**The Understanding of the Relationship between**

**Workplace Groups and Family Relationships**

**1. Purpose of Study:**

In conducting this research, the purpose is to understand the relationship between working in organizational groups and communicating with people outside of the workplace. Research indicates that the popularity of groups in organizations is increasing and groups are often the link between individuals and the organization they work in (Silva & Sias, 2010). There has been extensive research into the connection of the work life and home life, but thus far, no research has been done on the specific role of groups in relationships outside of the workplace. With individuals working more shifts and longer hours to support their families, the relationship between work life and home life is one that warrants research. One of the major factors related to group work in organizations is job satisfaction and how a person feels about the tasks they are assigned to do within their groups. The combination of these three variables has led me to the proposed research project in order to help employers understand the impact of the groups they use within the workplace.

The purpose of this study is to look at people who work in organizations and understand the impact of the groups within the organization on the lives of employees outside of the workplace. For this reason, students will not be considered for the survey since many of them have a work life and home life that overlap and are hard to distinguish individually. Data collection will happen at one time and will measure the atmosphere of the most common work group the participant is involved in, his/her job satisfaction, and his/her willingness to communicate with a variety of people based upon group participation at work. In order to answer the research questions related to groups, job satisfaction, and the willingness to communicate outside of the home, three independent scales will be used to measure the variables.

The survey will not ask for any identifying data that would distinguish the participants, it will however have a few demographic questions to help the researcher understand the audience. The researcher anticipates presenting this report at a national or regional conference to help organizations understand the impact of their formed groups on the lives of employees outside of the workplace. This research should give employers a look at ways they can adapt the way groups are used to help improve the overall atmosphere and attitude of the employees.

**2. Subject Population Description:**

Approximately 250 working adults will be sought for this study. Only participants that have a distinct work life and home life will be sought, so the use of students will not be considered.

**3. Research Procedures/Methods:**

The subjects sought for this investigation will first be individuals in the personal network of the researcher. From this point, it will take on a snowballing method, with the end of each survey asking the participant to pass it along to others in their workplace. Because of the wide variety of people in the network of the researcher, he anticipates a geographical spread across the United States of various people working in a wide variety of organizations.

The survey will be distributed electronically via a link in email. The survey should take participants about 10-15 minutes to complete and there will be no reward for completing the survey.

Participants will be notified that this study will be conducted through the Department of Communication Studies at Texas State University with the help of Dr. Marian Houser. The only people with access to the data of this survey will be the researcher and Dr. Marian Houser. The electronic data will be maintained in the Principal Investigator’s computer files. It will be destroyed within 2 years of collection and as the electronic consent form will remain separate from the survey and data files, no names will ever be associated with the data.

**4. Potential Risks and Safeguards:**

This study involves very minimal risk. Survey questions ask employees to think about a situation at work, but it does not exceed normal day-to-day risks that employees encounter. If a participant does not feel comfortable taking the survey, they may decline to participate without any penalty. They will also be informed that they can speak with the researcher or the campus IRB office and staff.

**5. Potential Benefits:**

There will be no payment benefits for the individuals taking the survey, but they will be informed and encouraged to read the final study when it is produced. Extra credit may be offered to students in Communication classes if their parents take the survey or if they recruit a family member to take it. At the end of the survey, there will be a question asking them to fill in the name of the student and the student’s instructor for them to receive extra credit. Very little research has been done in relation to groups and the relationship between work-life and home-life. This research has the potential to have a lasting impact on organizations that reconsider their use of groups based on the findings in the study. This will add to the literature on the balance between work-life and home-life in a significant way.