

5-1-2014

## Work and Home-Life Balance: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employee Satisfaction in the West and Midwest

Amanda Connick  
*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations>



Part of the [Hospitality Administration and Management Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Connick, Amanda, "Work and Home-Life Balance: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employee Satisfaction in the West and Midwest" (2014). *UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones*. 2068. <http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/5836087>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@unlv.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@unlv.edu).

WORK AND HOME-LIFE BALANCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HOTEL  
EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN THE WEST AND MIDWEST

By

Amanda Connick

Bachelor Degree of Science in Travel and Tourism

University of Nebraska Kearney

2012

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the

Masters of Science - Hotel Administration

William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

May 2014

---

Copyright by Amanda Connick, 2014

All Rights Reserved

---



## THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the thesis prepared under our supervision by

**Amanda Connick**

entitled

**Work and Home-Life Balance: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employee Satisfaction in the West and Midwest**

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Science - Hotel Administration**

**William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration**

Alison Green, Ph.D., Committee Chair

William Werner, J.D., Committee Member

Anthony Gatling, Ph.D., Committee Member

Vicki Rosser, Ph.D., Graduate College Representative

Kathryn Hausbeck Korgan, Ph.D., Interim Dean of the Graduate College

**May 2014**

## **ABSTRACT**

Work and home-life balance: A comparative study of hotel employee satisfaction in the  
West and Midwest

by

Amanda Connick

Dr. Alison Green, Examination Committee Chair

Assistant Professor of Hotel Administration

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This study was conducted in the Western and Midwestern United States at mid-scale hotels with no food and beverage services regarding hotel employee satisfaction of work and home-life balance. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing employee perceptions of work and home-life balance, and to determine whether the regional locations of the work influence those perceptions.

The data was collected using an online survey from several hotels in the Western U.S. and Midwestern U.S. A total of 120 surveys were completed, 78 were usable. There were 45 respondents from the Midwest and 33 respondents from the West. The data shows that there is no significant difference between regions in regards to satisfaction of work and home-life balance.

There were factors that showed similarities between regions and work and home-life satisfaction. These factors include: time management skills, missing home responsibilities because of work, a supportive work environment, and commute. Both regions viewed these factors similarly and each factor was cross examined with work and home-life balance to establish a correspondence.

The overall findings of the study will help both hotel employers and hotel employees find a balance between work and home-life satisfaction.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, I want to thank my husband, Mike, for all his patience, understanding, and support throughout the past few years. He is God's greatest gift to me and I could not have done this without him. He has taught me to work hard, but always find time for you, which has saved me this past year. I truly am blessed to have him in my life.

Secondly, I would like to thank my chair, Dr. Alison Green, who has sat with me for hours on end and replied to thousands of emails to help me stay on track. She was not only my mentor throughout this process, but my friend. She challenged me to do better than my best because she always saw something more in me than I could ever see. Her confidence in me has made me a better person.

Next, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. William Werner, Dr. Anthony Gatling, and Dr. Vikki Rosser. These people helped me to perfect my thesis and were always available if I had questions or needed assistance.

My family, although far away, have been so supportive and always available to listen. My mom, Heidi, and dad, Neal, have always been so incredibly supportive and such great role models for me growing up. My sister, Ambur, and my brother, Devin, who always make me smile and help me to remember I don't always have to be serious.

Lastly, I want to thank my friends for helping me: Jill, April, Jewell, Daryl, and Brian. Some old friends, and some new, but all very important to me. These people have helped me so much, that I cannot thank them enough for their love and support.

## **Table of Contents**

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Purpose of this study .....	2
Problem Statement .....	3
Hypotheses .....	3
Importance of the study .....	4
Definitions.....	4
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	6
Effect of Balance on Employee Performance and Satisfaction .....	6
Factors of Work and Home-Life Balance .....	9
Time Restrictions .....	9
Personal Issues .....	10
Characteristics of Employees with Good Work and Home-Life Balance .....	12
Characteristics of Employees with Poor Work and Home-Life Balance .....	12
Factors Influencing Work and Home-Life Balance.....	14
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	18
Purpose of this study .....	18

Hypotheses .....	18
Sampling and Data Collection .....	18
Reliability and Validity .....	19
Generalizability and Representativeness .....	20
Ethics.....	20
Instrument Design.....	20
Procedure .....	22
Data Analysis .....	23
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS .....	24
Data Collection .....	24
Data Analysis .....	24
Demographics .....	25
Significant Factors .....	28
Non-Significant Factors .....	29
Hypotheses Testing.....	32
Test of Hypothesis 1 .....	32
Test of Hypothesis 2 .....	32
Test of Hypothesis 3 .....	33
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	34
Purpose.....	34



Key Findings .....	34
Limitations .....	37
Implications.....	37
Discussion .....	39
Conclusion .....	40
Future Research .....	41
APPENDIX A: WORK AND HOME-LIFE BALANCE SURVEY .....	42
APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL .....	52
REFERENCES .....	53
CURRICULUM VITA .....	57

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Demographics .....	26
Table 2: Demographics by Region .....	27
Table 3: Hours Per Week Worked .....	28
Table 4: Significant Variables .....	29
Table 5: Non-Significant Variables .....	31
Table 6: Satisfaction ANOVA .....	32
Table 7: Hypotheses.....	33

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Many different characteristics contribute to the success of a company. Employee performance is one of the biggest contributions to business success. Employee satisfaction affects employee performance, which also contributes to the success of a company. Even though employee satisfaction differs from employee to employee, the success of a company still lies in the hands of its employees. Employees have the power to create and reinforce a company's reputation, both positively and negatively. Because of this, it is important for companies to keep their employees satisfied. Although many factors contribute to employee performance and satisfaction, such as, managerial standards, motivation, commitment, time spent at work, and employee evaluations, this study focused specifically on how work and home-life balance effect hotel employee satisfaction (Root, 2014).

In a service industry such as hospitality, it is especially important for employees to be satisfied in order to perform well. Keeping hotel employees satisfied is not always easy since hotels are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; there are few 8-5 workdays, and few weekends off. They are open on holidays, special occasions, on birthdays and anniversaries. Hotel employees are expected to work irregular hours, long shifts, and carry heavy workloads (Deery & Jago, 2009). This causes emotional exhaustion and results in lower levels of performance (Deery & Jago, 2009). Demanding work can cause work stress to spillover to home, which causes stress at home (Riordan, 2013). The stress from home is then brought back to work eventually leading to poor work and home-life balance (Karatepe, 2010). Job stress for hotel employees include salaried employees who work constantly as well as hourly wage employees who work very few hours each week.

High levels of stress can lead to employee burnout (Burg-Brown, 2013). Burg-Brown defines employee burnout as “the point in which important and meaningful work can become unpleasant and unfulfilling. At this point, energy turns into exhaustion, involvement leads to cynicism and efficiency is replaced by [poor performance]” (p. 49). Having a good work and home-life balance is often perceived as spending equal amounts of time at work and at home, but it actually means being able to fully engage while at work and fully engage while at home (Riordan, 2013). It means finding the balance between work-life and home-life that works for each individual (Riordan, 2013).

Some factors that determine good work and home-life balance are: the ability to detach from work while at home, having employers understand work and home-life balance achieves better job satisfaction and performance, finding time for both work and home-life, feeling appreciated while at work by having flexible schedules, and employees understanding their own definition of success. (“A Harmonious Life,” 2004; Hsieh, Kline, & Pearson, 2013; Riordan, 2013; “Work-Life Balance,” 2013). Making work and home-life balance a priority for employees can result in higher levels of job performance, higher levels of job satisfaction, and lower levels of intent to leave (Deery & Jago, 2009).

