term work communication to include those additional options.

The mere physical presence of the mobile device allowed for constant connectivity. Companies either paid for mobile devices, offered stipends, or participants used their personal devices. Whether the mobile devices were company-paid or otherwise, work communication readily permeated into the domestic sphere. Because the domestic sphere was not restricted to the four walls of the border crosser’s home, the mobile device enabled the industry to permeate into any space the border crosser occupied at any given time. With the border crosser (participant) in full control of their domestic time and space, this finding further supports the proposed model that removes the borderland area and places the border around the border crosser only (See Figure 3). While some participants felt compelled to respond when the company paid for their devices, others refused a company paid device to avoid that feeling. Regardless of the

phone status, company-paid, stipend, or personal, participants often engaged through monitoring or actively engaging with the device. When considering the nuances of mobile human computer interaction scholarly work, this sheds light on how individuals determined their interaction based on the ownership of the device itself and how they allowed the work accomplished through the device to permeate into their domestic sphere.

Beyond the physical presence of the device are the communications that invaded the family domain or in the case of this study, the domestic sphere. Burchell's (2015) study looked at the time invested in interpersonal communication and constant connectivity via mobile devices and its impact on everyday life. Burchell's findings conjectured that participants' connection to the mobile device included both the physical presence of the device as well as the awareness of possible interactions that the communicative apps and features extended to them. Burchell's findings are a precursor to this study's discussion on the control of time and workflow specific to planning for the next day as participants in this dissertation desired the awareness of possible interactions. Accordingly, results in this dissertation mirrored Burchell's (2015) in that some participants chose not to communicatively engage, but to monitor communication. In this study, that level of engagement took place 24/7 within all areas of the domestic sphere, thus having the potential to influence relationships. The findings of this study corroborated engagement findings in Burchell (2015), yet also uncovered the many areas participants were in and out of control in terms of professional communication. As such, this study offered data to further understand how organizational concepts drive decision making and impact familial and interpersonal communication and relationships.

Though the work communication via the mobile device readily entered the domestic time and space in ways participants could control and could not control, the managers interviewed in this study were heavily in support of maintaining the level of engagement the mobile device affords. This presents a shift in thinking. Wajcman et al. (2008), gauged the permeability of work:home boundaries. Of the managers, professional workers, and tradespersons in Wajcman et al.'s (2008) study, almost 50% claimed it would be difficult to fulfill the responsibilities of their job without a cell phone. In this study, 81% preferred to have their mobile device on them to complete their professional work in their nonwork time. Of the remaining respondents, it was mixed between enjoying the decision to shut off the device or no immediate preference.

### **Border Crosser's Work Ethic**

The third permeation proposed in the model is the border crosser's work ethic. This section comprised the border crossers' desired reputation, staying abreast of industry competition, and overall accountability concerns. Because of those characteristics, participants discussed their control over their workflow and the subsequent decisions to do work within the domestic sphere, thus a reason that work brought home has further collapsed into this arena.

Border crossers were influenced by how others viewed them and their work ethic. Participants aspired to express a credible and/or a caring demeanor. Like Clark and Farmer's 1998 findings that being responsible and capable were important qualities at work (as cited by Clark, 2000), these participants wanted to convey the attributes of credibility and caring through their mobile device communications. While reputation was not specifically discussed in Clark's model, this finding speaks directly to how a desired

reputation of responsiveness presents a permeation under the umbrella of work ethic. As David articulated, “I’d like to seem responsive and I care, but I also want to be seen like I care.” This statement elucidated David’s desire to build and uphold a good reputation. He, like others, intentionally engaged in professional communication within his family domain to achieve this. Beyond professional reputation came the concern for remaining competitive with both clients and colleagues.

The fear of missed business opportunities influenced many participants to engage to remain competitive and for promotion considerations. Like others, Jessica and Ben believed waiting until tomorrow could mean lost opportunities. Participants also discussed varying times when industry demands impacted the level of permeation with respect to remaining competitive with client relations. Previous studies exposed the relationship between the connection via the mobile device and its influence over engagement decisions (Dery et al., 2014; Ragsdale & Hoover, 2016). Disconnecting from work within the family domain was deemed difficult and often undesirable in consideration of advancing at work (Dery et al., 2014). Participants in this study echoed concern in terms of missing out on job promotions and possible bonuses, which permeated the domestic sphere by creating the need to remain engaged.

Finally, many participants felt it was their innate responsibility to be connected and engaged with work-related communication via the mobile device. Karlson et al. (2009) suggested the impetus to this engagement with the mobile device for work in nonwork times was to control their work demands. Likewise, in this study, participants desired to remain in control by managing and monitoring communication for both short and long-term situations. Many participants recognized how professional responsibilities

permeated their domestic sphere and further committed to their stance on remaining engaged regardless of the time and space within the domestic sphere due to their innate responsibility toward the company. Consequently, participants both intentionally and interstitially engaged with the mobile device in reaction to its permeation within the domestic sphere.

In response to the permeations articulated by the participants and the data, the researcher has thus proposed revised permeations on the model (See Figure 3) to include work expectations, work communication, and border crossers' work ethics as underlying concerns and actions that dissolve borders and bring the mobile device into the entire area of the domestic sphere. Clark (2000) theorized that permitted permeations weaken borders and can cause frustration to the border crosser. In conjunction with that notion of frustration, participants in this study expressed their sentiments as well as the sentiments of others with respect to professional mobile device usage.

### **Proactive vs. Reactive Behavior**

Clark (2000) uncovered proactive or enactive behavior in her research. She shared “they [individuals] moved back and forth between work and family lives, shaping as they went by negotiating and communicating” (p. 751). While she described individuals as enactive or proactive, she clearly stated “we were not reactive” (p. 751). In this dissertation's findings, participants talked about both proactive and reactive behavioral experiences. In fact, there were more reactive experiences than proactive. At times, those reactions were quite emotional by the border crosser and/or other domain members. Individuals primarily exhibited proactive behavior to avoid stress and anxiety. While some proactively disengaged, many proactively engaged throughout their nonwork time to avoid stress the next day; this included engagement during vacations to minimize

surprises when they returned. Other proactive behavior was to avoid confrontations within the domestic sphere or simply being mindful of others' professional communication preferences. Only a few participants mentioned mindfulness toward family, hinting that the influences of work to home appeared stronger than home to work. The researcher explored that possibility more in the unexpected theme of nonwork in work. Even those that took certain times to turn it off or limit alerts, they still confessed to proactively checking and self-determining who will get a response or who will actually get their mobile device number.

