

## Social Media, Work and Nonwork Interface: A Qualitative Inquiry

### Abstract

Flourishing social media, easy access to smartphones and tablets, and ready availability of the internet in the past decade have made it possible for people to be connected to social media almost anywhere at any time. In this qualitative study, we interviewed 41 individuals in multiple professions in the United Kingdom to examine the role of social media in how they navigate their personal and professional lives. We find social media to be a virtual domain that has boundaries with nonvirtual personal and professional domains. Focusing on spatial and temporal boundaries, our findings revealed four boundary transition modes employees used to switch between the social media domain and their work and nonwork domains: boundary switch avoidance; disciplined boundary switch; integrated boundary switch; and boundary switch addiction. We also describe 15 mechanisms through which engaging with social media platforms enriches or conflicts with individuals' personal and professional lives. Our findings extend work-nonwork scholarship and boundary theory to include virtual as well as nonvirtual domains.

**Keywords:** Work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, work-nonwork interface, work-nonwork boundary, social media

## Social Media, Work and Nonwork Interface: A Qualitative Inquiry

The work-nonwork interface has been studied for decades, and it continues to receive scholarly attention due to the changing nature of work and nonwork spheres and employee demographics (Powell, Greenhaus, Allen, & Johnson, 2019). Scholars from multiple disciplines have theorized this phenomenon and established that individuals' work and nonwork domains are linked via mechanisms such as conflict, enrichment, spillover, segmentation, and integration (e.g., Allen, 2012; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; French & Johnson, 2016; Zedeck, 1992). These scholarly endeavors have one thing in common: they explain the interface between two nonvirtual life domains—in most cases, the work and family domains. Therefore, we still have limited knowledge of work-nonwork theories' applicability to domains of a different nature (i.e., virtual).

Early discourse on the work-nonwork interface took place a few decades ago when information technology was in its early development, and access to the internet was limited. As internet use expanded, individuals migrated to virtual means to accomplish their tasks (e.g., Olson-Buchanan, Boswell, & Morgan, 2016). For example, email partially replaced traditional means of correspondence, employers offered work-from-home options to their employees (Colbert, Yee, & George, 2016; Raghuram, Hill, Gibbs, & Maruping, 2019), and individuals began online networking and virtual teamwork (Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs, & Rothbard, 2019; Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012). As the use of virtual means to accomplish work and nonwork activities increased, work-nonwork scholars began to consider this trend in examining how individuals combine their personal and professional lives.

In the past few years, work-nonwork scholars have paid increasing attention to the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and their application to the work-nonwork interface (Derks, Bakker, Peters, & van Wingerden, 2016). These studies can be

divided into two categories. One group of studies considered ICTs as boundary-influencing features (Siegert & Löwstedt, 2019) and reported ICTs' effects on individual preferences for managing their work–nonwork boundary (e.g., Choroszewicz & Kay, 2019; Park, Liu, & Headrick, 2020). A second group examined the correlational or predictive relationship between technological tool use and the work–nonwork interface (i.e., enrichment or conflict), reporting both positive and negative outcomes (e.g., Wang, Gao, & Lin, 2019).

We complement the findings of previous studies by proposing social media—“computer-mediated tools of the Web 2.0 generation that make it possible for anyone to create, circulate, share, and exchange information in a variety of formats and with multiple communities” (Leonardi & Vaast, 2017, p. 150)—to be a virtual domain<sup>1</sup>, rather than a factor or a variable, that can have boundaries with, and enrich or conflict with nonvirtual life domains, such as work and family. A virtual domain is rooted in a virtual environment where information technology capabilities allow individuals to conduct work and interact synchronously and asynchronously (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005). Within the work–nonwork interface literature, domains have been seen as entities bounded by self-defined boundaries or fostered by social roles (Frone, 2003). Although the term “domain” has not been exclusively defined, work-nonwork interface scholars have treated the work domain as activities and experiences related to paid work and the nonwork domain as experiences and activities taking place at home (Allen, 2012; Frone, 2003).

The work-nonwork interface theories and conceptualizations assume that it is viable to distinguish between work and family as separate entities and to study how the two domains are linked or related (Kanter, 1977). To date, work-nonwork scholarship has not conceptualized the interface between virtual domains and well-established nonvirtual domains, such as work and family. Our qualitative study among 41 employees from multiple

---

<sup>1</sup> We should note that we are presenting this finding upfront for clarity; as we explain in the analysis section, we found social media to act as a virtual domain during data analysis.

professions in the United Kingdom bridges this gap by examining the interface between a virtual domain (social media) and nonvirtual work and family domains. We address the two following questions: (a) what are the modes of transition between social media and work or family domains?; and (b) what are the mechanisms through which social media interfaces with work or nonwork? Informed by work-nonwork boundary theory (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000), we map four boundary transition modes—boundary switch avoidance, disciplined boundary switch, integrated boundary switch, and boundary switch addition—that our participants used to switch temporal and spatial boundaries between social media and work or family domains. Also, adopting the work-nonwork conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) and work-nonwork enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) theories lens, our findings capture 15 mechanisms for social media-to-work or family conflict, and social media-to work or family enrichment.

We expand the existing work-nonwork theories in three ways. First, the proposed boundary transition modes extend the existing literature by adopting a broad view toward how employees switch between a virtual domain and their work or family domains—not focusing solely on how employees manage ICTs or social media usage at either work or nonwork. Second, we bring together the findings of studies that either indicated how engagement with social media improves our professional lives (e.g., Charoensukmongkol, 2014) or focused on the negative impact of social media on our work (e.g., van Zoonen & Rice, 2017) or nonwork (e.g., Siegert & Löwstedt, 2019). By regarding social media as a domain, similar to the work-nonwork literature that has highlighted bidirectional relationships between work and family (Michel, Mitchelson, Kotrba, LeBreton, & Baltes, 2009), we argue for the existence of bidirectionality in the interface between virtual and nonvirtual domains. Finally, we highlight that, due to the increasing use of social media in nonwork domains and the myriad ways social media affects employees' nonwork lives and

spills over into their work world, organization scholars can no longer focus solely on the use of social media at work or for work-related purposes.

### **Theoretical Background**

Work-nonwork interface is an umbrella term that encompasses the nuances and the variety of conceptualizations that examine the relationship between employees' work and nonwork domains. Three prominent theories describe the interface between work and nonwork domains: work-nonwork boundary (Ashforth et al., 2000), work-nonwork enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), and work-nonwork conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Below, we will provide a brief description of each theory and how our work contributes to their literature.

#### **Work-Nonwork Boundary and ICTs**

Work-nonwork boundary theory conceptualizes how individuals transition between work and family domains demarcated by physical, temporal, and psychological boundaries (Ashforth et al., 2000; Clark, 2000). It is rooted in the classic sociological work of Nippert-Eng (1996, 2008), which postulates that people naturally need to draw mental fences and categorize information to make sense of the world around them. The process of drawing boundaries “results in the creation of slices of reality—domains—such as work and home that have particular meaning for the individuals” (Ashforth et al., 2000, p. 474). This theory emphasizes the meaning people attach to work and home domains, and how they transition between different roles and across boundaries (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Boundary theory further explains that individuals engage in boundary management to establish a balance between work and family domains or to reduce boundary-crossing difficulties (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2009; Nippert-Eng, 1996). As a result, a central focus of research adopting a boundary theory perspective has been exploring individual preferences and behavioral efforts to separate or integrate their work and family domains

(Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014). Research findings suggest that, based on the level of perceived boundary control, individuals adopt three styles to manage boundaries between their work and nonwork domains: integration, separation, and alternation (Ammons, 2013; Kossek & Lautsch, 2008; Kossek & Lautsch, 2012; Kossek, Noe, & DeMarr, 1999; Kossek, Ruderman, Braddy, & Hannum, 2012). Integrators tend to combine their personal and professional domains, whereas separators keep them separate, and alternators switch back and forth between them. Boundary management styles are developed further to define “role-firsters” as individuals who identify with a dominant role and put that role first so that its demands cross over and interrupt other roles (Kossek, 2016).