### **Purpose of this study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing employee perceptions of work and home-life balance, and to determine whether the regional locations of the work influence those perceptions.

The findings of this study can be beneficial to both hotel employers as well as hotel employees. This study explored employees perceptions who worked at mid-scale hotels who lived in the Western region of the United States and who lived in the

Midwestern region of the United States; to educate employers on the importance of work and home-life balance. These findings can assist employers in understanding work and home-life balance of hotel employees and allow employers to understand whether accommodating work and home-life balance of employees is a significant factor in bettering employee performance and satisfaction. From the findings, recommendations are provided on ways a hotel can improve employee satisfaction by promoting good work and home-life balance.

### **Problem Statement**

Poor work and home-life balance was an increasing trend, especially in hospitality employees. The problem was whether work and home-life balance affected job satisfaction. It is important for hospitality employers to understand if work and home-life balance affect employee satisfaction at work. This research provides insight to employees' perceptions of work and home-life balance and the effect on job satisfaction, thus educating employers on the importance of helping employees maintain work and home-life balance.

### **Hypotheses**

H1: Regionality does not influence hotel employees' perception of work and home-life balance.

H2: Hotel employees in the Midwest are more satisfied with their work and home-life balance than hotel employees in the West.

H3: Work and home-life balance does not influence employee satisfaction.

### **Importance of the study**

The importance of this study was to educate hotel employers on the effects of work and home-life balance on employee satisfaction and performance. Research has shown that employees who are highly engaged while at work are more likely to become loyal, valued employees and create a better working environment, while stressed employees show lower levels of performance and become disengaged from a company (Fairweather, 2013). Better work and home-life balance creates more satisfied employees and when employees experience more job satisfaction, they tend to perform better (Deery & Jago, 2009). “Employers are becoming increasingly aware of the cost implications associated with over-worked employees such as: operating and productivity costs, absenteeism, punctuality, commitment and performance” (Abercromby, 2007). It is important to know and understand work and home-life balance, even though work and home-life balance is only one factor contributing to the success of a company.

### **Definitions**

Throughout this study, the following terms are used:

**Burnout** - The point in which an employee has become exhausted and can no longer perform the job at hand effectively (Burg-Brown, 2013).

**Employee Satisfaction** - Employers have fulfilled the needs of the individual employee, which can be measured by turn-over rate, employee performance, and employee reviews (Hsu & Wang, 2008).

**Employee Performance** - How well the jobs assigned to an employee are fulfilled. This is typically measured by guest complaints, revenue, and employee evaluations (Wang, Liu, & Cong, 2012).

**Mid-Scale Hotel** - A hotel with less than 200 rooms and does not have a restaurant.

**Occupational Stress** - Stress created by a job that affects an individual personally and within an organization (Blomme, Rheede, & Tromp, 2010).

**Spillover** - When the emotions from one aspect of life are carried over to other aspects (Riordan, 2013).

**Work and Home-Life Balance** - Finding the balance between life at work and life at home that works for each individual (Riordan, 2013).

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Effect of Balance on Employee Performance and Satisfaction**

Many hospitality supervisors think that work and home-life balance is a myth. However, according to Li (2014), an industry professional, “There is no such thing as work-life balance. There’s only a series of less-than-optimal compromises” (p. 1). Research has shown that when employees feel they do not have enough personal time, they become drained and distracted while at work (Riordan, 2013). Many Human Resource managers have found that stress is great impediment to employee performance (Jehangir, Kareem, Khan, Jan, & Soherwardi, 2011). The negative spillover from home to work leads to job exhaustion, disruption of relationships at work and at home, loss of enjoyment, and increased stress (Riordan, 2013). According to Rigby (2010), evidence indicates that balance between work and home-life matter for health, well-being, and performance. Blomme, Rheede, and Tromp (2010) suggest that having a poor work and home-life balance is the number one reason why hospitality employees leave a company.

“The biggest threat to the harmony of a corporate family....can often be the employees’ real families” (Brimmer, 2013, p. 32). Stressed caused by a poor work and home-life balance can cause negative health issues for employees which results in more sick days and poor performance (Gordon, 2012). Work and home-life balance correlates with job satisfaction (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010). When employees feel they have good work and home-life balance, they tend to have higher job satisfaction, which results in higher levels of job performance. The opposite is also true; when an employee feels they have poor work and home-life balance, they tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction as well as lower levels of job performance. Lower levels of job satisfaction and lower levels



of job performance cause an increase in absenteeism and higher rates of turn-over (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010).

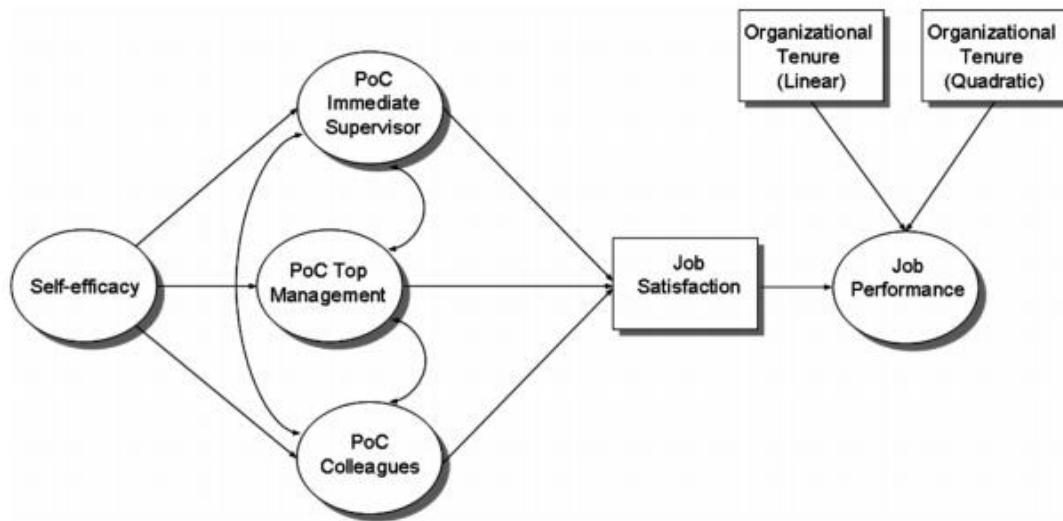
Employee satisfaction has decreased from 1999 to 2009 due to poor work and home-life balance (Van Horn, 2013). In 1999, 51% of employees were satisfied with their work and home-life balance. In 2009, that number decreased to 40% (Van Horn, 2013). The decrease in employee satisfaction with work and home-life balance is one of the main reasons that hospitality has such a high turnover rate. A study done by Hsieh, Pearson, and Kline (2009) shows turnover for front line employees in hospitality to be 158%, supervisors at 136%, and management at 129%. The study also shows that an increase in female employees in the hospitality industry (41% in 1995 to 46% in 2000) is also a key reason why work and home-life balance is decreasing employee satisfaction. This demographic shift in the workplace is putting more pressure on both male and female employees on managing work and home obligations (Baral, & Bhargava, 2011).

When employees struggle to find work and home-life balance, it causes stress, inefficiency towards duties, and/or disengagement from a company (Fairweather, 2013). Many studies have shown that if an employee cannot find the balance between work and home-life, most of the time that employee will choose home-life (Withiam, 2013). Most managers will not sacrifice their family and personal life for work. According to Hsieh & Eggers (2010), family time is more important than a job for most workers.