While proactive behavior existed within the findings, the stronger component, which was a shift from Work/Family Border Theory was reactive behavior. Individuals reacted in many ways to include irritation, guilt, anxiety, and anger. These sentiments had the capability to alter moods and dampen spirits on vacations, outings, and diminish the overall ability to relax in the evenings. The mobile device usage became a double-edged sword of knowing about the next day and possibly feeling stressed in the domestic sphere.

These sentiments were directed toward the company, other domain members, and self. One participant, Kara, reacted by being irritated to a specific work communicative scenario that took place in her nonwork time. Beyond irritation, other participants spoke of guilt due to choosing engagement. One reason they engaged or got "sucked in" was due to their inbox. One of Burchell's (2015) findings was the participant's inability to avoid the stress of the red number on the app communicating that an email or text arrived. Consistent with that literature, participants in this study had difficulties leaving the mobile device before their inbox was cleared or organized. This inability to leave the

device caused a reaction of guilt due to the engagement level that impedes the domestic sphere. While participants fantasized of pre-mobile device times when they envisioned more rest and relaxation without the device in their lives, still 81% clearly preferred to keep the domain or sphere operating with the device and with the freedom to engage at any time they want. While the researcher is proposing the border between the two domains dissolves leaving a fluid area between the two domains, the researcher also recognizes the border crossers' ability to control their engagement at any time or space within the domestic sphere. Thus, the border in the proposed model exists, however as shown in Figure 3, the researcher shifts the border to around the border crosser instead of in between the two domains. Because the mobile device allowed for 24/7 connectivity and the border crosser was the chief determinant of the engagement, the border crosser moves around with the ability to control their own border in any time or space of the domestic sphere. This control included the ability to advance workflow within their domestic time and space.

### **Announcements not Negotiations**

One of the foundations of the Work/Family Border Theory was that individuals were regularly negotiating and communicating with each other, thus shaping the work and family domain (Clark, 2000). Negotiations coupled with communication inferred that two or more individuals were shaping their spheres by proactively discussing family and/or work experiences. This dissertation refutes that negotiations are key components of shaping the family domain (domestic sphere), rather announcements about self-developed parameters occurred. Announcement refers to a verbalized expression from border crossers to border keepers/other domain members on how the border crosser decided to shape the domain.



As the findings exhibited, announcements occurred far more frequently than negotiations. David & Roberts (2017) suggested that to avoid the feeling of being phubbed, the development of a social contract about appropriate mobile device usage should be developed. While some findings showed organic development of usage, the fact remained that announcements surpassed negotiations. In this study, only two of the participants formally negotiated the mobile device usage within the domains and that negotiation decision involved children as the primary catalyst. Participants revealed they shape their own destiny based on what works for them. While admittedly there were influences as the original model suggested from other domain members, the shift resided in the lack of negotiation with these members. Few parameters were out of the participants' control; suggested permeations contributed to the parameter developments and subsequent announcements to others. These announcements included verbalized short- or long-term needs to engage with the mobile device, as well as solely postponing activities with children and/or family until the completion of mobile device engagement. Jake explained that when he said he needed a few minutes to manage something, he was not negotiating.

Participants spoke of workflow industry demands and divulged that they personally were in complete control of their workflow through managing and monitoring various communicative situations; their sole decisions on engagement were offered as announcements. For example, Alexa shushed her husband to flag her email for a moment. Findings in this dissertation advanced that announcements not negotiations were central to the communication process in this context. This points to further understanding of

familial and interpersonal communication contexts and adds to the current body of literature within those disciplines.

Central to the Work/Family Border Theory was the fact the two spheres influence each other, and management and negotiation were the keys to achieving balance (Clark, 2000). While the findings of this dissertation showed a lack of negotiation, participants exhibited concern for relationships and how their decisions influenced those relationships. For example, David talked about his announcements and the necessity to maintain trust in relationships by adhering to his word. Relational impact is discussed in the next section which encompasses tension and the influence of children vs. spouses/significant others over the border crosser (participant).

### **Relational Impact**

Studies showed engagement decisions with the mobile device impacted the domestic sphere and relational quality (Dunn, 2014; Hall et al., 2014; Hughes & Hans, 2001; Khan & Markopoulos, 2009; Rendle-Short, 2015; Storch & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, 2017; Taylor, 2013; Villegas, 2013). The findings of this dissertation supported that perception specific to professional usage within the domestic sphere. Participants spoke of conflict with spouses/significant others, parents, and children surrounding their engagement decisions as a border crosser. Conflict ranged from proactive calm discussions to angry exchanges. This conflict perpetuated tension surfaced as the participants' (border crossers') inner turmoil and as tension between the border crosser and other members of the domestic sphere. Primarily, these conflicts resided with the adults (border crossers and border keepers) rather than children (other domain members). This first section will address tension and the second section will offer discussion about children vs. spouses/significant others.

## **Tension**

Participants shared experiences of tensions arising due to their professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere. At times, the tension was inner turmoil on personal decisions or work initiatives that were out of their control. Largely, the tension was between the participant and members of their domestic sphere. These findings solidified that relationships are truly impacted in some way which reflects back on *RQ2: How are familial relationships within the domestic sphere influenced by professional mobile device usage?*

Participants (border crossers) chronicled feelings and perspectives that had the potential to impact relationships, thus tension surfaced because of those sentiments. Considering the spouses/significant others verbalized their sentiments freely, tension certainly occurred within that relational dynamic. There were a few situations in which tension between the participant and their children arose as well. In regards to spouses and significant others, there were issues of phubbing, double standards, and simply not listening that caused tension.

