

Use of mobile devices at home can carry conflict to workplace

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A University of Texas at Arlington researcher is part of a team of authors who have found that using a mobile device at home for work purposes has negative implications for the employee's work life and also their spouse.

Wayne Crawford, assistant professor of management in UTA's College of Business, was one of five authors on "Your Job Is Messing With Mine! The Impact of Mobile Device Use for Work During Family Time on the Spouse's Work Life," recently published in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.

Dawn Carson, Baylor University; Meredith Thompson, Utah State University; and Wendy Boswell and Dwayne Whitten, Texas A&M University; also contributed to the study.

In all, 344 married couples were surveyed. All participants worked fulltime and used [mobile devices](#) or tablets at home for work purposes.

"There is plenty of research on technology and how it affects employees," Crawford said. "We wanted to see if this technology use carried over to affect the spouse negatively at work."

The couples' survey results showed that use of a mobile device during family time resulted in lower job satisfaction and lower job performance.

"It's really no surprise that conflict was created when a spouse is using a mobile [device](#) at home," Crawford said. "They're sometimes engaging in work activities during family time. What that ultimately leads to, though, is trouble at work for both [spouses](#). So, whether companies care or don't care about employees being plugged in, those firms need to know that the relationship tension created by their interaction with their employees during non-work hours ultimately leads to work-life trouble."

Abdul Rasheed, chair of the Department of Management, said Crawford's work is illuminating for businesses.

"That extra time spent on mobile devices after hours might not be worth it if the grief it causes results in productivity losses once the conflict is carried back to work," Rasheed said. "Businesses have to think about accomplishing tasks more efficiently while people are at [work](#)."

More information: Dawn S. Carlson et al. Your Job Is Messing With Mine! The Impact of Mobile Device Use for Work During Family Time on the Spouse's Work Life., *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1037/ocp0000103](https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000103)

Provided by University of Texas at Arlington

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