Research has shown that job satisfaction predicts job performance (Borgogni, Dello Russo, Petitta, & Vecchione, 2010). With an increase in job stress, job performance falls (Jehangir et al., 2011). Negative issues turn into distractions and interfere with an employees' ability to do work. The more satisfied employees are with

their job, the more likely the employees will engage in positive behavior and perform are efficiently (Borgogni et al., 2010). This can also be reversed. Employees can bring positive issues to work and improve the employees' ability to do work. Work and home-life roles "...can either help or hurt each other. They may be allies, or they may be enemies" (Williams-Myers & Kwansa, 2010, p. 41). Figure 1 from Borgogni, Dello Russo, Petitta, and Vecchione (2010), shows the correlation between job satisfaction and job performance.

**Figure 1: Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Job Performance (Borgogni, Dello Russo, & Vecchione, 2010)**



Withiam (2013) suggests that one of the biggest reasons hospitality employees leave their job is poor work and home-life balance. Poor work and home-life balance effects service recovery and increases employees' intentions to quit (Karatepe, 2010). A 2008 study shows that employees would much rather be at home than at work (Hsieh, Kline, & Pearson, 2008). That percentage has increased dramatically (Hsieh et. al., 2008). In 2000, 54% of employees would much rather be at home than at work. That study was repeated in 2002 and 70% of employees would rather be at home than at work.

That same study showed that 44% of employees felt they were successful in balancing work and home-life, while 23% felt unsuccessful (Hsieh et al., 2008).

Work and home-life balance is so important to employees that 70% of business professionals would trade a pay raise for an increase in personal time and wellness (Walter, 2013). Achieving good work and home-life balance can benefit the employer, by creating healthier and more satisfied employees. Employees who are healthier and more satisfied tend to be more productive at work.

### **Factors of Work and Home-Life Balance**

#### **Time Restrictions**

One of the primary factors influencing work and home-life balance is time (Riordan, 2013). Many hospitality employees feel they do not have enough time for their personal lives. They feel overwhelmed and stressed after leaving work and that stress is brought home. That stress at home causes personal stress that is brought back to work: the cycle is continuous (Riordan, 2013). Studies have shown that the more time and energy a person puts into one aspect of their life is less time and energy that is left for other aspects of their life (Hsieh et al., 2009). It's a time-based conflict; the more participation in one role, the less participation in the other (Yavas, Karatepe, & Babaku, 2011). Employees feel that the time they dedicate to work is time taken away from personal and family time (Williams-Myers & Kwansa, 2010).

Work and home-life balance is not about spending equal amounts of time at work and at home (Burg-Brown, 2013). Work and home-life balance is about an employees' ability to manage work and home-life together. Each employee has a different fit for balance (Burg-Brown, 2013). That is why it is important for both employers and

employees to find work and home-life balance (Fairweather, 2013). The long and erratic work load presented to hospitality employees creates large amounts of work and home-life stress, which makes finding balance difficult (Fairweather, 2013; Hsieh et al., 2009).

Many time constraints are developed when employees cannot take off sufficient time to look after their dependents (Slanickova, 2004). These dependents can be children, spouses, or adults whom the employee is responsible for. It is important that employees know and understand their rights working for a particular company and receive what they are entitled to, which can help their work and home-life balance (Slanickova, 2004).

### **Personal Issues**

Each employee finds work and home-life balance differently, which is why it is important for each individual to do what is right for them ("A Harmonious Life," 2004; Riordan, 2013). Some employees prefer to be at home more than at work and other employees prefer to be at work more than at home (Riordan, 2013). The number of hours worked is a key component in work and home-life balance (Hsieh et al., 2009). Participation in one aspect of life affects participation in other aspects (Hsieh et al., 2009). "The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it" (Walter, 2013, p. 10). Employees must be able to find work and home-life balance in order to find satisfaction at work and at home ("A Harmonious Life," 2004).

Many hospitality managers have difficulty finding an effective balance between work and home-life (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010). According to Jobcrowd (2014), hotel managers work an average of 10 hour days, six days a week and are on call 24 hours a day. They do not have energy or patience left for their personal lives after leaving work

(Hsieh et al., 2009). The stress from work affects their personal lives negatively causing unnecessary tension between family members and spouses (“Work-Life Balance,” 2013). This causes managers to resent work and they begin to value their home-life more than work (Hsieh et al., 2009). Some employees eventually decide to leave a job because they do not want to continually upset the people in their personal lives (Deery & Jago, 2009). A study published by Blomme et al. (2012) showed 2/3 of 22-32 year olds still work in hospitality after graduation. Of 32-44 year olds, a significantly larger group left hospitality: 61% of women left and 47% of men. Poor work and home-life balance is contributing to increasing turnover in hospitality employees (Blomme et al., 2010).

Social support at work and at home tends to help employees successfully balance work and home-life (Karatepe, 2010). Clegg (2008) suggests that there needs to be separation between work-life and home-life. It is important that employees have a cut-off point where employers cannot contact them while at home (Clegg, 2008). Even when employees are satisfied with their work and home-life balance, it is important for employees to continue to take steps while at home to release work stress (Fairweather, 2013). Fairweather (2013) also suggests that when employees are home, they need to be able to have fun and be social.

There are times when the line between work-life and home-life is “blurred” (Burg-Brown, 2013). Due to the normality of smart phones, tablets, and laptops, disconnecting from work is nearly impossible. When an employer wants to contact an employee it is only a matter of minutes before they expect a response. The average American workers tends to work more than 1 ½ months of overtime per year due to answering phone calls, emails, and texts while at home (Burg-Brown, 2013). According

to Walter (2013), it is important to keep in mind that separating work and home-life is important because “...money doesn’t make you rich, it just allows you to buy more stuff.” (p. 10).

### **Characteristics of Employees with Good Work and Home-Life Balance**

Employees who are able to disconnect from work while at home tend to experience less fatigue and lower levels of job burnout (“Work-Life Balance,” 2013). Employees who experience less fatigue and lower levels of burnout tend to have increased job satisfaction, higher levels of commitment to a company, and fewer turnovers (Deery & Jago, 2009). Studies have shown that employees who have better work and home-life balance tend to be less angry while at work (Brimmer, 2013). Employees who are less angry at work tend to affect guests and other employees positively which results in higher levels of productivity (Brimmer, 2013).

According to Baral and Bhargave (2011), work and home-life balance occurs when skills, perspectives, flexibility, physical, social capital and material resources in one aspect of life improve, or positively affect, other aspects of life. Work and home-life balance is greatly affected by support of other employees, support at home, company norms, and personal characteristics (Deery & Jago, 2009).

### **Characteristics of Employees with Poor Work and Home-Life Balance**

Eighty-seven percent of American workers feel unsuccessful about their work and home-life balance (Gordon, 2012). They believe that poor work and home-life balance is affecting their health negatively (Gordon, 2012). Work and home-life imbalance is increasing in hospitality (Hsieh et al., 2009). This is causing low levels of job satisfaction and is causing employees to withdrawal from work. Withdrawal is a term

used to describe employees becoming detached from work (Hsieh et al., 2009).

Employees who are angry at home usually bring that anger to work (Brimmer, 2013).

Feelings of discouragement and frustration in one area lead to similar feelings in other areas (Yavas et al., 2011). Their negative attitudes affect guests and other workers and can result in lost productivity (Brimmer, 2013).