Tension became prominent during dinner as all participants spoke about the importance of protecting the dinner hour, some successfully and others not successfully. Alongside vacation, the dinner hour was one of the largest areas of tension producing situations within the domestic sphere.

Lack of active listening was recounted by participants as an area of tension that caused conflict. Ann's boyfriend got upset with her because he came home with good news about a job endeavor and she was busy engaging professionally on her mobile device. Cindy and her husband faced those same challenges that have sometimes caused

tension to erupt in their marriage. Other couples recounted times they yelled at each other or made snarky comments to each other. Tension also surfaced between individuals that were not a spouse/significant other.

Tension also surfaced between friends and colleagues because of professional mobile device usage in nonwork time. Alyssa shared a story in which a friend did not understand or agree with her engagement with the mobile device while they were out at a restaurant. When her friend physically took the phone from Alyssa, substantial tension erupted between them. Adam had an employee that frequently contacted Adam via his mobile device in Adam's nonwork time. This caused tension for Adam and while he hadn't dealt with the individual specifically, he expressed his tension by "bitching" about it to others.

In consideration of the tension that surfaced, it is significant that participants still chose to engage and that they did not negotiate to find a common ground that worked for the participants and the members of the domestic sphere. In this way, tension could possibly be reduced or avoided. In terms of communication research, this finding builds our understanding of borders and control from both an academic and practical perspective.

Lastly, participants spoke of potential tension between children from the perspective of avoidance more so than avoiding any of the other aforementioned examples. Participants wanted to establish a stronger balance when it came to their children. The participants (border crossers) tended to control their time and actions differently when it came to the children as influencers versus spouses and significant others. While findings showed that participants perceived their significant others as

understanding, they had increased tension when making decisions about engaging when children were present. They had a higher desire to achieve stronger balance to set a good example, to account for limited time with children, and to prevent the child from feeling as if they are competing with the parents' phone. This next section uncovers findings on how the children have a stronger influence over engagement than the significant others.

### **Children vs. Spouses/Significant Others**

According to Work/Family Border Theory, border keepers such as spouses and work supervisors had more power over border crossers than other domain members such as co-workers or children (Clark, 2000). Clark (2000) conjectured while the co-workers and children were influential to the border crosser, they did not have the same power over them as do spouses and supervisors/bosses. Participants in this research did express the power of their bosses and their priorities to respond to them. However, this dissertation argues children have more power than spouses/significant others. This was recognized in the theme Influences. Often the border crosser claimed the adult or spouses/significant others would understand because they were experiencing similar challenges or simply because they were adults. The border crossers' concerns about understanding professional mobile device engagement were heightened for their children. Thus, they carefully considered their mobile device engagement in certain experiences with their children.

Participants offered examples of how children influenced their engagement decisions including extracurricular activities. Mary expressed regret for walking out of her daughter's high school volleyball games to take work calls, which impacted their relationship. Beyond specific events, some participants recognized the value in talking

with kids before bed and ensuring their child did not have to compete with their phone for the border crosser's attention. Participants expressed their devotion to engaging with their children to have a supportive and trusting relationship. Comments verbalized by children were more disturbing to the participant than comments made by the spouse or significant other.

Finally, participants desired to be a positive role model. Participants shared their desires to be realistic with their children as they grow and face the same balance challenges, yet some also recognized times when they were sending mixed messages. For example, Sheila and her husband wanted to teach their children balance, but the message sent through their actions was that it is acceptable to engage with your mobile device professionally in any time or space even when it interrupted relationships within the domestic sphere. Beyond examples of usage, border crossers wanted to set aside the appropriate time with their children and express focused attention.

In terms of adults in the participants' lives, such as significant others/spouses, they expressed lower level to no concern for how their engagement levels impacted their spouses. David & Roberts (2017) suggested if both or all individuals were engaged with their mobile devices, the disturbance within the home was less obvious. The findings of this study corroborated that notion as participants spoke of using interstitial time to engage. Interestingly, even though the border crossers argued the adults understood, the spouses/significant others exhibited most of the verbal and nonverbal sentiments, some in a confrontational manner. Nigel and his wife had discussions about his mobile device re-engagement after the kids went to bed and how that negatively impacted their relationship. Laura admitted her marital relationship was closer pre-mobile devices. With

that said, it did not change the overall findings that the children were more influential within the domestic sphere.

Some adults don't understand and in this study those adults were typically the border crossers' parents, some which were non mobile device users. Campbell & Russo (2003) suggested non-users had the power to influence or shape technology usage. Parents sometimes verbalized comments that questioned their engagement level. Specifically, Landi's mom found concern and gently asked her about her overall usage to gauge how she balanced her engagement. While other parents also questioned the border crossers' intentions, it didn't substantially alter the participant's usage. Often these situations presented themselves on vacations or during extended family events or visits. Some confessed to intentionally scheduling time when parents weren't in the same physical space as them, others did not make changes.

Overall, the children had the strongest influence in this research, which is a shift from what the Work/Family Border Theory suggests. No changes to the overall model were proposed by this finding because border keepers and other domain members were represented as the same group within the domestic sphere. This is an interesting shift to the Work/Family Border Theory and certainly adds to communication scholars understanding of power dynamics within family relationships.

### **Nonwork Communication in Work Domain**

This research sought to explore individual's professional mobile device usage within the domestic sphere and possible relational influences. Though the focus was primarily on the domestic sphere, conversations were sparked on the reverse dynamic of nonwork occurring on work time, in the professional sphere. Like work in nonwork time,

some of this engagement was in the border crossers' control and some was not. This finding will be unpacked in this section.

As the Work/Family Border Theory suggested, domain exclusivity was lost in the border area (Clark, 2000). According to the findings in this dissertation, the proposal is that the border area be dissolved physically between the two domains, yet remain around the border crosser, as illuminated in Figure 3. This change illustrates the mobile device substantially transformed the reach the professional sphere had into the domestic sphere. With 24/7 capabilities and the apparent domestication of the mobile device, it has the potential to reach into every temporal, physical, and psychological space within the domestic sphere. The ultimate power of choice remained with the border crosser on when, where, and how that happened.