In the past few years, work-nonwork researchers have examined the use of ICTs and their impact on the work-nonwork boundary. They argue that technology is making work-nonwork boundaries more “porous” (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2019, p. 426), increasing individuals’ visibility and reducing their privacy (Siegert & Löwstedt, 2019; Walden, 2016). Mazmanian, Orlikowski, and Yates (2013) demonstrated that although using mobile devices offered the professionals they studied short-term flexibility and control over interactions with others, it also increased expectations for their availability and work engagement. Developing “digital cultural capital”—the combination of awareness, motivation, and skill needed to manage technology (p. 427)—has been suggested as a solution to enable individuals to actively manage communication technologies impacting their work-nonwork boundaries (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2019).

Some studies have shown that the use of ICTs has different effects for those who prefer to integrate or separate their work and nonwork (Derks et al., 2016; Piszczek, 2017). Integrators find technology useful to increase their boundary-control power, while segmentors experience less boundary control when using work-related mobile technology at home.

Other scholars have borrowed segmentor and integrator concepts to explain individuals' boundary management differences regarding their use of ICTs and mobile devices. Duxbury, Higgins, Smart, and Stevenson (2014) divided smartphone users into three groups: segmentors, who only used smartphones during work hours; integrators, who used their smartphones for work and nonwork activities with no space limitations; and struggling segmentors, who did not prefer to use smartphones during nonwork time, but felt they were expected to do so by their organizations. Choroszewicz and Kay (2019) built upon this work by studying mobile technology use among male lawyers and identified three boundary management styles—struggling segmentors, struggling integrators, and integrators—that was associated with varying models of fatherhood and family.

Some scholars have studied the ICTs users' communicative boundary management that involves handling expectations of other people in the work or family domain (Caporael & Xie, 2003; Derks, van Duin, Tims, & Bakker, 2015; Gadeyne et al., 2018; Hislop & Axtell, 2011). Communicating expectations helps employees reduce ICT-related interruptions: for example, designating when colleagues or family members can contact them during work or nonwork hours (Park et al., 2020).

More directly relevant to our research is the limited literature (Kühnel, Vahle-Hinz, de Bloom, & Syrek, 2020) on the work-family boundary and engagement with social media. Focusing on social media (Facebook and Twitter) usage among employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Siegert and Löwstedt (2019) outline three boundary work tactics—prohibitive, reactive, and active—their participants adopted to protect their private lives from social media scrutiny. We conclude that, so far, ICTs have been mainly regarded as boundary-influencing features and that scholars have typically been concerned about the impact of using work-related mobile devices during nonwork hours. These studies usually describe strategies employees implement to reduce ICT-related interruptions that

originate from work and impact the family domain. Our study extends these studies by identifying social media as a virtual domain that interfaces with both work and nonwork domains. Social media users can engage with both personal and professional activities while at work or nonwork due to the omnipresence of social media and the possibility of its users' constant connectivity (Walden, 2016; Yang, 2020). So far, we know little about how individuals transition between virtual (social media in our case) and nonvirtual domains (work or family); we explore this question in the first section of our findings.

### **Work-Nonwork Enrichment, Conflict, and ICTs**

Work-nonwork enrichment proposes that experiences in either work or nonwork domain can lead to favorable outcomes in the other domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Work-nonwork conflict explains the tension between work and nonwork domains when people face excessive and incompatible demands in their lives (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Researchers have established the bidirectionality of enrichment and conflict and have distinguished between work-to-nonwork and nonwork-to-work effects (Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, 2020; Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2010; Michel et al., 2009; Zhang, Xu, Jin, & Ford, 2018).

Empirical findings suggest that ICTs potentially have both negative and positive effects on the work-nonwork interface (Wang, Gao, & Lin, 2019). On the one hand, researchers have shown that ICTs provide employers with the possibility of connecting with their employees at all hours, which encourages work problems to override time reserved for nonwork/family life (Butts, Becker, & Boswell, 2015; Mullan & Wajcman, 2019; Schlachter, McDowall, Crompton, & Inceoglu, 2018). This stream of research suggests that the use of ICTs for work during nonwork time is positively associated with work-nonwork conflict (Derks et al., 2015; Gadeyne et al., 2018). On the other hand, researchers have also found that ICTs add flexibility or “novel opportunities” to help employees manage their work-nonwork interface



(Wajcman, Bittman, & Brown, 2008, p. 636). This line of research has shown that using ICTs for personal and professional purposes outside the workplace improves the balance between work and nonwork domains (Christensen, 2009; Wajcman, Rose, Brown, & Bittman, 2010). Derk and colleagues (2016) argue that for integrators using smartphones to accomplish work-related tasks at home is associated with reduced work-family conflict, while for separators it might have no impact on work-family conflict. These studies have examined the role of ICTs—benefiting or vexing work-nonwork balance—as a contextual factor or correlational variable. Treating ICT usage as a variable provides little insight into how individuals' engagement in a virtual ICT-facilitated domain creates conflict or enriches nonvirtual work and family domains; also, it misses conceptualizing the possible bidirectional relationship between nonvirtual and virtual domains.

There exists limited research relevant to social media usage and the work-nonwork interface (Siegert & Löwstedt, 2019). Studies have found social media to have both negative and positive impacts on employees' work-nonwork interface and some work-related variables. Liu, Zhang, Chen, Guo, and Yu (2015) found social media usage to be associated with work-nonwork conflict, and other researchers have argued that social media can interrupt work, decrease employee performance (Kühnel et al., 2020), and increase stress (Bucher, Fieseler, & Suphan, 2013). However, another group of studies has underlined positive outcomes of employees' engagement with social media, including work-nonwork balance (Kühnel et al., 2020), co-worker networks and friendships (Yang, 2020; Yang & Wong, 2020), job satisfaction (Charoensukmongkol, 2014), work engagement (Syrek, Kühnel, Vahle-Hinz, & De Bloom, 2018), and recovery from work (Kim et al., 2019).

Also, a few studies have highlighted both positive and negative outcomes from employees' social media use subject to specific conditions. One example is Bizzi (2020) that used data on the blogging activity of a Canadian health-care provider's employees and found

that the positive or negative impact of using social media at work depends on whether the employees use it to engage with organizational members or outsiders. Engagement with outsiders had a negative relationship with intrinsic work motivation and proactive behavior, while engagement with colleagues was positively associated with those variables.

To date, as evident in the descriptions of the three prominent theories above and reflected in the scales developed to measure work-family conflict (e.g., Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011; Michel et al., 2009) or work-family enrichment (e.g., McNall et al., 2010), work-nonwork interface scholarship has predominantly examined domains that exist in the physical world. In this study, we extend this literature by focusing on social media as a virtual domain, and we borrow from work-nonwork conflict and enrichment theories to explore the mechanisms through which social media enriches or conflicts with work and nonwork.

### **Methodology**

Our epistemological lens for this study was constructivism. Constructivists believe that meaning is born as a result of human engagement with world realities—that “meaning is not discovered but constructed” (Crotty, 1998, p. 9). We adopted a qualitative methodology, which is appropriate when the research purpose is exploratory (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). This approach allowed us to explore the experiences and multiple realities of our participants' experiences. It also enabled us to understand how our participants made sense of their experiences (Merriam, 2009)—in this case, the interface between participants' personal and professional domains.

### **Participants**

Forty-one employed adults from various occupations in the United Kingdom participated in this study. More than 80% of the participants were in their 30s (15), 40s (10), or 50s (8); the rest were between 18-20 (1), or in their 20s (2), 60s (3), or 70s (2). 51% of the

participants' identified as female, 71% had children, and 66% were white. Thirty participants were married, and 11 were single or in a relationship (see appendix for participants' demographic information). We engaged with data analysis as we were conducting the interviews. In the final stages of our analysis, and after we reached saturation, we decided to include participants below 30 or above 60, which was aligned with selecting confirming cases to help us examine if their experiences would fit into patterns that emerged in our study (Patton, 2002).