Many hospitality companies expect their employees to be available all the time (Burg-Brown, 2013). Being accessible all the time leads to employee burnout.

Employee burnout is the breaking point for employees where they no longer can find joy and fulfillment from their job and all positive energy turns negative (Burg-Brown, 2013).

There are many job characteristics that affect work and home-life balance negatively that include the pressure of the job, intensification of the job, quality of home-life, and the attitudes and values of the company and other employees (Deery & Jago, 2009).

Employees who experience poor work and home-life balance also experience emotional dissonance, meaning that employees will act a different way than they feel (Karatepe, 2010).

There are three key areas that raise concern for work and home-life balance: the pressure and intensification of the work involved, quality of home-life and community relations, and attitudes and values of people (Deery & Jago, 2009). The first concern, the pressure and the intensification of work, is even more critical for hotels because the hours of operation and the high pressure of customer service are constant. The more pressure and intensification a job has, the more time an employee needs to recover. The second concern, quality of home-life and community relations, can affect their work-life because decreased family time can cause greater stress, which can result in stress from home

spilling over to stress at work. Moreover, good family relations improve balance. The last concern, attitudes and values of people, relates to the employees attitude towards work and home-life balance. Not every employee perceives work and home-life balance equally which makes defining work and home-life balance a challenge (Deery & Jago, 2009).

Poor work and home-life balance can cause personal issues for employees with their marriage, life, friends, and family (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010). It can also cause issues that decrease productivity at work, such as stress, mental and/or physical pain, depression, substance abuse, anxiety, and burnout (Hsieh & Eggers, 2010; Withiam, 2013). Occupational stress also causes stress, fatigue, frustration, physical health deterioration, headaches, heart attacks, strokes, feelings of inadequacy, etc. (Blomme et al., 2010; Williams-Myers & Kwansa, 2010).

Studies have also shown that the more hours an employee works, the less productive that employee becomes (Brimmer, 2013). Four out of ten hospitality employees experience high levels of stress. One out of every three is dissatisfied with their work and home-life balance (Hsieh, et al., 2009). Some employees believe work interferes with family and others believe family interferes with work (Hsieh et al., 2009). Either way, imbalance is caused by and consequence of each other-i.e.-either once can have a negative effect of the other.

### **Factors Influencing Work and Home-Life Balance**

In order to have a good work and home-life balance, the following must be aligned: personal priorities, work, family, health, and well-being (Riordan, 2013). It is important to find the job that works for each individual. To be able to do that, each



individual must know their own definition of “success.” Employees who find a job that suit them, have lower levels of stress (Riordan, 2013). That means, achieving the work and home-life balance that employee is looking for. Good work and home-life balance ensures that employees feel successful at home and at work (Lingle, 2004). Spillover can occur from work to home or from home to work (Hsieh, Kline, & Pearson, 2013).

Studies have shown that spillover can be both positive and negative. The most common spillovers are negative spillover from work to home, and positive spillover from home to work (Hsieh et al., 2013).

Managers tend to assume that female workers have poorer work and home-life balance than male workers (Franquiz, 2013). However, other studies have shown that both male and female workers view their balance similarly (Franquiz, 2013). There are an increasing number of women working full time, which has resulted in more dual earning families and/or single-parent families (Karatepe, 2010). Since women tend to be more emotionally attached, if they feel that one aspect of their life is interfering with another, they tend to eliminate one aspect; usually work (Hsieh et al., 2009; Karatepe, 2010). Although both men and women view their balance similarly, women are more likely to make a change.

The key to recovery from job stress is being able to detach from work: mentally, physically, emotionally, and electronically (“Work-Life Balance,” 2013). With advanced technology, it makes it nearly impossible to detach from work. Smartphones, tablets, and laptops make it very easy for work to overlap into home-life (“Work-Life Balance,” 2013). Most hospitality employees already have long days, little job security, low pay,

high demand, and irregular hours, then adding always being accessible makes it nearly impossible for employees to recover from work (Blomme et al., 2010).

The best way for employers to help employees achieve good work and home-life balance is to work with each employee individually (Brimmer, 2013). Larger corporations may find working with each employee an impossible task, so it is important to be flexible (Withiam, 2013). Offering flexible work schedules, restructuring of jobs, and allowing employees to move to different jobs all help employees better their work and home-life balance, which leads to higher levels of job satisfaction and an increase in job performance (Withiam, 2013). Some organizations have already started to make changes to help better work and home-life balance of employees (Williams-Myers & Kwansa, 2010). These organizations have become more family oriented and now offer flexible schedules, on-site day-care services, and flexible leave policies. These new policies were put into place in order to help employees better balance their personal lives with work and help improve performance (Williams-Myers & Kwansa, 2010). With higher levels of staff engagement, employees are more loyal to a company and tend to create better working environments (Fairweather, 2013).

The gap for work and home-life balance research lies in regionality. There are many articles available about work and home-life balance that discuss factors influencing work and home-life balance, such as stress, long working days, irregular hours, low job security, etc. (Blomme et al., 2010; Fairweather, 2013). These are factors that employers need to be aware of and understand to help their employees have higher levels of satisfaction and job performance, but regionality has not been analyzed. According to Rampell (2009), people of Western states tend to be happier than people of the

Midwestern states. This may predict that Western hotel employees are more satisfied with their work and home-life balance than Midwestern hotel employees. This study will help regionality issues and their effect of work and home-life balance in hotel employees (Rampell, 2009).

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Purpose of this study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing employee perceptions of work and home-life balance, and to determine whether the regional locations of the work influence those perceptions.

### **Hypotheses**

The three hypotheses this study investigated were:

H1: Regionality does not influence hotel employees' perception of work and home-life balance.

H2: Hotel employees in the Midwest are more satisfied with their work and home-life balance than in the West.

H3: Work and home-life balance does not influence employee satisfaction.

### **Sampling and Data Collection**

The targeted population of this study was hotel employees located in the West and Midwest United States. The hotels were located in North Platte and Kearney, Nebraska and throughout California. Participants were hotel employees from all departments. The instrument that was used in this study was a survey. To implement the instrument, and reach this target population, a Qualtrics survey was used. Qualtrics is an online research company that allows users to create a survey online, which makes it fast and easy to distribute. Non-probability quota sampling was used to select the participating employees. The employees were asked to participate because they currently worked in a hotel located in a target region being studied, and are considered part of a convenience sample. The participants included employees from Best Western, Marin Management

Inc., Holiday Inn Express, Hampton Inn, Comfort Inn & Suites, Fairfield Inn & Suites, Country Inn & Suites, Rodeway Inn & Suites, Econolodge, Super 8, and Boarders Inn & Suites.

The link to the self-administered survey through Qualtrics became available to all employees working at the participating locations on January 26, 2014 and closed on February 28, 2014. Participation in taking the survey was voluntary and all surveys are anonymous.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The reliability of this study was based on the repeatability of the results of the similar studies done before (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Grffin, 2010). Since no studies have been done on work and home-life balance of hotel employees as a regional comparison, there were no results to repeat. However, there are many studies that have been done on factors in work and home-life balance of hotel employees. The results of this study, although it differs because of the regionality comparison, should be similar. Studies have shown that more employees are becoming dissatisfied with their work and home-life balance. The results from both West and Midwest hotels should provide similar results.