In exploring this phenomenon, an unexpected theme developed. This theme titled "nonwork in work" pertained to the usage of the mobile device for nonwork purposes within the professional sphere. Wajcman et al. (2008) found the primary spillover occurred at work from home and the work-related spillover into the domestic area was minimal. They rationalized the mobile device did not primarily function as an extension of work. Conversely, the primary use of the device was for contacting individuals within the domestic sphere. Work related communication mostly fell within the work hours of 8-5 with little overflow, thus the work to family spillover was not statistically significant (Wajcman et al., 2008). While that spillover was a component of Wajcman et al.'s 2008 findings, according to Allen et al. (2014), "the family domain is more permeable than is the work domain" (p. 103). This means there has been a shift in domain perspectives between the 2008 and 2014 study. This dissertation found that dynamic shifted and the



mobile device played a large role in maintaining professional communication outside of the physical and temporal work space. Accordingly, family to work spillover was largely logistical and brief within this study compared to the 2008 study where the findings of family to work spillover were statistically significant (Wajcman et al., 2008).

In looking at the nonwork at work communications, the participants of this study overall allowed more permeations into the domestic sphere than they did into the professional sphere. Of the 32 interviewees, 24 (75%) indicated logistical domestic usage of the mobile device while in the professional sphere. Of the moderate usage range, 6 (19%) identified characteristics that applied them to the moderate category meaning some pictures were shared throughout the day and some light engagement with social media. Heavy is defined as fluid usage of multiple nonwork apps and communication throughout the workday. Regarding heavy usage, 2 (6%) of the participants fell within that category.

In further assessing those statistics, specifically the 75% of participants who explained their usage was primarily logistical, participants elaborated further on their stance. As managers, they claimed there was often not actual time in their day due to meetings and interactions with other individuals within their industries. Participants offered accounts of brief exchanges to plan for children, dinner items, and overall maintenance of the household. Other uses included brief check-ins such as to let someone know they are in their thoughts. Some participants admitted they prefer to not be bothered at all when they are at work. These situations at times caused relational discontent especially when the usage was unbalanced. For example, one person preferred not to be bothered at work, but admittedly engaged at home for work purposes at least a few times in the evening. While they described a less frequent mobile device engagement

in the domestic sphere than other participants, their spouse did not feel respected in this apparent double standard.

With those outcomes in mind, the researcher is proposing a new model to reflect that change. Figure 3 exemplifies the fluidity between the domains with arrows where the borderland used to reside. However, it is important to note that only one arrow points left from home to work, while the other three exemplify the persistent work to home spillover that occurred in all areas of the domestic sphere. While this study focused specifically on the family domain (domestic sphere), this dynamic unexpectedly surfaced as a theme thus the findings became significant in which to both understand the balance and to consider for future research to further grow this line of communication research.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study focused on building research on how the mobile device was used professionally within the domestic sphere and its possible implications on relationships. While the study's rich data and significant findings add value to how professional mobile device communication is domesticated and managed, the study overall is not without its limitations. Limitations that are highlighted in this section create a springboard to future research suggestions.

#### **Limitations**

From a methodological standpoint, participants were recruited from the researcher's personal and professional network with the use of snowball sampling for garnering referrals. With that said, 50% of the 32 participants were gained through referrals from the author's original network. Participants' ages ranged from

28-62 with the average age reflected as 45. There was only one participant under the age of 35, thus the diversity of ages presented a limitation.

Gender was well distributed with 40% identifying male and 60% identifying female. While this is not an obvious limitation, it does provide realization that future research needs to consider the balance of gender representation and collecting data about single or dual-income households that further test the addition of a female gender representation added to the updated model.

Considering the participant pool was focused on full-time managerial-level individuals from various industries, two limitations could be extracted from that characteristic. First, a limitation of garnering data based on the vantage point of salary-based employees presents the possibility that data was skewed towards individuals with a high-level of identification with the industry and its overall success. Second, in consideration of industry variety, the consistency of data could be challenged as industries have unique communication patterns that could be uncovered through future research. As well, the industries included were diverse, but not exhaustive.

Finally, the participants recruited worked in a physical office generally with set hours. This dynamic may have altered the outcome of the nonwork in work, which was an unintended theme, but presents a valid opportunity to further explore this with different populations and demographics.

### **Future Research**

Mobile device communication provides a wealth of areas for future research within diverse communication disciplines. These recommendations directly reflect the rationale for this dissertation and its exploration into how mobile device usage for

professional communication shapes relationships within the domestic sphere. This is the only study to date that combined Domestication Theory and Work/Family Border Theory as a lens for discovery, so those opportunities will be discussed first.

First, Domestication Theory is an area of growth for understanding not only the incorporation of devices, but other stages of the domestication approach as well to further explore how mobile devices are truly domesticated in various spheres. A future study could look at how it is domesticated in the professional sphere within organizational settings or even within the educational sphere with students. Expanding into different spheres could offer familial, interpersonal, and organizational communication scholars potential to gain new perspectives in which to grow their research.

Another growth area recommended for future research is expanding research approaches to the Work/Family Border Theory with the infusion of the mobile device. By expanding the participants and industries, new pathways for communication research are seemingly endless and necessary to test the proposed model from a variety of methodological approaches. First, continuing with qualitative research with different hierarchies within organizations will glean additional foundational knowledge with which to compare to further update the model if needed. These hierarchies could include, but are not limited to, owners, CEOs, non-management salaried employees, full-time hourly employees, and part-time hourly employees. Secondly, expanding the age ranges within those hierarchies while attempting to achieve a more diverse representation of ages is recommended. Lastly, targeting a specific industry to compare professional usage within the domestic sphere and how that might alter based on organizational demands. To further understand the nuances of the Work/Family Border Theory, it is suggested to

change the focus from the border crosser to the border keepers and other domain members to further understand their role, influences, and sentiments.

