

Why do workers feel “tied” to their mobile devices? And is this a bad thing?

In an iLEAD-funded study that was conducted in 2013 at a multispecialty group practice and healthcare provider of a large Midwestern teaching hospital, Drs. Jenny Hoobler (UIC) and Wendy Casper (University of Texas at Arlington), and Morgan Wilson (Mount St. Mary’s University), discovered that workers with

- **Stronger relational identities**
 (“My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am”)
- **A higher drive to manage their impression with others**
 (“Stay at work late so people know I am hard working”)
- **Who were higher in conscientiousness**
 (“efficient; organized”)

were the ones who felt the most psychologically and physically dependent on their mobile communication devices.

Other findings:

The more responsive workers were to to smartphone interruptions from work while not working, the more they reported

- **Higher job stress**
 - **Greater work-to-family conflict**
 (the job interfering with their personal life),
 which decreased their career satisfaction;
 and the more their family members reported
 - **Work-to-family conflict.**
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Which employees were the most likely to respond to a smartphone interruption from work while not at work?

- **Workers with the highest workloads**
- **Those with the strongest work identities**
 (“I invest a large part of myself in my work”).