The survey used to gather information had face validity, content validity, criterion validity, and convergent validity (Zikmund et al., 2010). The survey contained logical information to measure what was intended to be measured. It had content that actually covered what the study was intended to cover. The survey was created by using former surveys from other studies that have shown valid results. And lastly, this survey asked questions about related factors to get more in-depth information.

### **Generalizability and Representativeness**

This study used a small sample of hotels located in the West and Midwest regions of the United States. Since the sampling was a non-probability sample, generalizability is a limitation. Since there was no randomization in choosing hotel employees to participate in the study, it is not possible to assume that each group accurately represented the majority of hotel employees within their specified region.

### **Ethics**

There are two major forms of ethical guidelines that were followed: cultural ethical guidelines and Institutional Review Board (IRB) ethical guidelines. This study recognized the culture in the United States and all participants did not have to be concerned with their general rights and obligations being tested. This survey did not ask invasive questions and all participation was voluntary. The survey was sent to IRB for approval. The survey was approved to be sure that no harm came to participants.

### **Instrument Design**

The survey's (located in appendix A) design was to help understand more about employee perceptions of work and home-life balance. There were seven constructs: satisfaction, balance and integration, commute, family structure, position, workload management, and about you. The variety of categories were to help get quality information about employee satisfaction of work and home-life balance and to make it possible to compare the West and Midwest results.

The first construct was satisfaction (questions 1-3). This section asked employees about their level of satisfaction with their work and home-life balance. It also asked a question regarding their work-life satisfaction and a question about their home-life

satisfaction. These questions provided a better idea of employees' satisfaction of balance and gave insight to whether each aspect was dependent or independent.

The second construct (questions 4-8), balance and integration, was designed to gather information about the correlation between work and home-life of employees. This section included questions regarding one aspect of life interfering with the other, as well as questions about intra-company openness of communication involving work and home-life balance. The third construct was commute (questions 9-11). This section asked questions of the participant that related to their commute to and from work. The questions involved commute time and how an employee gets to and from work. It also asked how reasonable the employee felt the commute time was for the work he/she does.

The fourth construct was family structure (questions 12-13). This section was designed to get an idea of whom the participant was responsible for outside of work. These questions asked about both elderly and children that are dependent on the participant. The fifth construct was position (questions 14-15). This section identified which department each employee worked for and how flexible or inflexible their work schedule was.

The sixth construct was workload management (questions 16-20). This section focused on the employees' perception of the amount of work required of them. It also asked questions regarding how comfortable the employee was talking about work and home-life balance with colleagues and superiors. The last construct was about you (questions 21-27). About you was the section that gathered information about the participant's demographics. These questions included age, race, gender, marital status,

and the property that participants worked for and which region that property was located in.

The most relevant questions pertaining to the purpose of this study were questions 1-3 that specifically asked about satisfaction of work and home-life balance. These involved questions about satisfaction of work-life, satisfaction of home-life, and satisfaction of work and home-life balance.

Prior to the distribution of the surveys, a pilot study was conducted using hotel employees at the Holiday Inn Express in Kearney, Nebraska. Six employees were asked to participate in the pilot study. After all six surveys were completed, the participants were asked to reveal whether the survey needed to be adjusted or not. Participants were also asked to give feedback pertaining to the questions to ensure quality information and clarity before the study was conducted. These employees did not participate in the actual study.

### **Procedure**

The first step in this study was the design of the survey based from current literature followed by the creation of the survey in Qualtrics. After the survey was completed, it was sent to the IRB for approval (located in appendix B). Once the IRB approved the study, the survey was sent to the Holiday Inn Express in Kearney, Nebraska for the pilot study. These hotel employees participated only in the pilot study. When the instrument was returned, the feedback was analyzed and the survey required minor grammatical adjustments to clarify a few questions. The survey was then resent to the IRB for final approval. With no major adjustments needed, the survey was ready for distribution electronically. Using our convenient sample, the Qualtrics survey, became



available January 26, 2014 to all participating locations. The hotels had approximately 4 weeks to complete the online surveys. Analysis of the information began on March 1, 2014. Following the analysis, discussions and conclusions have been made.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected was quantitative and was analyzed by using SPSS 21.0 software. Included in the analysis are descriptive statistics to include mean scores, frequency, standard deviations, and overall percentages for the variables. There were also inferential statistics used and analysis of variance (ANOVA), which compared the two regions in the area of work and home-life balance.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

### **Data Collection**

The data for this study was collected between January 26, 2014 and February 28, 2014. Participants included hotel employees from two regions of the United States: Western and Midwestern. These hotel employees all worked at mid-scale hotels with no food and beverage. The data analysis began on March 1, 2014.

Of the 120 completed surveys, 78 were usable. Surveys that were considered unusable included incomplete surveys, surveys completed by hotel employees of hotels that were not considered mid-scale (e.g. Wynn, Bellagio, etc.), and surveys that were completed by employees who were not located within one of the specified regions.

### **Data Analysis**

After data was collected, all data was transferred to SPSS. The data was then sifted through to remove all unusable surveys. Once all unusable surveys were removed, all variables were coded. The surveys contained 27 questions, some with multiple questions, resulting in 53 questions, excluding the validation question. All questions were either dropdown or multiple choice except question 14, which was a fill in the blank that asked employees to indicate which department they worked in.

Eleven of the multiple choice questions used a five-point Likert Scale. Three of those questions offered a “non-applicable” choice, while the remaining eight did not. These questions were scaled using three different Likert Scales: agreeableness, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

Questions 1-3 related directly to answering the hypotheses. These questions asked employees about their satisfaction of work-life, satisfaction of home-life, and

satisfaction of work and home-life balance. The data showed no significant difference between regions regarding satisfaction of work-life, home-life, and work and home-life balance, which is displayed in table 6.

### **Demographics**

The demographic questions that were asked of respondents included gender, age, ethnicity, and marital status. The majority of respondents responded as such: forty-nine of the 78 respondents were female, 58 were white, 33 were born between 1965-1983, and 25 were married. Table 1 shows the breakdown of each demographic question.

Table 1

*Demographics*

Variable	<i>n</i>	Percent (%)
Region		
West	33	42.30
Midwest	45	57.70
Gender		
Male	27	34.60
Female	49	62.80
Other	01	1.30
Ethnicity		
White	58	74.40
Black or African American	01	1.30
Asian	11	14.10
Hispanic	06	7.70
American Indian	01	1.30
Other	01	1.30
Birth Year		
1965-1983	33	42.30
1949-1964	29	37.20
Before 1949	12	15.40
Marital Status		
Married	25	32.05
Partnered	10	12.82
Divorced	10	12.82
Separated	03	3.85
Widowed	02	2.57
Never Married	21	26.92
Other	07	8.97

As shown in table 2, when the demographics are divided by region, responses are similar. In both regions, there were more female responses. Most respondents in both regions were white and born between 1965-1983. In the West, the dominant marital status was never married, while in the Midwest, the dominant marital status was married.