While the focus of this dissertation was the implications on the domestic sphere, the unexpected theme of the nonwork in the work domain surfaced. With that said, this study could be repeated focusing on the other sphere to delve further into that dynamic with different populations, demographics, and hierarchies within the organization. This would be interesting to expand into corporate policies for nonwork usage within the various hierarchies of an organization.

In addition to repeating this dissertation study, another study that warrants review and possible repeating is Wajcman et al.'s (2008) study using their survey and then comparing and contrasting the possible differences between 2008 and 2018. Additionally, a study recommended for consideration is Clark's mixed methodology follow up to her 2000 study, but now looking at how the mobile device potentially changes the outcomes of the main study.

Overall, the researcher believes the proposed model needs to be tested through a variety of additional studies to validate its applicability to illustrate Work/Family Border Theory with additional permeations and the mobile device as a staple within the domains. In testing the model, the researcher also recommends exploring the terminology of border by also considering the term boundary.

## **Conclusion**

Researching the use of mobile devices for professional reasons within the domestic sphere illuminated areas of control, sentiments, and influences that transcended organizational, familial, and interpersonal communication disciplines. This research

broadens our understanding of the incorporation stage of Domestication Theory as it applies to professional communication via the mobile device and how it is domesticated within our nonwork time. The decisions to technologically engage or not engage made by the border crosser have the potential to directly influence relationships within both the domestic and the professional spheres as scholars further understand the Work/Family Border Theory.

This research also extends to a newer area of communication, that of mobile human computer interaction. In this sense, the research was both scholarly and practical. Practical knowledge and resources gained from this data have the potential to offer individuals and organizations tools to manage the fluidity between the two spheres. With future research, additional practical knowledge can be gained from border keepers and other domain members to further gain knowledge and skills to manage the domestic sphere from a different perspective.

## References

- About LinkedIn*. (2018). Retrieved from: <https://about.linkedin.com/?#>
- Allen, T. D., Cho, E., & Meier, L. L. (2014). Work-family boundary dynamics. *The Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), 99-121. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091330
- Aranda, J. H., & Baig, S. (2018) Toward “JOMO”: The joy of missing out and the freedom of disconnecting. *Proceedings of the 20th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction with Mobile Devices and Services*, 19:1-19:8. doi:10.1145/3229434.3229468
- Barber, L. K., & Santuzzi, A. M. (2015). Please respond ASAP: Workplace telepressure and employee recovery. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 20(2), 172-189. doi:10.1037/a0038278
- Berker, T., Hartmann, M., Punie, Y., & Ward, K. J. (2006). Introduction. In T. Berker, M. Hartmann, Y. Punie, & K. J. Ward (Eds.), *Domestication of media and technology* (pp. 1-17). Maidenhead, England: Open University.
- Bernard, H. R. (2002). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative methods* (3rd ed.). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.
- Burchell, K. (2015). Tasking the everyday: Where mobile and online communication take time. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 3(1), 36-52. doi:10.1177/2050157914546711

- Campbell, S. W., & Russo, T. C. (2003). The social construction of mobile telephony: An application of the social influence model to perceptions and uses of mobile phones within personal communication networks. *Communication Monographs*, 70(4), 317-334. doi:10.1080/0363775032000179124
- Carvalho, J., Francisco, R., & Relvas, A. (2015). Family functioning and information and communication technologies: How do they relate? A literature review. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 45, 99-108. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2014.11.037
- Charmaz, K. (1996). The search for meanings: Grounded theory. In J. A. Smith, R. Harre, & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking methods in psychology* (pp. 27-49). London, England: Sage.
- Chesley, N. (2005). Blurring boundaries? Linking technology use, spillover, individual distress, and family satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(5), 1237-1248. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2005.00213.x
- Chesley, N. (2006). Families in high-tech age: Technology usage patterns, work and family correlates, and gender. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(5), 587-608. doi:10.1177/0192513x05285187
- Chesley, N., Moen, P., & Shore, R. P. (2003). The new technology climate. In P. Moen (Ed.), *It's about time: Couples and careers* (pp. 220-241). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.
- Chitakunye, P., & Takhar, A. (2014). Consuming family quality time: The role of technological devices at mealtimes. *British Food Journal*, 116(7), 1162-1179. doi:10.1108/bfj-12-2012-0316



- Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747-770. doi:10.1177/0018726700536001
- CNN Wire. (2018, March 28). *Tired of having to check work email after hours? New Yorkers may not have to, if this bill passes*. Retrieved from: <http://fox40.com/2018/03/28/tired-of-having-to-check-work-email-after-hours-new-yorkers-may-not-have-to-if-this-bill-passes/>
- Cohen, R. L. (2010). Rethinking 'mobile work': Boundaries of space, time and social relation in the working lives of mobile hairstylists. *Work, Employment and Society*, 24(1), 65-84. doi:10.1177/0950017009353658
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage
- David, M. E., & Roberts, J. A. (2017). Phubbed and alone: Phone snubbing, social exclusion, and attachment to social media. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, 2(2), 154-163. doi:10.1086/690940
- de Reuver, M., Nikou, S., & Bouwman, H. (2016). Domestication of smartphones and mobile applications: A quantitative mixed-method study. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 4(3), 347-370. doi:10.1177/2050157916649989

- Derks, D., van Duin, D., Tims, M., & Bakker, A. B. (2014). Smartphone use and work-home interference: The moderating role of social norms and employee work engagement. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 88(1), 155-177. doi:10.1111/joop.12083
- Dery, K., Kolb, D., & MacCormick, J. (2014). Working with connective flow: How smartphone use is evolving in practice. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 23(5), 558-570. doi:10.1057/ejis.2014.13
- Dunn, C. (2014, May 6). *Is technology helping families communicate or holding them back?* Retrieved from:  
<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/may/06/technology-helping-families-communicate-or-holding-back>
- Eadicicco, L. (2015). *Americans check their phones 8 billion times a day*. Retrieved from: <http://time.com/4147614/smartphone-usage-us-2015/>
- Golden, A. G. (2013). The structuration of information and communication technologies and work-life interrelationships: Shared organizational and family rules and resources and implications for work in a high-technology organization. *Communication Monographs*, 80(1), 101-123.  
doi:10.1080/03637751.2012.739702
- Graham, R. (2012). The digital practices of mobile phones. *Sociology Compass*, 6(12), 962-973. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9020.2012.00500.x
- Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2015). *A first look at communication theory*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