We began the recruitment process from our personal and professional contacts and continued with snowball sampling (Patton, 2002). Our rationale for using snowball sampling was that our network was limited to academic jobs, and we wanted to diversify our population to include individuals from multiple occupations and age groups in the UK. We selected a broad range of participants from varied professional backgrounds including consulting, engineering, management, teaching, medicine, library, food service, and academia. However, due to our having a wider network among higher education professionals, our participants from higher education slightly outnumber the others. All but six participants worked fulltime. Those who worked part-time worked at least 20 hours per week; they included two full-time undergraduate students who worked part-time and a full-time housewife who did part-time volunteer work.

### **Data Collection**

We used semi-structured face-to-face interviews as our primary data collection method. Interviews were conducted in public places, offices, or homes depending on participants' preferences. We recorded the interviews with the participants' consent. Interviews lasted from 30 to 80 minutes; interview questions are available as an appendix.

## **Data Organization and Analysis**

We transcribed interview recordings using professional transcription services (1,121 pages of transcript). We started the study with a broad focus to explore how engagement with social media affected the work-nonwork interface. During data analysis, we realized that social media could be regarded as a domain in a virtual environment, which slightly changed the focus of our data analysis. Treating social-media as a domain enabled us to apply boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) to the virtual environment and examine boundary transition modes adopted by social media users (SMUs) to switch between the social media domain and work and non-work domains. In addition, informed by work-family enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) and work-family conflict theory (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), we decided to adjust our research focus and examine social media-to-work and social media-to-nonwork enrichment and conflict; therefore, we analyzed the current study's dataset informed by three work-nonwork theories. Our approach is aligned with Jackson and Mazzei's (2011) recommendations to borrow theoretical concepts from the literature and apply them in the analytic process to integrate theory and data.

After reviewing the dataset, we entered the data in NVivo software and began our analysis using the constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, we read the transcripts line-by-line and coded the transcriptions (open coding). Then, we classified the codes into categories; the categories were given conceptual labels informed by work-family boundary, work-family enrichment, and work-family conflict theories. However, we did not limit our categories to the concepts discussed in those theories, and we allowed the data to speak for itself (Table1). Both authors engaged with the process of developing interview questions, data collection, and making sense of the data. To analyze the data, one author analyzed the whole dataset, and the other author reviewed the subcategories and categories and raised questions when there was an inconsistency between the two authors' data

interpretations; we continued this process until we reached an agreement. We did not quantify the inter-rater reliability process because both authors engaged with the whole process, were familiar with the dataset, and had conversations in cases of disagreement (Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Marteau, 1997).

-----  
Insert Table 1 about here  
-----

## **Credibility**

Qualitative researchers emphasize credibility, which seeks to understand whether the multiple realities in participants' minds are consistent with what the researcher has attributed to them (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). In this research, we ensured credibility by utilizing three strategies outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). First, we had multiple readings of our data and followed a constant process of revisiting the data and referring to the literature to enable us to look at our data through multiple theoretical lenses. Second, we used peer debriefing by asking two of our peers who had sufficient qualitative research knowledge to give us feedback on our first draft. Finally, we kept a reflexive journal as a means to document the research process, our observations, interactions with the participants, and reflections. Also, we interviewed eight individuals whose age range was different from the participants we had initially interviewed as confirming cases to examine if their experiences matched patterns that emerged in our data analysis. Doing so enabled us to fine-tune our themes, and to be aware of our research journey, our positionality, and potential biases we could bring to the data collection and analysis.

## **Boundary Transition Modes**

Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest were social media platforms that our participants frequently mentioned in the interviews; WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter were the platforms most frequently used. With WhatsApp, we focused only on its

social aspect (e.g., group chats) and did not analyze occasions where this platform was used for one-on-one text messaging. The SMUs' engagement with social media platforms ranged from extremely high to extremely low, and we did not find any age or gender patterns in our participants' social media usage; however, only 20% of our participants were below 30 or above 60, and having more participants from these two age groups might have revealed differences not captured in our work. Depending on their usage pattern, our interviewees' work and nonwork domains ranged from immersion in social media platforms to having little interaction with them.

Our findings comprise two sections. Section one is informed by boundary theory and discusses four modes of transition our participants adopted to switch between the social media domain and their work or nonwork domains. Section two is informed by work-family conflict and work-family enrichment theories, and illustrates how engaging with the social media domain enriched or conflicted with our participants' work or nonwork. In other words, the first section attends transitioning between the virtual and nonvirtual domains, while the second section focuses on their content, tasks, and activities.

### **Virtual-Nonvirtual Domain Boundary Transition Modes: Social Media Domain and Work or Nonwork Domains**

Our analysis revealed four transition modes adopted by the SMUs to switch spatial or temporal boundaries between their social media domain and work or nonwork domains: boundary switch avoidance, disciplined boundary switch, integrated boundary switch, and boundary switch addiction. Our findings did not reach saturation regarding other types of boundaries, such as relational or cognitive. Below, we describe each transition mode, supported by quotations from the interview transcripts.

***Boundary switch avoidance:*** Among the 41 participants, seven were not interested in the social media domain, and minimized their use of it; however, all the SMUs used social

media to some extent. In cases where the SMUs preferred not to engage with social media, they were forced to use it to gain access to information available only through such platforms, or they were asked by their workplace or family to join social media to promote work-related events or to remain in contact. This group of SMUs avoided social media as much as they could, had minimum boundary switch between the social media domain and their work or nonwork domains, and rarely needed to cross boundaries.

The following example is from SMU<sub>16</sub>, who was on Facebook and Twitter only to find out about her children's school and afterschool clubs, and did not post anything other than functional messages. She describes why she adopted a boundary switch avoidance mode:

“I just feel [social media] is an invasion, because people are on it all the time and I think it has changed people's behaviors. Because I could be speaking to someone, this is unusual that you're speaking to me and not looking at a device, and I think the manners have just gone ... and I'm battling it. It's an ongoing battle.”

The SMUs who adopted a boundary switch avoidance mode did not belong to a particular generation, and their ages ranged from SMU<sub>25</sub>, an engineer in his 20s, to SMU<sub>27</sub>, a business developer in his thirties, SMU<sub>34</sub>, a trader in his forties, SMU<sub>25</sub>, an engineer in her fifties, and SMU<sub>11</sub>, a secretary in her seventies.

***Disciplined boundary switch:*** Eighteen SMUs managed the boundaries between their social media domain and their work or nonwork spheres by putting limitations on when (temporal boundary) and where (spatial boundary) they checked their social media profiles; we have labeled this mode as disciplined boundary switch. SMU<sub>36</sub> and SMU<sub>31</sub> described their disciplined-boundary switch mode as “... when I get to work, except during my break times, [my two phones and my iPad] are in my locker ... [and I] focus on my job. When I'm on my break, I check ... what's going on.” (SMU<sub>36</sub>), and “I know what I'm doing on Facebook ...

I've set a boundary. There's time for everything ... I'm just trying to lead a balanced life” (SMU<sub>31</sub>).

It is noteworthy that in this group, less than half had prior experiences of not being mindful about their social media usage, or had extensive engagement with it for a while, and then made a conscious decision to create a social media domain usage pattern that matched their needs and preferences. Deciding to create patterns for engagement with social media occurred when individuals became self-aware of their social media usage after being distracted (e.g., SMU<sub>30</sub>) or not able to concentrate when needed (e.g., SMU<sub>39</sub>). As a result, those participants decided to create disciplined temporal or spatial boundaries between the social media domain and their work or nonwork domains. The majority of participants in this group practiced this mode without having faced any prior problems.