Table 2

*Demographics by Region*

Variable	West		Midwest	
	<i>n</i>	Percentage (%)	<i>n</i>	Percentage (%)
Gender				
Male	14	42.42	13	28.89
Female	18	54.54	31	68.89
Ethnicity				
White	17	51.51	41	91.11
Black	0	0.00	1	2.23
Asian	11	33.33	0	0.00
Hispanic	4	12.12	2	4.43
American Indian	1	3.04	0	0.00
Other	0	0.00	1	2.23
Birth Year				
1965-1983	17	51.51	16	35.56
1949-1964	12	36.36	17	37.78
Before 1949	3	9.09	9	20.00
Marital Status				
Married	8	24.24	17	37.78
Partnered	5	15.15	5	11.11
Widowed	0	0.00	2	4.44
Divorced	4	12.12	6	13.33
Separated	0	0.00	3	6.68
Never Married	11	33.33	10	22.22
Other	5	15.16	2	4.44

The majority of respondents work over 41 hours each week. Divided by regions, 41 plus hours is still the dominant category. In the Midwest, no respondents worked less than 16 hours each week. Fifteen of the 33 respondents from the West work 41 plus hours and 21 of the 45 respondents from the Midwest work 41 plus hours. In table 3 the individual percent column is the percent of that region. The total percent column is the percentage of each hour category worked of both regions.

Table 3

*Hours Per Week Worked*

Hours worked per week	West		Midwest		Total
	<i>n</i>	Percent (%)	<i>n</i>	Percent (%)	Percent (%)
5-10	3	9.09	0	0.00	3.80
11-15	4	12.12	0	0.00	5.10
16-20	2	6.06	2	4.44	5.10
21-30	4	12.12	5	11.11	11.50
31-40	5	15.15	17	37.78	28.20
41+	15	45.46	21	46.67	46.20

**Significant Factors**

From the survey, ten variables showed significant differences between regions ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those variables included: work interferes with home life, missed work due to home responsibilities, missed home due to work responsibilities, work environment supports work and home-life balance, supervisor understands importance of work and home-life balance, regularly making hard decisions between work and home, commute, reasonable amount of work, opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance, and how often are breaks allowed during the day. Table 4 shows each of these variables, the mean of each region, and the significant value between regions. The variables are rank ordered from the most significant to the least significant.

Table 4

*Significant Variables*

Variables	Mean		Sig. Value	SD
	West	Midwest		
8b: My supervisor understands the importance of balance between work and home <sup>b</sup>	3.33	4.18	.000	1.078
4a: My work life interferes with my home life <sup>b</sup>	3.55	5.18	.001	2.261
19: How often is there opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance with your supervisor <sup>f</sup>	3.21	4.07	.004	1.330
8a: The environment at work supports a balance between work and home life <sup>b</sup>	3.00	3.67	.008	1.119
8d: I regularly have to make hard decisions between work and home obligations <sup>b</sup>	3.37	2.60	.010	1.151
16b: The amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable <sup>f</sup>	3.21	3.93	.013	1.280
11b: My commute takes too much time <sup>c</sup>	2.18	1.62	.014	1.003
7a: How many times over the past year have you missed something at work due to home responsibilities <sup>b</sup>	5.42	6.13	.019	1.333
7b: How many times over the past year have you missed something at home due to work responsibilities <sup>b</sup>	4.36	5.18	.022	1.558
20: How often are you allowed breaks during the day <sup>f</sup>	3.91	4.51	.023	1.167

*Note.* Each question is from a different construct from the survey. The superscript letter is equivalent to the construct number from the survey. Variable<sup>b</sup>= Construct 2: Balance and Integration. Variable c= Construct 3: Commute. Variable<sup>f</sup>=Construct 6: Workload Management.

**Non-Significant Factors**

Table 5 organized the other variables by their significant value. These variables fail to reject the null. Although there is no significant difference between regions, the variables are rank ordered by their significant value, found using an ANOVA, to show

the factors that are most closely significant to work and home-life balance. The smaller the significant value, the more difference there is between regions. The larger the significant value, the more similar the regions are.



Table 5

*Non-Significant Variables*

Variable	Mean	Sig. Value	Total SD
15a: My schedule is flexible	3.73	.068	1.147
6: How effective do you feel your time management skills are	3.86	.075	0.817
9: How many minutes does it take to get to work (one way)	3.10	.108	1.656
15c: A flexible schedule should be available to all employees	3.63	.140	1.196
16c: My work has reasonable expectations of its employees	3.78	.145	1.224
16d: My job does not cause unreasonable stress	3.04	.157	
13k: Dependents age 60+	.99	.166	0.730
15c: I would have a better work and home life balance with a flexible schedule	4.00	.169	1.329
5: Which best describes your feelings of stress around finding work and home-life balance	3.17	.191	0.959
13a: Dependent <1	.83	.207	0.633
13i: Dependents age 40-49	.81	.237	0.646
13b: Dependent age 1-3	.82	.247	0.575
13e: Dependents age 11-14	1.05	.253	0.737
4b: My home life interferes with my work life	5.72	.277	2.032
11c: My commute is worth it for my job	4.01	.280	0.933
13g: Dependents age 19-29	.99	.308	0.761
13h: Dependents age 30-39	.85	.332	0.722
16a: The pace of work enables me to do a good job	3.67	.344	1.202
11a: My commute is reasonable	4.12	.349	0.926
12a: Elderly dependent living with you	1.86	.382	0.350
15e: I would take advantage of a flexible schedule	4.29	.393	1.260
13f: Dependents age 15-18	.91	.538	0.724
8c: My colleagues understand the importance of balance between work and home life	3.56	.608	1.158
15b: I prefer a flexible schedule	4.24	.650	1.022
12c: Elderly dependent long distance	1.86	.700	0.386
12b: Elderly dependent locally but not living with you	1.81	.708	0.397
13j: Dependents age 50-59	.72	.890	0.507
13c: Dependents age 4-6	.94	.968	0.651
13d: Dependents age 7-10	1.00	1.000	0.703

## Hypotheses Testing

The following discusses each hypothesis individually and the data that was analyzed in each case. Table 7 displays all three hypotheses and the conclusion based on the analysis of the data collected.

### Test of Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that regionality does not influence hotel employees' perception of work and home-life balance. A one-way ANOVA was used to test for satisfaction differences between two regions: the West and Midwest. Work and home-life balance satisfaction does not differ significantly between regions,  $F(1, 76) = 0.575$ ,  $p = 0.451$ . Therefore, the analysis supports hypothesis 1.

Table 6

*Satisfaction ANOVA*

	df	Sig.	Mean	F
Work-Life Satisfaction	1			
Between Groups	76			
	77	.221	3.87	1.525
Within				
Home-Life Satisfaction	1			
Between Groups	76			
	77	.172	3.91	1.904
Within				
Work and Home-Life Balance Satisfaction	1			
Between Groups	76			
	77	.451	3.55	.575
Within				

### Test of Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 states that hotel employees in the Midwest are more satisfied with their work and home-life balance than employees in the West. Table 4 shows work and

home-life balance between regions is not significant. Therefore, the analysis fails to support hypothesis 2.

### **Test of Hypothesis 3**

Hypothesis 3 states that work and home-life balance does not influence employee satisfaction. The analysis of the data is inconclusive to support or fail to support hypothesis 3, leaving availability for future research.

Table 7

#### *Hypotheses*

Hypothesis	Conclusion
H1: Regionality does not influence hotel employees' perception of work and home-life balance	Supported
H2: Hotel employees in the Midwest are more satisfied with their work and home-life balance	Failed to Support
H3: Work and home-life balance does not influence employee satisfaction	Inconclusive

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing employee perceptions of work and home-life balance, and to determine whether the regional locations of the work influence those perceptions.

### **Key Findings**

The data analysis showed no significant difference between work-life satisfaction, home-life satisfaction, and satisfaction of work and home-life balance between regions. Table 6 shows the significant value between the two regions for all three variables. The significant values were all above .05, concluding that there is no significant difference between regions in employee satisfaction of work-life, home-life, and work and home-life balance.