- Guest, D. E. (2002). Perspectives on the study of work-life balance. *Social Science Information, 41*(2), 255-279. doi:10.1177/0539018402041002005
- Haddon, L. (2007). Roger Silverstone's legacies: Domestication. *New Media & Society, 9*(1), 25-32. doi:10.1177/1461444807075201
- Hall, J. A., Baym, N. K., & Miltner, K. M. (2014). Put down that phone and talk to me: Understanding the roles of mobile phone norm adherence and similarity in relationships. *Mobile Media & Communication, 2*(2), 134-153. doi:10.1177/2050157913517684
- Hertlein, K. M. (2012). Digital dwelling: Technology in couple and family relationships. *Family Relations, 61*(3), 374-387. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2012.00702.x
- Hoffman, B. (2017). Phonoholism: A new behavioral addiction. *Trakia Journal of Science, 15*(4), 315-319. doi:10.15547/tjs.2017.04.007
- Hughes, R., & Hans, J. D. (2001). Computers, the internet, and families: A review of the role new technology plays in family life. *Journal of Family Issues, 22*(6), 776-790. doi:10.1177/019251301022006006
- Hynes, D., & Richardson, H. (2009). What use is domestication theory to information systems research? In Y. Dwivedi, B. Lal, M. Williams, S. Schneberger, & M. Wade (Eds.), *Handbook of research on contemporary theoretical models in information systems* (pp. 482-494). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-60566-659-4.ch027
- Jacobs, J. A., & Gerson, K. (2001). Overworked individuals or overworked families? *Work and Occupations, 28*(1), 40-63. doi:10.1177/0730888401028001004

- Jones, C. (2018, April 4). Proposed law would curb off-the-clock work email. *USA Today*, 28.
- Karlson A. K., Meyers B. R., Jacobs A., Johns P., Kane S. K. (2009) Working Overtime: Patterns of Smartphone and PC Usage in the Day of an Information Worker. In: Tokuda H., Beigl M., Friday A., Brush A. J. B., Tobe Y. (Eds), *Pervasive Computing*. Pervasive 2009. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 5538. Berlin, Germany: Springer. doi:10.1007/978-3-642-01516-8\_27
- Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Keyton, J. (2015). *Communication research: Asking questions, finding answers*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Khan, V. J., & Markopoulos, P. (2009). Busy families' awareness needs. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 67(2), 139-153.  
doi:10.1016/j.ijhcs.2008.09.006
- Kim, Y., Kim, B., Kim, Y., & Wang, Y. (2017). Mobile communication research in communication journals from 1999 to 2014. *New Media & Society*, 19(10), 1668-1691. doi:10.1177/1461444817718162
- Kraut, R., Patterson, M., Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukophadhyay, T., & Scherlis, W. (1998). Internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? *American Psychologist*, 53(9), 1017-1031.  
doi:10.1037//0003-066x.53.9.1017

- Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C., & Sheep, M. L. (2009). Balancing borders and bridges: Negotiating the work-home interface via boundary work tactics. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 52(4), 704-730. doi:10.5465/amj.2009.43669916
- Ladner, S. (2008). Laptops in the living room: Mobile technologies and the divide between work and private time among interactive agency workers. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 33(3). doi:10.22230/cjc.2008v33n3a1981
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Linke, C. (2012). Mobility, media, and relational communicative repertoires: An analysis of everyday family interactions. *Interactions: Studies in Communication & Culture*, 3(1), 25-38. doi:10.1386/iscc.3.1.25\_1
- LinkedIn Editors (2018). Could off-hour work email be banned? Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/content/?anchorTopic=813500>
- Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (Eds.). (2009). *Encyclopedia of communication theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lull, J. (1980). Family communication patterns and the social uses of television. *Communication Research*, 7(3), 319-334. doi:10.1177/009365028000700303
- MacCormick, J. S., Dery, K., & Kolb, D. G. (2012). Engaged or just connected? Smartphones and employee engagement. *Organizational Dynamics*, 41(3), 194-201. doi:10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.03.007
- Marano, H. E. (2016, August). Love interruptus. *Psychology Today*, pp. 50-58.

- Miller-Ott, A., & Kelly, L. (2015). The presence of cell phones in romantic partner face-to-face interactions: An expectancy violation theory approach. *Southern Communication Journal*, 80(4), 253-270. doi:10.1080/1041794x.2015.1055371
- Mumby, D. (2013). *Organizational Communication: A Critical Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Olmstead, K. (2017, May 25). *A third of americans live in a household with three or more smartphones*. Retrieved from: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/25/a-third-of-americans-live-in-a-household-with-three-or-more-smartphones/>
- Owen, W. F. (1984). Interpretive themes in relational communication. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70(3), 274-287. doi:10.1080/00335638409383697
- Padilla-Walker, L. M., Coyne, S. M., & Fraser, A. M. (2012). Getting a high-speed family connection: Associations between family media use and family connection. *Family Relations*, 61(3), 426-440. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2012.00710.x
- Palen, L., & Hughes, A. (2007). When home base is not a place: Parents' use of mobile telephones. *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*, 11(5), 339-348. doi:10.1007/s00779-006-0078-3
- Park, Y., & Jex, S. M. (2011). Work-home boundary management using communication and information technology. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 18(2), 133-152. doi:10.1037/a0022759
- Pew Research Center. (2017). *Mobile phone ownership over time* [Mobile Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from: <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>