***Integrated boundary switch:*** The third transition mode, integrated boundary switch, was adopted by 11 interviewees who switched between the media domain and work or nonwork domains during their work and nonwork hours without setting any temporal or spatial boundaries for their social media usage. A few participants said they had “no specific time ... for social media. It just runs across the whole day,” (SMU<sub>29</sub>). Participants categorized under integrated boundary switch mode did not find it hard to switch boundaries and did not believe that engaging with social media affected their personal or professional lives, as described by SMU<sub>28</sub> and SMU<sub>10</sub>:

If I'm spending time with my family, that doesn't mean that I should lose touch with the world ... Spending quality time with my family doesn't necessarily mean that if I get a message [on social media], I shouldn't read it until I've finished spending quality time. (SMU<sub>28</sub>)



I check WhatsApp and Twitter during work ... When I'm in work, I leave my phones out, so I can clearly see the screens ... Obviously, if there's an emergency going on, I wouldn't say, "Stop the emergency. I just need to check my [social media]." (SMU<sub>10</sub>)

***Boundary switch addiction:*** Five participants struggled with managing boundaries between the social media domain and work or nonwork domains, could not control the frequency of switching between them, and checked their social media platforms anywhere and anytime; we labeled this mode as boundary switch addiction. Those participants found it difficult to regulate how they engaged with social media and found themselves constantly checking social media during their waking hours. In some cases, participants with boundary switch addiction tried to limit the frequency of their social media engagement, but failed, as described in these two examples: "Yes. I have at times thought, 'Right, I'm going to have a week where I check Facebook once a day or I don't check it at all.' That has not lasted more than half an hour" (SMU<sub>22</sub>), and "because I know I'm addicted, I know that sometimes it's easy for me to get sucked into [Facebook], and so that's why I talked about needing some boundaries ... I definitely have difficulty with self-regulation" (SMU<sub>41</sub>).

In one of our interview questions, we asked the SMUs if they preferred to separate their work and nonwork spheres. This allowed us to compare the SMUs' transition mode for switching boundaries between social media and their work or nonwork domains with their work-nonwork boundary strategies (which is extensively studied in the literature). At the time of the interview, two common strategies used by the SMUs when managing boundaries between their nonvirtual work and nonwork domains were integration and separation. When switching boundaries between the social media domain and their work and nonwork domains, the majority of the integrators (52.4%) practiced an integrated boundary switch mode and the rest practiced disciplined boundary switch (19.05%), boundary switch addiction (19.05%), or boundary switch avoidance (9.5%) modes. When the work-nonwork domain separators

switched boundaries between the social media domain and work or nonwork domains, the majority (70%) adopted a disciplined boundary switch mode, while the rest used boundary switch avoidance (25%) or boundary switch addiction (5%) modes. We can conclude that the SMUs' boundary transition mode between a virtual and a nonvirtual domain and between two nonvirtual environments did not necessarily follow similar patterns.

### **Social Media-Work/Nonwork Enrichment**

Engagement with the social media domain enriched our participants' work or nonwork domains in many ways. Below, we describe mechanisms through which social media enriched the SMUs' work and nonwork domains, respectively. We contend that both social media-to-work and social media-to-nonwork enrichment should be considered by organization scholars because work and nonwork domains interface with one another, and the enrichment experienced by the SMUs in nonwork spills over to their work domain.

We highlight that our findings depict solely social media-to-work/nonwork enrichment mechanisms described by the SMUs. Our interview protocol did not include questions about the interviewees' work-to-social media or nonwork-to-social media enrichment, because the role of social media as a virtual domain was revealed to us during data analysis. We argue that, similar to work-nonwork literature, the interface between social media and work or nonwork can be a two-way relationship, and a few interviewees referred to this relationship; however, we could not capture the nuances of work-to-social media or nonwork-to-social media enrichment due to a lack of data.

### **Social Media-to-Work Enrichment**

Engagement with the social media domain while physically at work or working from home enriched the SMUs' work in three ways we describe below. More than 30 interviewees asserted that the social media domain enriched their work domain, but the mechanisms described below were not common to all of them.

***Maintaining contact with family.*** Our interviewees, especially parents or those who had family members living overseas, believed that social media enabled them to reduce their concerns about their families while at work. Although it is possible to use non-social media modes, such as phone calls, to receive family information, many participants said they used social media platforms, especially WhatsApp family groups, because of their efficiency, continuity, and the capacity to exchange group messages and photos. The SMUs appreciated that access to social media while at work helped them feel they were available for emergencies. For example, SMU<sub>28</sub> said, “I use WhatsApp ... to keep in touch with my family ... it helps me because once I know that they're fine, then I can concentrate more on work.”

***Facilitating self-promotion and professional opportunities.*** SMUs who used social media platforms to share their professional updates and achievements, believed that those platforms enriched their professional lives. SMU<sub>32</sub>, an author, shared updates about her books, which could lead to having more readers; and SMU<sub>30</sub> used social media to share her academic achievements: “When I publish a paper I just put it on Facebook for my few friends ... to help publicize because it's free communication and free promotion. That could be regarded as empowerment, couldn't it?”

When participants revealed their professional qualifications on social media platforms, or contributed to relevant conversations, it could lead to unexpected professional opportunities. These opportunities did not necessarily arise because the participants intentionally promoted themselves, but because the SMUs shared their views on certain topics and contributed to an ongoing discourse. For example, SMU<sub>41</sub>, who researched equity and diversity and engaged in conversations from that lens, told us: “Facebook has also brought me business as an independent consultant with someone who has recognized some of the things I'm saying, and they say, ‘Do you do consulting work around blah blah?’ ... I got some work from her because of that.”

Interviewees managed to find jobs, get professional information, promote themselves, or recruit employees via their social media platforms. An example was given by SMU<sub>34</sub>:

LinkedIn and ResearchGate have empowered me ... because I'm looking for a job now and most of the time when I look on LinkedIn, they're sending me links that this job is something you might like to do. I apply for them, sometimes I get an interview, sometimes I get a response.

***Accommodating non-traditional professional communication.*** For a few participants, specifically those who worked for small businesses, social media was regarded as a platform to house or facilitate non-traditional professional communications. Also, many participants followed individuals or communities on twitter or Facebook to update their professional knowledge:

There are active coaching professionals across Twitter that share a lot of information, share a lot of new ideas ... there are a whole load of health and wellbeing people that I follow. I do find that I have a lot of ex-students that then follow me and have exchanges as well (SMU<sub>14</sub>).

### **Social Media-to-Nonwork Enrichment**

Engagement with social media enriched the SMUs personal lives through six mechanisms described below.

***Facilitating socialization and efficient communication.*** Social media platforms facilitated the SMUs social lives. In some cases, interviewees mentioned that they used social media to have conversations with their extended family and friends, like-minded people, or those who shared their common interests and hobbies. Examples include SMU<sub>2</sub>, who used Twitter to exchange updates about football games; SMU<sub>22</sub>, who simultaneously watched a cooking show and exchanged views with her connections interested in the show; and SMU<sub>16</sub>, who said, "I have WhatsApp groups for my friendship groups, for the sporting groups, for the

sporting mums who I socialize with.” The following examples from SMU40, who was an immigrant in the United Kingdom, and SMU7, a part-time employee and full-time student, illustrate how social media can facilitate socializing with family and nonfamily circles.

My family has this WhatsApp group and has really been very helpful ... We've got family in America, ... in UK, ... in Africa. Social media actually brought us all together, so it helps us to carry out projects, things that we need to do back home in Africa, and it's been very useful. (SMU<sub>40</sub>)

I was really shy as a teenager. I wouldn't know how to speak to somebody, even if it was people at school. I wouldn't sit at the back of the class ... and I just kept my head low. Then social media was introduced, so it did make an impact, in a way, for me. Because it did bring me out of my shell, and I'd speak to people that I'd never speak to. (SMU<sub>7</sub>)

***Giving voice.*** Participants, especially those who were active on their social media platforms, argued that social media can give voice to those who might not have the opportunity to be heard otherwise. SMU<sub>19</sub> mentioned how social media enables individuals to reach out to others and be heard.

If you look at Brexit, post-Brexit ... lots of people who were against leaving [shared] their posts and their viewpoints like, “We need to come together, we need to work through this” ... Maybe without social media ... those guys wouldn't have a voice ...

I can definitely see its value in that respect. (SMU<sub>19</sub>)

Another example is SMU<sub>2</sub>, who found it “...exciting when somebody re-tweets what [I] say ... that's quite a boost ... And then other people ... contact ... me off the back of that ... So, I [will] obviously [have] new people following ... So that's ... quite empowering.”