Table 6 also shows the means of both regions with all three variables. The means of the combined regions in all three variables were between 3.50 and 4.0, resulting in the satisfaction level to be above “neutral” and below “satisfied” for work-life, home-life, and work and home-life balance. According to Karatepe (2010), what employees feel at work spills over to home and what employees feel at home spills over to work. Table 6 supports this analysis because all three questions had similar satisfaction rates from employees in both regions.

Tables 1 and 2 show the demographics of the respondents. According to Franquiz (2013), manager are bias that female hotel employees have lower levels of work and home-life balance, but studies show that both male and females view work and home-life similarly. The data collected in this study reinforces that both male and female workers

tend to view work and home-life similarly. However, this data contrast the Baral and Bhargava (201) study that suggests a primary reason that work and home-life satisfaction is decreasing is due to the increase in women in the industry. This data shows that the majorities of respondents are female and are generally satisfied with work and home-life balance.

The data collected in Table 4 shows significant factors between regions. These questions are the variables that show significant differences between the West and Midwest. The means of each region show that the West has more conflict between work and home interference, and that the West feel less comfortable discussing work and home-life balance while at work. Question 4a asked respondents, "...indicate how often you feel the following statements are true; my work life interferes with my home life." The means of this question indicate that the West experiences interference more often than the Midwest. Question 7a and 7b asked respondents, "Thinking back over the past year, how many times have you had to miss something at work due to home responsibilities," and "missed something at home due to work responsibilities." The means on these two questions also show that the West miss more at home and at work due to responsibilities in other aspects of their life than the Midwest.

Questions 8a, 8b, and 8d asked the employees to indicate their level of agreement with the following: "the environment at work supports a balance," "my supervisor understands the importance of a balance," and "I regularly have to make hard decisions between work and home." The larger the mean, the higher the level of agreement. The Midwest has a higher mean on questions 8a and 8b, meaning that the Midwest agrees more strongly that the environment at work support a balance, and the Midwest also

agrees more strongly that their supervisor understands the importance of a balance.

However, the Midwest has a lower mean on question 8d. The Midwest disagrees more strongly that they have to often make hard choices between work and home.

Question 11b and 16b also asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements; “my commute takes too much time,” and “the amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable.” The Midwest had a smaller mean, meaning they disagree more strongly that their commute is too long. The West had a smaller mean regarding reasonable amount of work, meaning they do not agree as strongly as the Midwest.

The last two variables include: “how often is there opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance with your supervisor,” and “How often are you allowed breaks during the day?” The Midwest had a higher mean for both of these questions. Therefore, the Midwest has more opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance, and the Midwest is allowed more breaks during the day than the West.

Another key finding is all the significant variables from table 4 are from constructs 2, 3, and 6. Six of the significant variables are from construct 2, balance and integration, three were from construct 6, workload management, and one was from construct 3, commute. This is significant in understanding that the only variables that were significantly different between regions involved balance and integration, commute, and workload management. The other constructs showed no significant differences between regions.

## **Limitations**

This study encountered a few limitations. One limitation of the study was that the survey was conducted using a convenience sample. The response rate was very low, which resulted in the convenience sample expanding into the snowball effect to gain more responses. This causes a poor amount of randomization throughout both regions. Consequently, the results cannot accurately represent both regions.

Another limitation includes the number of replies. Although both regions reached the minimum of 30 responses, more responses would have helped to broaden the participation and help to generalize the results more accurately.

The last limitation includes the period of the study. The survey was opened for approximately one month, which excludes the rest of the year. The responses could have been different during a different time of year. The study was also not repeated over numerous years to allow the opportunity for repeat results.

## **Implications**

Some implications that occur that may affect the results were the different management and policies each hotel instills. There are different rules and regulations for each brand and each individual property. The differences can make finding parallel results difficult. It is also implied that these results can be used for hotel employers and employees in the hospitality industry all across the nation. Since this data shows that regionality does not affect work and home-life balance, employers can assume research on work and home-life balance for hospitality employees is relevant to their property.

This study also identifies the factors that influence work and home-life balance that the employer controls. This allows for the opportunity for the employers to actively address the problem.

In the hospitality industry, we understand the demands of a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week industry. However, there is need for understanding balance within organizations. Table 4 and 5 discuss which variables are both significant in each individual region, and which factors contribute to work and home-life balance in both regions. Table 4 shows how each region views particular variables and shows their expectations within each variable in order to become satisfied with work and home-life balance. Table 5 shows variables that failed to reject the null and ranked them according to their significant value. These variables showed no significant value ( $p < .05$ ) but were similar between regions, and can be used by employers to understand employees' wants and needs for a balance between work and home-life.

Table 4 shows the primary variables for this study. The most important item to notice from this table is that the West and the Midwest have different work environments. Although the West experiences less support regarding work and home-life balance and tend to miss more experiences in one aspect of life due to the other, they still have similar views of work and home-life satisfaction as the Midwest. Employers can use this table as a guide for what employees expect to be rated just less than satisfied with work and home-life balance. Increasing work support and flexible schedules may be the key to increasing employees' work and home-life balance satisfaction. And as shown in figure 1, employee satisfaction affects employee performance. The more satisfied an employee is, the better that employee performs, which in turn can better a company.



## **Discussion**

This study provides useful contributions to the hospitality industry. This data can help employers to understand that factors that affect the satisfaction of work and home-life balance in hotel employees, and can help employers understand the factors that are different between regions. This regional difference shows employers that employees have different expectations of their work. The significant factors, shown in table 4, display some of those different expectations. If employers can understand what factors improve employee satisfaction, they can then increase satisfaction, resulting in an increase in employee performance.

The answer to the main question of this study, “Does Regionality affect work and home-life balance satisfaction in hotel employees,” is no. Regionality does not influence employee satisfaction of work and home-life balance. However, this study found the factors that do differ between regions. These factors can help employers to implement training programs and open communication to employees to help increase satisfaction. As research has shown, satisfaction and performance are linked, so if satisfaction increases, performance increases (Borgogni, Dello Russo, Petitta, & Vecchione, 2010). Implementing programs that concentrate on these factors, and the other factors, can increase employee satisfaction.

The study also shows that the main constructs that show significant differences between regions are balance and integration, and workload management. These constructs are key to understanding the main factor differentiation between regions. The construct balance and integration show the importance of open communication between employers, employees, and colleagues involving work and home-life balance satisfaction.

The construct workload management show the importance of having a reasonable volume of work.

Most of the research has shown that work and home-life balance of hotel employees is a myth, and the data collected contradicts that statement. The mean of the respondents shows the employees are closer to 'satisfied' than 'dissatisfied.' This study only included hotel employees who work at mid-scale hotels with no restaurants, which could be where the difference lies.

There is still a lot of research to be done, but overall, the research shows that there is no regional difference between work and home-life balance satisfaction. There are differing factors that can help employers to understand employees expectation of work with regards to work and home-life balance.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the data collected and the analysis of that data, regionality does not play a significant role in the satisfaction of work and home-life balance of hotel employees. In fact, most of the data collected shows that the West and Midwest regions view work and home-life balance similarly.

The factors that do show a significant difference between regions, also show that the Midwest has more opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance, has to choose between aspects of life less, has a more reasonable work load, allowed breaks more often, and work in an environment that is more supportive of work and home-life balance than in the West. Since there is no significant difference in satisfaction of work and home-life balance between regions, but there are factors that do show significant differences, it is assumed that the West and Midwest have different expectations from the employers. The

Midwest has higher expectations from the employer than the West, which is shown in table 4.