- Pew Research Center. (2018). *Mobile phone ownership over time* [Mobile Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from: <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>
- Pierson, J. (2006). Domestication at work in small businesses. In T. Berker, M. Hartmann, Y. Punie, & K. J. Ward (Eds.), *Domestication of media and technology* (pp. 205-226). Maidenhead, England: Open University.
- Ragsdale, J. M., & Hoover, C. S. (2016). Cell phones during nonwork time: A source of job demands and resources. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 57, 54-60. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.12.017
- Rendle-Short, J. (2015). Dispreferred responses when texting: Delaying that 'no' response. *Discourse & Communication*, 9(6), 643-661. doi:10.1177/1750481315600309
- Roberts, J. A., & David, M. E. (2016). My life has become a major distraction from my cell phone: Partner phubbing and relationship satisfaction among romantic partners. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 54, 134-141. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.07.058
- Roberts, J., Yaya, L., & Manolis, C. (2014). The invisible addiction: Cell-phone activities and addiction among male and female college students. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 3(4), 254-265. doi:10.1556/jba.3.2014.015
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations*. New York, NY: Free.
- Rudi, J. H., Walkner, A., & Dworkin, J. (2015). Adolescent-parent communication in a digital world: Differences by family communication patterns. *Youth & Society*, 47(6), 811-828. doi:10.1177/0044118X14560334

- Sadler, K., Robertson, T., Kan, M. & Hagen, P. (2006). Balancing work, life, and other concerns: A study of mobile technology use by Australian freelancers. *Nordic Conference Proceedings on Human-Computer Interaction*, 413-416.  
doi:10.1145/1182475.1182525
- Sarker, S., & Wells, J. D. (2003). Understanding mobile handheld device use and adoption. *Communications of the ACM*, 46(12), 34-40.  
doi:10.1145/953460.953484
- Sharaievska, I., & Stodolska, M. (2016). Family satisfaction and social networking leisure. *Leisure Studies*, 36(2), 1-9. doi:10.1080/02614367.2016.1141974
- Silverstone, R., Hirsch, E., & Morley, D. (1992). Information and communication technologies and the moral economy of the household. In n.a., R. Silverstone, & E. Hirsch (Eds.), *Consuming technologies: Media and information in domestic spaces* (pp. 15-31). London, England: Routledge.
- Sorenson, B. (2015, January 28). *How does technology affect family communication?*  
Retrieved from: <https://www.livestrong.com/article/243280-how-does-technology-affect-family-communication/>
- Sorenson, K. (2006). Domestication: The enactment of technology. In T. Berker, M. Hartmann, Y. Punie, & K. J. Ward (Eds.), *Domestication of media and technology* (pp. 40-61). Maidenhead, England: Open University.
- Stafford, L., & Hillyer, J. D. (2012). Information and communication technologies in personal relationships. *The Review of Communication*, 12(4), 290-312.  
doi:10.1080/15358593.2012.685951



- Staines, G. L. (1980). Spillover versus compensation: A review of literature on the relationship between work and nonwork. *Human Relations*, 33(2), 111-129.  
doi:10.1177/001872678003300203
- Stephens, K. K., & Ford, J. L. (2016). Unintended consequences of a strategically ambiguous organizational policy selectively restricting mobile device use at work. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 4(2), 186-204. doi:10.177/2050157915619211
- Stevenson, O. (2011). From public policy to family practices: Researching the everyday realities of families' technology use at home. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 27(4), 336-346. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2729.2011.00430.x
- Storch, S. L., & Ortiz Juarez-Paz, A.V. (2017). Family communication: Exploring the dynamics of listening with mobile devices. *International Journal of Listening*, 32(2), 115-126. doi:10.1080/10904018.2017.1330657
- Taylor, J. (2013, March 13). *Is technology creating a family divide?* Retrieved from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-power-prime/201303/is-technology-creating-family-divide>
- Turel, O., Serenko, A., & Bontis, N. (2011). Family and work-related consequences of addiction to organizational pervasive technologies. *Information and Management*, 48, 88-95. doi:10.1016/j.im.2011.01.004
- Villegas, A. (2013, October 17). The influence of technology on family dynamics. *Proceedings of the New York State Communication Association*, 2012, 1-17.
- Wajcman, J., Bittman, M., & Brown, J. E. (2008). Families without borders: Mobile phones, connectedness and work-home divisions. *Sociology*, 42(4), 635-652.  
doi:10.1177/0038038508091620

## Appendix A

### Recruitment Script

Dear (NAME),

I am a doctoral candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and under the guidance of Dr. Anna Victoria Juarez-Paz (vortiz@iup.edu) I am conducting my dissertation study on the professional use of mobile devices within nonwork time and their subsequent influence on family relationships. Specifically, I want to talk to individuals that are over 24, have a personal and/or work mobile device, have used a mobile device for work purposes in nonwork hours, and hold a full-time management role within their organization. This management role can include, but is not limited to, the management of people, programs, projects, finances, or functions within the organization. Additionally, the individual must report to a physical office or work location that offers communication options beyond a mobile device (landline, computer, etc.).

With that said, I would very much appreciate your participation in this study. I believe in the strength of your experiences and I look forward to learning from you as a communication scholar. Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential.

You can choose to participate in an in-depth interview that would last between 45 minutes and 60 minutes. You will be asked about your mobile device usage experiences and the influences of organizational and family members. All of this information will be recorded and later transcribed by a third-party transcription service. That being said, all materials will be free of any identifying evidence. The interview can take place at your home, your office, a neutral location, or through a video conversation such as Skype or FaceTime.

If you are interested in participating and educating me on your experiences, please contact me at [s.l.storch@iup.edu](mailto:s.l.storch@iup.edu), or call/text 724-263-2120 to arrange a meeting and discuss any questions you may have. If you know of an individual that fits the parameters of participation, please share their name and contact information with me and I will send them an invitation as well.

Your involvement means a lot to me! Thank you.

Sharon L. Storch

Ph.D. Candidate

Communications Media Department

Indiana University of Pennsylvania



<https://www.iup.edu/commmedia/>

**This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).**

## Appendix B

### Participant Informed Consent

#### Research Participant Information

#### **Sorry I can't talk right now, or can I?: A qualitative exploration of professional mobile device usage within domestic spheres.**

Principal Investigator and Interviewer: Sharon L. Storch, PhD. Candidate  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

#### Purpose of Research

This project seeks to examine individuals' professional mobile device usage within domestic (nonwork) times and the subsequent influence(s) on family relationships.

