

P3: Work/life Balance and Border Theory

- Supervisor:** Dr Majella Albion
Phone: 07 4631 1672
Email: albionm@usq.edu.au
- Research Purpose:** This project will investigate life balance issues by testing propositions associated with the Work/life border theory.
- Research Description:** Clark (2000) proposed the work/family border theory as a way of explaining people's experiences managing their lives as participants in two domains – work and family. Her theory consisted of a number of propositions, relating to the strength of the borders that exist between the two domains, and the extent to which a person's involvement in each domain is central or peripheral.
- The study will measure satisfaction and functioning at home and work and levels of role conflict between the two. It will also measure the strength of the borders between the domains – physical, temporal, and psychological – and the level of participation in each domain.
- Participants:** Participants will be people who are employed and who also have home or family commitments. It would be advantageous for the student researcher to have access to a workgroup that they invite to participate in the study. Participants will also be recruited from the general public and from the student research pool.
- Methodology:** Questionnaires will be based on questions used by Clark (2000) and Nippert-Eng (1996) to measure the strength of borders and levels of participation in the two domains. Work and home satisfaction will be measured using the Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin (1985). Role conflict will be measured using scales by Kopelman, Greenhaus, and Connolly (1983), and Burley (1989). Data collection will be by online survey. The student will be required to actively recruit participants.
- Data Analysis:** The study will involve quantitative analyses of data including t-tests, correlation, and regression. Appropriate data screening and checking of the psychometric properties of the test instruments will also be conducted.
- Student friendliness:** The study is suitable for oncampus or distance students. I expect fortnightly contact either by email or face-to-face.
- Further reading:** Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747-770.
- Nippert-Eng, C. (1996). Calendars and keys: The classification of "home" and "work". *Sociological Forum*, 11(3), 563-583.
- Expected research outcomes:** The final product of the research could be suitable for publication in a journal or as a conference presentation.
- Ethics:** Ethical approval will be sought by supervisor

Resources:

Project able to be funded within \$150 departmental limit

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