***Providing social support mechanisms.*** Interviewees gave us examples from situations where social media helped them seek support or provide support to someone who needed it.

Social media facilitated support for friends who were grieving (SMU<sub>23</sub>) or friends who experienced a personal crisis (SMU<sub>2</sub>). SMU<sub>31</sub>, who lived in a foreign country and was moving to a new city with no connections, describes how Facebook helped her receive support:

When I was moving ..., I didn't know anybody in [this city]. ... I spoke to a friend of mine ... on Facebook ... She said, "Not to worry. I also know another lady who lives in [this city] ... The lady sent me a friend request on Facebook and then that was how we connected ... My coming to [this city], she made it very comfortable for me.

***Inspiring through positivity and fun.*** Some SMUs believed that social media feeds boosted their positivity and inspired them. However, in most cases, such inspiration came from selected pages or forums that they chose to visit, rather than from random social media feeds. For example, SMU<sub>32</sub> said, "I really love Pinterest ... I read a lot of quotes ... you pin images on Pinterest and there are these motivational or inspirational quotes, and they're just fantastic," or SMU<sub>41</sub> shared with us, "if I get to the point where I'm just drained of positivity, I'll go to [a couple of friends'] page[s] ... and they will usually have something ... [that] can be really uplifting."

Social media feeds could also enrich our participants' personal lives by putting them, and sometimes their families, in a good mood:

Some of [the feeds] can be very funny and humorous, so most times when I just want to laugh I go on social media because I will always find something that will make me laugh either ... When my wife comes in ... We'll just laugh over it. It's a way for us to unwind. (SMU<sub>29</sub>)

***Keeping Informed.*** Social media enabled the SMUs to remain informed and follow news about the topics they cared about in a fast-paced world. Accessing such news became more important when an important public decision, such as this example: "Brexit vote, and

the build-up to that. The recent election, I think that was quite interesting. It's nice to be able to find out very quickly what was happening, and there are some links that you find to various things" (SMU<sub>11</sub>).

### **Social Media-Work/Nonwork Conflict**

All the SMUs mentioned that engagement with social media platforms had some sort of conflict with their work or nonwork domains; below, we describe mechanisms through which this conflict occurred, supported by quotations from interview transcripts. We argue that both social media-to-work and social media-to-nonwork conflict should be examined by organization scholars, because ultimately, work and nonwork interface with one another, and the conflict between social media platforms and the nonwork domain spills over to the work domain as well.

#### **Social Media-to-Work Conflict**

***Decreasing productivity.*** Checking social media platforms while at work made it difficult to concentrate on their job for a few participants, which negatively impacted their productivity. While most participants said they did not spend much time on social media while at work, some found it difficult to disengage from it. For example, SMU<sub>37</sub> described checking social media at work as:

I'm always on [social media] ... so it takes it away from what you're meant to be doing. You're constantly checking up your phone ... Your productivity is declining slightly because you're not really focused on what you're doing.

***Breaching Privacy.*** Many interviews shared with us their concerns about how their social media profiles could breach their privacy at work or have other negative consequences for them. Enabling the social media location function with or without being aware of the consequences, sharing pictures or having pictures shared by others, and being pinned to locations and revealing backgrounds that participants did not necessarily want to

share with their co-workers or managers could cause serious penalties for employees, as highlighted by our participants. The majority of our interviewees were concerned about how their current or prospective workplaces reacted to their social media posts, even if they were personal posts. SMU<sub>23</sub> told us she was very careful to not accept work colleagues on Facebook because she witnessed this example:

[A colleague] put something [on his personal twitter account] ... it was football banter conversation between him and some other fans about a football match that was going on. One of the staff ... printed a screenshot of it ...and gave it to his boss so he was disciplined and was sacked from the business.

### **Social Media-to-Nonwork Conflict**

Conflict between the social media and nonwork domains was more frequent among those who said they were often engaged with their social media platforms and those who found it hard to disengage from such platforms. It is noteworthy that the majority of the participants who experienced conflict mentioned that using a smartphone to access social media increased their social media engagement and lead to more conflict than using a desktop or laptop.

*Disengaging from family and personal activities.* Engagement with social media when participants were supposed to be spending time with family and loved ones was common among most of the participants who frequently checked social media platforms. Disengagement from family due to engagement with social media was common among participants for all age groups and demographic categories. Examples of this kind of conflict included arguments with spouses or partners (e.g., SMU<sub>25</sub>, SMU<sub>23</sub>, SMU<sub>22</sub>), missing quality time with grandchildren (SMU<sub>6</sub>), receiving comments such as “You’re not bloody listening to me, are you?” (SMU<sub>2</sub>), or “we have a 'Twittergate' in the house,” when



a participant was on Twitter a lot (SMU<sub>23</sub>). Engagement with social media platforms could be negatively associated with the time parents devoted to their children as well:

We were ... having dinner one night, and we were all sitting around. I was playing on my phone, and my husband was playing on his. I noticed that we weren't talking to the kids. I was thinking, "Well, this is a bit rubbish, isn't it? (SMU<sub>23</sub>)

When you have kids, you have to look after and then you concentrate on social media. You may not have the time to actually know what the kids are doing ... because you are just so much engrossed in using social media. (SMU<sub>40</sub>)

For some participants, taking a phone to bed or charging a phone next to their bed led to them not getting enough rest due to their immersion in social media and engaging with it in the middle of the night or early morning. All those actions could lead to a lack of sleep, inability to go back to sleep, or failing to engage in their morning routines. SMU<sub>18</sub> shared with us an extreme example where she planned to go for a run and to make herself a healthy breakfast every morning, but after waking up early, she convinced herself she could spend 15 minutes to check social media. After checking social media, she was so depressed from comparing herself with others that she skipped both her run and her healthy breakfast.

Interviewees also said they read fewer books (e.g., SMU<sub>12</sub>), did not do their laundry (e.g. SMU<sub>1</sub>), and paid less attention to cleaning their homes (e.g., SMU<sub>41</sub>) due to extensive engagement with social media. Another example of social media taking time from personal activities was shared by SMU<sub>4</sub>: "The garden is not very well maintained, I could paint the walls a bit more and maybe I could do more with other hobbies and things, yes, I think [social media] probably has distracted from that or taken away that time, yes."

A few SMUs said they were asked by their employers to support and take an active role in their workplace social media pages through their personal social media accounts.

Participants typically did it at home during their family time, and sometimes felt stressed when receiving updates from such pages. SMU<sub>17</sub> shared the following example:

One of my challenges that [my line manager] has given me for my professional development is to be more active on the [university] side of Facebook and the [team] Facebook page [which happens at home]. I think the number of things I posted on Facebook could probably be counted on one hand. Two of those were the birth of [my children] and the other three had to do with [work].

***Taking extensive time.*** Many participants asserted that their engagement with social media led to wasting time. Our interviewees believed that engaging with the increasing number of social media platforms and the high frequency of social media posts took so much time, and, in cases where major national events were happening, it became unmanageable. SMU<sub>1</sub>, who had recently developed strategies to limit the time she engaged with social media, shared with us,

Well, because you go on and you see, “Oh, I’ve not seen Liz for years. I wonder how she’s getting on.” Then you look at all her posts, and the photographs, and you look at your watch and two hours has gone. You suddenly think, “Oh, my goodness. What have I been doing for the last two hours?” (SMU<sub>1</sub>)

Some participants were personally interested in limiting their social media use to a few platforms, but they felt overwhelmed when they were asked to join new platforms when their friends used such platforms to communicate with them, as evident in the example below.

[A]s more and more people have individual modes of communication ... through social media, ... I’m being forced to have to open up other modes, because I have friends that like to use [those modes] ... And I’m finding that because of their

preferences I have to now have access to all of those, which is becoming overwhelming. (SMU<sub>13</sub>)

A few participants highlighted that their network expected them to respond to all the messages they received, even if they did not have time to do so. Some social media platforms allow message senders to check whether their messages have been seen or not; some participants said they were tempted to see the messages but did not have enough time to react to all of them. As SMU<sub>28</sub> put it, “I haven't been on Facebook for the past eight years or nine years. I just found it too stressful. People keep messaging and you have to reply. If you don't reply, people will see that you have not replied and it just became too much. I just said no and stopped.”