#### Participant Eligibility Criteria

- Over 24
- Full-time manager within any industry
- Possesses a personal and/or work mobile device
- Has used a mobile device for work purposes in nonwork times
- Reports to a physical office for work
- Has other modes of communication (besides mobile device) at physical office

#### Specific Procedures to be Used

If you are willing to participate in this research project, you will be interviewed in person or via video conversation such as Skype or FaceTime and this interview will be recorded. The interviewer (Sharon Storch) will focus on your mobile device communication experiences primarily within the work and nonwork areas of your life. Specifically, she will ask you professional and personal questions about your professional mobile device usage, decision making process, and questions about your organizational and family influences and interactions. You may choose to skip any questions that could lead you to feeling uncomfortable. Upon completion of interview, the recording will be sent to a third party transcription service. The transcription service will be held to the same confidentiality standards as the interviewer (Sharon Storch) and her advisor (Dr. Anna V. Ortiz Juarez-Paz).

#### Duration of Participation

Your participation will consist of one interview, lasting between 45 to 60 minutes. You can withdraw participation at any time without penalty.

### Risks to the Individual

The researcher will take every reasonable precaution to ensure your privacy. Of course, there could be a possibility, based on what is eventually published, that someone you know could recognize you through your experience. This risk, however, is very minimal and the researcher will take every precaution possible so this does not happen.

### Benefits to the Individual or Others

You will be asked to share your experiences, which in turn may lead to better overall understanding of the professional usage of mobile devices within nonwork time and space and the possible influences on family relationships. The possible benefits to others or society are a very important aspect of this project. With the ever-changing digital communication flow, this study offers the potential to communicate and educate individuals on the balance of work and nonwork experiences with the use of mobile devices and how the organization and family communication work and weave together.

### Confidentiality

I will use pseudo-names in all of the interview transcripts and notes taken during interviews. I will create a code key and keep it for three years. All data collected from our study (audio recordings, transcripts, code keys, meeting notes, etc.) will be kept on a password protected computer. Only Sharon Storch and her advisor, Dr. Ortiz, will have any access to the data collected. All recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after three years.

### Voluntary Nature of Participation

You do not have to participate in this research project. You are free to withdraw at any time without penalty by contacting Sharon Storch or Dr. Ortiz (contact information below). If you request to be withdrawn, your data will be destroyed immediately.

### Contact Information

Sharon Storch is a Ph.D. candidate conducting dissertation research under the guidance of Dr. Anna V. Ortiz Juarez-Paz, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. You are welcome to contact them at the following locations:

#### **Sharon Storch**

(724) 263-2120 (personal cell phone with private voicemail)  
s.l.storch@iup.edu

#### **Dr. Anna V. Ortiz Juarez-Paz**

(724) 357-3781  
vortiz@iup.edu

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:**

**I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a participant in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received a copy for my records of this Informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.**

**Name (PLEASE PRINT)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).**

*(NOTE: Any participants via video discussions such as Skype or FaceTime will email completed copy to me prior to interviewing)*

## Appendix C

### Interview Guide

1. Please begin by telling me about yourself. What is your age? What city/town do you reside in?
2. How do you define family? What individual(s) comprise your family?
3. Please tell me a bit more about yourself and the people around you. Are you married/single? Do you have children? Do you live near to or far away from extended family?
4. What industry do you work in? How long have you worked in that industry?
5. What is your job title and description? Please discuss your specific role and responsibilities.
6. Please discuss your communicative options within your position. How do you use them to complete your managerial work? Besides completing specific managerial work, what other purposes do you use those communicative options for?
7. Do you have a usage preference within the modes (types) of communication available at the office? If so, why is that (or are they) your preference?
8. How conducive are mobile devices for work purposes? Please explain and give examples.
9. Do you use your mobile device for nonwork purposes while at work? How do you use your mobile device at work for nonwork purposes?
10. How do you incorporate your mobile device within your professional relationships? What role does the mobile device primarily serve for communicative exchanges while at work? What role does your mobile device serve to complete managerial tasks while at work? Please share examples.
11. Does your mobile device serve to foster or maintain family relationships while at work? How does it do that? Please share examples. Does your mobile device serve to foster or maintain family relationships when outside of work? How does it do that? Please share examples.
12. Do you incorporate your mobile device in nonwork times to accomplish managerial tasks or professional communication? Please share some examples of tasks that you complete. Are they typical tasks to accomplish in nonwork time? If so, why these tasks?
13. Does your mobile device serve to network, foster, and/or maintain professional relationships when you are not at work? How does it do that? Please share examples.

14. How do you manage your family time in order to complete managerial work or engage in professional communication? Please share examples. Does the usage ever cause family conflict or misunderstandings? How does it do that? When does it do that? Please share examples.
15. What is your motivation for using the mobile device for work purposes in nonwork time? Is the usage a directive from another person within your organization? If so, please share examples and experiences. Is the usage self-directed? If so, please share examples and experiences.
16. Do family relationships or interactions influence your decision(s) to complete or NOT complete managerial work outside of work hours? How do they do that? Please share examples. Please discuss the specific family members and how they influence your decision(s).
17. Which domain (professional, familial, or self) has the greatest power of influence over your decisions to use mobile device for work in nonwork times? Why do *they* have the greatest power? In what ways do they influence you? Please discuss how the other domains rank in their power of influence.
18. Regarding specific managerial work and/or professional communication, please talk about how negotiations are made with family members regarding your time and attention (presence) within the family. Are boundaries set/agreed upon? Please share examples of these boundaries. Do you find you are able to adhere to those? Why/Why not?
19. In New York City, a councilman is attempting to pass legislation to lift any mandates to engage in professional emails, texts, calls, etc. that companies of 10 or more impose on individuals. What are your thoughts on that legislation? How would your life be different if you were not engaging in professional communication or managerial tasks via your mobile device outside of the work hours? Do you have a preference? Why/Why not?
20. Thank them for participating.