***Arousing negativity and frustration.*** A common theme shared by the SMUs who frequently used social media platforms or had done so for a while was provoking negative thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Some participants shared with us that they banned themselves from certain social media platforms or deactivated their accounts due to the negative thoughts that frequently arose when participants checked social media first thing in the morning as evident below:

I found that's how I was starting my day off: either scrolling through other people's things and thinking, “Oh, she's got a great life, look at her clothes. Look what holiday she's been on, look how great she looks.” ... So, I wasn't starting the day feeling good about myself, I was comparing myself to people that I didn't really know. Then, the side of a lot of doom and gloom, people tend to share quite a lot of negative things ... So, I thought, “Just get rid of it all.” (SMU<sub>19</sub>)

One common frustration among the participants was seeing random things in social media such as stories, images, or posts that left them with in a negative feeling when they were no longer engaged with social media. Examples include seeing gothic images with

violence, or someone ran over by a bus or similar examples that could not be forgotten (e.g., SMU<sub>33</sub>, SMU<sub>5</sub>).

Negative feelings were also aroused in participants when they experienced personally hurtful political, religious, or other ongoing debates on social media. Some participants who read those comments, typically made by friends, were hurt but did not respond (SMU<sub>5</sub>) and just grumbled in their minds (SMU<sub>22</sub>); some responded; and some terminated their friendship, as evident in the following quotation: “[I unfriended] a friend of mine [on Facebook who] was ... going into what I would call white supremacy ... no matter how you respond back, it's just going to create more negativity, more hate, more junk ... I don't need negativity in my life.” (SMU<sub>13</sub>)

Our participants also expressed frustration with seeing pictures about individuals or things they did not care about. Interviewees shared with us that in some cases they unfollowed posts from certain connections to avoid such frustrations, but some ended up scrolling them and feeding their frustration without being interested; SMU<sub>8</sub> describes a common situation: “I just got annoyed with [those] posting so much crap ... because it was just like they were living their lives through social media, like, ‘I'm having this for breakfast,’ ‘I'm doing this now,’ and I was like, So what? Everyone else is doing this as well”.

A group of participants who were connected to their work colleagues through social media and checked social media first thing in the morning had concerns about the impact of those messages on how they started their day. In cases of crisis, some work colleagues reached participants through their social media platforms. Even if the participants were not available for help, hearing the problem could affect their personal life routine or their rest quality. SMU<sub>37</sub> described,

Recently ... I woke up in the morning to see a message put down [on social media] by the store manager ... It wasn't really a good message ... I'd say it probably puts you

in a mood or a bad mood. It's not a very positive outlook when you already have that information first thing in the morning.”

***Causing addictive habits.*** Although only five participants could be categorized as extreme cases of having a boundary-switch addiction when crossing boundaries between social media and their work and nonwork domains, more than half of the participants said they felt they were somehow addicted to their phones or had developed the addictive habit of constantly checking social media notifications. In many cases, the participants did not expect specific messages when checking their phones; they simply did it because that was the first thing to come to their mind when they were bored or needed a rest. We also found extreme cases of checking social media in the middle of the night while in bed, as shown in the example below.

[Checking Facebook frequently is] completely illogical ... especially when the people that I care about most in my life aren't really on [it] and... a lot of the people that come up on my feed, are not really people I care about, so why do I go into it? I don't know. It's bizarre. I ask the same question. And my logical brain is, like, “Why are you doing it? Why do you need to go into Facebook right now?” And I don't know what the answer is. And that's why I feel ... it's like an addictive habit more than anything. (SMU<sub>2</sub>)

***Hindering concentration.*** The instant nature of social media platforms and constant message notifications interrupted participants or shifted their focus from their intended activities to social media feeds. A group of participants said they turned off their notifications to reduce such interruptions, but carrying a smartphone, and speculating there might be new messages, tempted them to check their phones frequently. Below is one example:

I do some Bible reading and I use a Facebook group to access the Bible excerpts and the notes ... I guess, because of the way Facebook is set up, it pushes that news story

to my top every morning ... normally, if I'm really tired and I don't want to concentrate, my plan is to look at what I'm planning to look at, but I instead scroll through other things. (SMU<sub>22</sub>)

### **Discussion and Theoretical Implications**

Our findings extend work-nonwork scholarship to include virtual domains and to inform future researchers who might explore several mediators and moderators that might be associated with the interface between virtual and nonvirtual domains. In this research, we focused solely on the social media domain and examined its interface with work and nonwork domains. Future research can examine other virtual domains such as a virtual leisure domain (e.g., online multiplayer games) or a virtual professional domain (which complements the existing studies on teleworking and technology-mediated working, such as online job search, online personal branding campaigns, or online continuing education). In addition, conceptualizing social media as a virtual domain makes it possible to examine the bidirectional relationships between virtual and nonvirtual domains. We were unable to capture the nuances of work-to-social media or nonwork-to-social media relationships because the idea of assuming social media to be a virtual domain emerged during data analysis, but we highlight an important gap that can be addressed by future researchers. In other words, future research can explore work/nonwork-to-social media enrichment and conflict to develop a broader understanding of this phenomenon.

Our findings extend work-nonwork boundary theory by developing a more comprehensive grasp of the SMUs' boundary management profiles. We identified four transition modes adopted by our participants to transition between their social media and work/nonwork domains that add a dimension to the existing work-nonwork boundary literature. We provided evidence that the SMUs did not necessarily follow the same patterns in transitioning boundaries between two nonvirtual domains as between a virtual and a

nonvirtual domain. This means that future studies should widen their lens to capture the nuances of employees' boundary preferences when managing domains of different natures. In addition, we encourage future researchers to examine boundary management between two virtual domains, which will complement our findings.

We argue that the interactive, fluid, and dynamic nature of the social media domain as well as the possibility of constant connectivity to it while at work or nonwork have led to the emergence of boundary-switch addiction—an extreme case of failure in boundary management—that has been seen as a potential mental health problem for some users (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Previous research has addressed addiction to social media to some extent (e.g., Sriwilai & Charoensukmongkol, 2016); we contend that treating social media as a virtual domain that can have boundaries with other domains, and impacts and is impacted by its users, might provide more insight into this issue.

Our findings on social media-to-work enrichment and conflict illustrate that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy that organizations can adopt for employees' social media usage at work. The social media domain was shown to both enrich and conflict with the SMUs' work domain, depending on their contingencies and experiences. The strengths of the enrichment and conflict mechanisms between social media and work domains can be further explored to enable practitioners to make more informed decisions regarding social media use at work.

We found ten mechanisms through which social media enriched or conflicted with the SMUs' nonwork domains, and five mechanisms through which it enriched or conflicted with their work domains. At first glance, organization scholars might perceive these findings to be more relevant to the nonwork domain than to the work domain, but we disagree. Extensive literature has shown that employees' work and nonwork domains impact one another; for example, from research we know that lack of sleep and sleepiness at work impair employees' ability to interpret information, interact with others effectively, and contribute

fully to the organization (Budnick & Barber, 2015; Swanson et al., 2011). We argue that social media-to-nonwork enrichment or conflict will eventually spill over to the work domain, and this is what future researchers need to address. The majority of existing studies focus solely on social media use at work or work-related ICT usage at home; however, an employee who has devoted extensive time to social media use at home, has disengaged from their family due to social media addiction and will not perform at work the same as employees without such an addiction. Another example is an immigrant employee who manages to socialize with distant family and friends through social media in an affordable manner, or who receives social support through social media during nonwork time and manages to overcome typical challenges faced by similar employees (e.g., Ladkin, Willis, Jain, Clayton, & Marouda, 2016). Therefore, we suggest future researchers become simultaneously mindful of the interface between social media and both work and nonwork domains so they can address conflicts that might arise from employees' engagement with social media and reinforce social media-to-nonwork or work enrichment mechanisms.

### **Limitations and Practical Implications**

Due to the qualitative nature of our research, we cannot generalize our findings, but our explorations can inform individuals and organizations engaged with social media in similar contexts. All our participants resided in the United Kingdom, which is a Western country where individuals and organizations have had access to social media for more than a decade. Individuals in other geographical areas, where public access to broadband internet and social media is fairly recent, or where certain social media platforms are filtered, might have different experiences with the social media and work or nonwork interfaces. Furthermore, the majority of our participants represented employees with professional jobs; employees with precarious jobs might provide a different picture of the impact of social media on their personal and professional lives.



Our findings revealed how social media enriched or conflicted with our participants' personal and professional lives. This is of value to many groups, including employees who engage with social media, human resource management (HRM) professionals in charge of developing social media-related policies and training, and organizations using social media for business purposes. We argued that the interface between the social media domain and nonwork domain deserves further attention, as the majority of enrichment and conflict mechanisms occurred in the interface between those two domains. It is important for organizations not to limit their interventions to social media usage at work, but to help employees become mindful of their social media behaviors in general. HRM professionals might invest in initiatives that raise employee awareness about personal social media usage and help them reflect on usage behaviors that might conflict with their nonvirtual domains.

One of the four boundary transition modes identified in our findings was boundary-switch addiction. Organizations should provide support mechanisms and relevant training for employees who find it challenging to manage their social media usage, as it might have detrimental effects on their personal and professional lives. Creating an environment where individuals feel safe to share these issues and ask for help is a prerequisite for providing support. Learning about conflict mechanisms, such as being penalized for personal ideas, organizations might re-evaluate and revise their relevant policies to protect employees from these negative experiences.

#### References

- Allen, T. D. (2012). The work-family interface. In S. W. J. Kozlowski (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 1163-1198). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Allen, T. D., Cho, E., & Meier, L. L. (2014). Work–family boundary dynamics. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *1*(1), 99-121.  
doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091330
- Allen, T. D., French, K. A., Dumani, S., & Shockley, K. M. (2020). A cross-national meta-analytic examination of predictors and outcomes associated with work–family conflict. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *105*(6), 539-576. doi:10.1037/apl0000442
- Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E. L., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *5*(2), 278-308. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.5.2.278
- Ammons, S. K. (2013). Work-family boundary strategies: Stability and alignment between preferred and enacted boundaries. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *82*(1), 49-58.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.11.002>
- Armstrong, D., Gosling, A., Weinman, J., & Marteau, T. (1997). The Place of Inter-Rater Reliability in Qualitative Research: An Empirical Study. *Sociology*, *31*(3), 597-606.  
doi:10.1177/0038038597031003015
- Ashforth, B. E., Kreiner, G. E., & Fugate, M. (2000). All in a Day's Work: Boundaries and Micro Role Transitions. *The Academy of Management Review*, *25*(3), 472-491.  
doi:10.2307/259305
- Bizzi, L. (2020). Should HR managers allow employees to use social media at work? Behavioral and motivational outcomes of employee blogging. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *31*(10), 1285-1312.  
doi:10.1080/09585192.2017.1402359
- Bucher, E., Fieseler, C., & Suphan, A. (2013). The stress potential of social media in the workplace. *Information, Communication & Society*, *16*(10), 1639-1667.  
doi:10.1080/1369118X.2012.710245

- Budnick, C. J., & Barber, L. K. (2015). Behind sleepy eyes: Implications of sleep loss for organizations and employees. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science, 1*(1), 89-96. doi:10.1037/tps0000014
- Butts, M. M., Becker, W. J., & Boswell, W. R. (2015). Hot Buttons and Time Sinks: The Effects of Electronic Communication During Nonwork Time on Emotions and Work-Nonwork Conflict. *Academy of Management Journal, 58*(3), 763-788.  
doi:10.5465/amj.2014.0170
- Caporael, L. R., & Xie, B. (2003). Breaking Time and Place: Mobile Technologies and Reconstituted Identities. In J. E. Katz (Ed.), *Machines That Become Us: The Social Context of Personal Communication Technology*. New York: Routledge.
- Charoensukmongkol, P. (2014). Effects of support and job demands on social media use and work outcomes. *Computers in Human Behavior, 36*, 340-349.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.03.061>
- Choroszewicz, M., & Kay, F. (2019). The use of mobile technologies for work-to-family boundary permeability: The case of Finnish and Canadian male lawyers. *Human Relations, 0018726719865762*. doi:10.1177/0018726719865762
- Christensen, T. H. (2009). 'Connected presence' in distributed family life. *New Media & Society, 11*(3), 433-451. doi:10.1177/1461444808101620
- 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
- Colbert, A., Yee, N., & George, G. (2016). The Digital Workforce and the Workplace of the Future. *Academy of Management Journal, 59*(3), 731-739.  
doi:10.5465/amj.2016.4003
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Derks, D., Bakker, A. B., Peters, P., & van Wingerden, P. (2016). Work-related smartphone use, work–family conflict and family role performance: The role of segmentation preference. *Human Relations*, *69*(5), 1045-1068. doi:10.1177/0018726715601890
- Derks, D., van Duin, D., Tims, M., & Bakker, A. B. (2015). 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
- Duxbury, L., Higgins, C., Smart, R., & Stevenson, M. (2014). Mobile Technology and Boundary Permeability. *British Journal of Management*, *25*(3), 570-588. doi:10.1111/1467-8551.12027
- Edwards, J. R., & Rothbard, N. P. (2000). Mechanisms Linking Work and Family: Clarifying the Relationship Between Work and Family Constructs. *Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 178-199. doi:10.5465/amr.2000.2791609
- Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- French, K. A., & Johnson, R. C. (2016). A Retrospective Timeline of the Evolution of Work–Family Research. In T. D. Allen & L. T. Eby (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Work and Family* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frone, M. R. (2003). Work-family balance. In J. C. Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational health psychology*: American Psychological Association.
- Gadeyne, N., Verbruggen, M., Delanoëije, J., & De Cooman, R. (2018). All wired, all tired? Work-related ICT-use outside work hours and work-to-home conflict: The role of integration preference, integration norms and work demands. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *107*, 86-99. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.03.008>

- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles. *Academy of Management Review*, *10*(1), 76-88.  
doi:10.5465/amr.1985.4277352
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When Work And Family Are Allies: A Theory Of Work-Family Enrichment. *Academy of Management Review*, *31*(1), 72-92.  
doi:10.5465/amr.2006.19379625
- Hesse-Biber, S. J. N., & Leavy, P. L. (2010). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Hislop, D., & Axtell, C. (2011). Mobile phones during work and non-work time: A case study of mobile, non-managerial workers. *Information and Organization*, *21*(1), 41-56. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2011.01.001>
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. (2011). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*: Routledge.
- Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Work and Family in the United States: A Critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
- Kim, S., Furst-Holloway, S., Hollensbe, E., Masterson, S., Sprinkle, T., & Bologna, D. (2019). A Qualitative Study of “online” Work Breaks. *Organization Management Journal*, *16*(4), 235-250. doi:10.1080/15416518.2019.1663142
- Kirkman, B. L., & Mathieu, J. E. (2005). The Dimensions and Antecedents of Team Virtuality. *Journal of Management*, *31*(5), 700-718. doi:10.1177/0149206305279113
- Kossek, E. (2016). Managing work–life boundaries in the digital age. *Organizational Dynamics*, *45*(3), 258-270. doi:10.1016/j.orgdyn.2016.07.010
- Kossek, E., & Lautsch, B. A. (2008). *CEO of me: Creating a life that works in the flexible job age*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

- Kossek, E., & Lautsch, B. A. (2012). Work–family boundary management styles in organizations: A cross-level model. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 2(2), 152-171. doi:10.1177/2041386611436264
- Kossek, E., Noe, R. A., & DeMarr, B. J. (1999). Work-family role synthesis: Individual and organizational determinants. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 10(2), 102-129. doi:doi:10.1108/eb022820
- Kossek, E., Ruderman, M. N., Braddy, P. W., & Hannum, K. M. (2012). Work–nonwork boundary management profiles: A person-centered approach. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 81(1), 112-128. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.04.003>
- Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C., & Sheep, M. L. (2009). Balancing Borders and Bridges: Negotiating the Work-Home Interface via Boundary Work Tactics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(4), 704-730. doi:10.5465/amj.2009.43669916
- Kühnel, J., Vahle-Hinz, T., de Bloom, J., & Syrek, C. J. (2020). Staying in touch while at work: Relationships between personal social media use at work and work-nonwork balance and creativity. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(10), 1235-1261. doi:10.1080/09585192.2017.1396551
- Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2011). Online Social Networking and Addiction—A Review of the Psychological Literature. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(9), 3528-3552.
- Ladkin, A., Willis, C., Jain, J., Clayton, W., & Marouda, M. (2016). Business travellers' connections to home: ICTs supporting work-life balance. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 31(3), 255-270. doi:10.1111/ntwe.12071
- Leonardi, P. M., & Vaast, E. (2017). Social Media and Their Affordances for Organizing: A Review and Agenda for Research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 150-188. doi:10.5465/annals.2015.0144

- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, California: Sage.
- Liu, S., Zhang, Y., Chen, L., Guo, L., & Yu, D. (2015). Enterprise WeChat Groups: Their Effect on Work-Life Conflict and Life-Work Enhancement. *Front. Bus. Res. China*, 9(4), 516-535. doi:10.3868/s070-004-015-0020-5
- Mazmanian, M., Orlikowski, W. J., & Yates, J. (2013). The Autonomy Paradox: The Implications of Mobile Email Devices for Knowledge Professionals. *Organization Science*, 24(5), 1337-1357. doi:10.1287/orsc.1120.0806
- McNall, L. A., Nicklin, J. M., & Masuda, A. D. (2010). A Meta-Analytic Review of the Consequences Associated with Work-Family Enrichment. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(3), 381-396. doi:10.1007/s10869-009-9141-1
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass: John Wiley & Sons.
- Michel, J. S., Kotrba, L. M., Mitchelson, J. K., Clark, M. A., & Baltes, B. B. (2011). Antecedents of work-family conflict: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32(5), 689-725. doi:10.1002/job.695
- Michel, J. S., Mitchelson, J. K., Kotrba, L. M., LeBreton, J. M., & Baltes, B. B. (2009). A comparative test of work-family conflict models and critical examination of work-family linkages. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(2), 199-218.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.12.005>
- Mullan, K., & Wajcman, J. (2019). Have mobile devices changed working patterns in the 21st century? A time-diary analysis of work extension in the UK. *Work, Employment and Society*, 33(1), 3-20.
- Nippert-Eng, C. (1996). *Calendars and keys: The classification of "home" and "work"*. Paper presented at the Sociological Forum.

- Nippert-Eng, C. (2008). *Home and work: Negotiating boundaries through everyday life*. University of Chicago Press.
- Ollier-Malaterre, A., Jacobs, J. A., & Rothbard, N. P. (2019). Technology, Work, and Family: Digital Cultural Capital and Boundary Management. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 45(1), 425-447. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-073018-022433
- Olson-Buchanan, J. B., Boswell, W. R., & Morgan, T. J. (2016). The role of technology in managing the work and nonwork interface. In E. L. T. Allen T. D. (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Work and Family* (pp. 333–361). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Park, Y., Liu, Y., & Headrick, L. (2020). When work is wanted after hours: Testing weekly stress of information communication technology demands using boundary theory. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 41(6), 518-534. doi:10.1002/job.2461
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Piszcdek, M. M. (2017). Boundary control and controlled boundaries: Organizational expectations for technology use at the work–family interface. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(4), 592-611. doi:10.1002/job.2153
- Powell, G. N., Greenhaus, J. H., Allen, T. D., & Johnson, R. E. (2019). Introduction to Special Topic Forum: Advancing and Expanding Work-Life Theory from Multiple Perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 44(1), 54-71. doi:10.5465/amr.2018.0310
- Raghuram, S., Hill, N. S., Gibbs, J. L., & Maruping, L. M. (2019). Virtual Work: Bridging Research Clusters. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(1), 308-341. doi:10.5465/annals.2017.0020
- Schlachter, S., McDowall, A., Copley, M., & Inceoglu, I. (2018). Voluntary Work-related Technology Use during Non-work Time: A Narrative Synthesis of Empirical



- Research and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(4), 825-846. doi:10.1111/ijmr.12165
- Siegert, S., & Löwstedt, J. (2019). Online boundary work tactics: an affordance perspective. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 34(1), 18-36. doi:10.1111/ntwe.12126
- Sriwilai, K., & Charoensukmongkol, P. (2016). Face it, don't Facebook it: Impacts of Social Media Addiction on Mindfulness, Coping Strategies and the Consequence on Emotional Exhaustion. *Stress and Health*, 32(4), 427-434. doi:10.1002/smi.2637
- Swanson, L. M., Arnedt, J. T., Rosekind, M. R., Belenky, G., Balkin, T. J., & Drake, C. (2011). Sleep disorders and work performance: findings from the 2008 National Sleep Foundation Sleep in America poll. *Journal of Sleep Research*, 20(3), 487-494. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2869.2010.00890.x
- Syrek, C. J., Kühnel, J., Vahle-Hinz, T., & De Bloom, J. (2018). Share, like, twitter, and connect: Ecological momentary assessment to examine the relationship between non-work social media use at work and work engagement. *Work & Stress*, 32(3), 209-227. doi:10.1080/02678373.2017.1367736
- van Zoonen, W., & Rice, R. E. (2017). Paradoxical implications of personal social media use for work. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 32(3), 228-246. doi:10.1111/ntwe.12098
- 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
- Wajcman, J., Rose, E., Brown, J. E., & Bittman, M. (2010). Enacting virtual connections between work and home. *Journal of Sociology*, 46(3), 257-275. doi:10.1177/1440783310365583

- Walden, J. A. (2016). Integrating Social Media Into the Workplace: A Study of Shifting Technology Use Repertoires. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 60(2), 347-363. doi:10.1080/08838151.2016.1164163
- Wang, X., Gao, L., & Lin, Z. (2019). Help or harm? The effects of ICTs usage on work–life balance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 34(8), 533-545. doi:10.1108/JMP-02-2019-0093
- Wilson, R. E., Gosling, S. D., & Graham, L. T. (2012). A Review of Facebook Research in the Social Sciences. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 7(3), 203-220. doi:10.1177/1745691612442904
- Yang, F. X. (2020). Social media friending in building coworker guanxi: A study in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 84, 102183. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.10.020>
- Yang, F. X., & Wong, I. A. (2020). How do cyberspace friendships transition to favorable workplace outcomes? The self-team joint influence. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 85, 102363. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2019.102363>
- Zedeck, S. E. (1992). *Work, families, and organizations*: Jossey-Bass.
- Zhang, Y., Xu, S., Jin, J., & Ford, M. T. (2018). The within and cross domain effects of work-family enrichment: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 104, 210-227. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.11.003>

Table 1. Social Media Domain and Work and Nonwork Domains Enrichment and Conflict

<b>Social Media-to-Work/Nonwork Enrichment</b>	
<b>Social Media-to-Work Enrichment</b>	<b>Social Media-to-Nonwork Enrichment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining contact with family</li> <li>• Facilitating self-promotion and professional opportunities</li> <li>• Accommodating non-traditional professional communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling socialization and efficient communication</li> <li>• Giving voice</li> <li>• Providing social support mechanisms</li> <li>• Inspiring through positivity and fun</li> <li>• Keeping informed</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media-to-Work/Nonwork Conflict</b>	
<b>Social Media-to-Work Conflict</b>	<b>Social Media-to-Nonwork Conflict</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreasing productivity</li> <li>• Breaching privacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disengaging from family and personal activities</li> <li>• Taking extensive time</li> <li>• Arousing negativity and frustration</li> <li>• Causing addictive habits</li> <li>• Hindering concentration</li> </ul>