### **Future Research**

This research has opened the opportunity for future research involving work and home-life balance. Research can be done to specifically focus on factors that influence work and home-life balance of hotel employees who work at mid-scale hotels with no food and beverage. It is important to allow employees more options for hours per week worked. Since the majority of respondents answered 41 plus, there is no way to know how many hours above 41 the average employee works. Another suggestion would be to ask the participants to declare if they are management or not and if they are salaried employees or not. These factors may have a significant impact on responses. It would also be beneficial to have that information to divide the data accordingly.

Future research may also include hypothesis 3: work and home-life balance does not influence employee satisfaction. This study did not obtain sufficient information to support this conclusion, leaving room for future research.

## **APPENDIX A: WORK AND HOME-LIFE BALANCE SURVEY**

Hello and thank you for participating in this survey.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors influencing employee perceptions of work and home-life balance, and to determine whether the regional locations of the work influence those perceptions.

Work and home-life balance is defined as the ability to balance multiple aspects of life (work-life and home-life) without one aspect negatively affecting another aspect. Home-life refers to any personal time spent away from work.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you work for a hotel within a particular region that is being researched. Any questions can be directed to Amanda Connick or Dr. Alison Green at 702-895-3931.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a study pertaining to work and home-life balance. There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, the findings of study will assist hoteliers in understanding hotel employees' perception of work and home-life balance. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you must be 18 years old or older to participate. You may refuse to participate in this study. You may withdraw at any time during the survey, but incomplete surveys are invalid and will not be used. All information gathered in this study is anonymous, meaning we will not ask for your name or any identifying information. No individual information will be released.

Thank you for your time and cooperation. If you agree to participate in this survey and are at least 18 years old, please click "yes" to start. If you choose not to participate or are under 18 years of age, please click "no."

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

How satisfied are you with your work-life?

☐ Very Dissatisfied (1)

☐ Dissatisfied (2)

☐ Neutral (3)

☐ Satisfied (4)

☐ Very Satisfied (5)

How satisfied are you with your home-life?

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neutral (3)
- ☐ Satisfied (4)
- ☐ Very Satisfied (5)

Please describe your current satisfaction of your work and home-life balance.

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neutral (3)
- ☐ Satisfied (4)
- ☐ Very Satisfied (5)

Please indicate how often you feel the following statements are true:

	Daily (1)	2-3 Times a Week (2)	Once a Week (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Month (5)	Several Times a Year (6)	Once a Year or Less (7)	Never (8)
My work life interferes with my home life (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My home life interferes with my work life (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which of the following best describes your feelings of stress around finding a work and home-life balance?

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neutral (3)
- ☐ Satisfied (4)
- ☐ Very Satisfied (5)

How effective do you feel your time management skills are?

- ☐ Very Ineffective (1)
- ☐ Ineffective (2)
- ☐ Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- ☐ Effective (4)
- ☐ Very Effective (5)

Thinking back over the past year, how many times have you had to:

	Daily (1)	2-3 Times a Week (2)	Once a Week (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Month (5)	Less than Once a Month (6)	Never (7)
Miss something at work due to home responsibilities (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Miss something at home due to work responsibilities (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The environment at work supports a balance between work and home-life (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor understands the importance of a balance between work and home-life (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My colleagues understand the importance of balance between work and home-life (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I regularly have to make hard decisions between work and home obligations (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many minutes does it take to get to work (one way)?

- ☐ (1)
- ☐ 5-10 (2)
- ☐ 11-15 (3)
- ☐ 16-20 (4)
- ☐ 21-30 (5)
- ☐ 31+ (6)

How do you get to work?

- ☐ Walk (1)
- ☐ Bike (2)
- ☐ Drive (3)
- ☐ Bus (4)
- ☐ Other (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
My commute is reasonable (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My commute takes too much time (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My commute is worth it for my job (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Do you have the responsibility of caring for an elderly (relative or non-relative):

	Yes (1)	No (2)
Living with you (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Locally but no living with you (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long distance not living with you (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate the number of dependents in each age group for whom you are responsible:

	0 (1)	1 (2)	2 (3)	3 (4)	4+ (5)
(1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1-3 years old (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4-6 years old (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7-10 years old (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11-14 years old (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15-18 years old (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19-29 years old (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30-39 years old (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40-49 years old (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
50-59 years old (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
60+ years old (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate the main department that you work in (if more than one, please indicate both). If you are management, simply put management and do not indicate a specific department:

Please answer the following questions about flexible work schedules:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	N/A (6)
My schedule is flexible (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer a flexible schedule (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A flexible schedule should be available to all employees (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would have a better work and home- life balance with a flexible schedule (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would take advantage of a flexible schedule if it was offered (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The pace of work enables me to do a good job (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My work has reasonable expectations of its employees (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job does not cause unreasonable stress (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What time does your typical shift start?

What time does your typical shift end?

How often is there opportunity to discuss work and home-life balance with your supervisor?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Neutral (3)
- ☐ Sometimes (4)
- ☐ Always (5)
- ☐ N/A (6)

How often are you allowed breaks during the day?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Neutral (3)
- ☐ Sometimes (4)
- ☐ Always (5)
- ☐ N/A (6)

How many hours a week on average do you work?

- ☐ (1)
- ☐ 5-10 (2)
- ☐ 11-15 (3)
- ☐ 16-20 (4)
- ☐ 21-30 (5)
- ☐ 31-40 (6)
- ☐ 41+ (7)

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Other (3)
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose (4)

Which year were you born?

- ☐ 1984-1996 (2)
- ☐ 1965-1983 (3)
- ☐ 1949-1964 (4)
- ☐ Before 1949 (5)

Please select your ethnicity.

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ Black or African American (2)
- ☐ Asian (3)
- ☐ Hispanic (4)
- ☐ American Indian (5)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian (6)
- ☐ Other (7)

Which best describes your marital status?

- ☐ Married (1)
- ☐ Partnered (2)
- ☐ Widowed (3)
- ☐ Divorced (4)
- ☐ Separated (5)
- ☐ Never Married (6)
- ☐ Other (7)

Please indicate which region you work in.

	Western (1)	Midwestern (2)
Region (1)		

Please indicate which property you work at.

- ☐ Best Western (1)
- ☐ Comfort Inn & Suites (2)
- ☐ Country Inn & Suites (3)
- ☐ Fairfield Inn & Suites (4)
- ☐ Hampton Inn (5)
- ☐ Holiday Inn Express (6)
- ☐ Quality Inn (7)
- ☐ Ramada (8)
- ☐ Other (9) \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL

<http://www.cyberirb.us/UNLV/UNL01RevProtFormFrameN.php>

### Print Application

1. Data you have entered on any page is saved anytime you exit from the page.

2. Click on the  to display missing data for each page. When all data has been entered, use the check boxes to show you've completed the page.

☐ Reviewers Protocol Form

Protocol Number: 1401-4673 Page 1 of 1  
Protocol Title: Work and Home-Life Balance: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employee Satisfaction in the West and Midwest

### IRB Protocol Review Form

Protocol #: 1401-4673  
Title: Work and Home-Life Balance: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employee Satisfaction in the West and Midwest  
PI: Dr. Alison Green

Level of Review: ☒ Exempt ☐ Expedited ☐ Full Board ☐ Pending

Exempt/ Pending Decision: ☒ Approve ☐ Revisions Request ☐ Send to Full Board ☐ Excluded

Please choose the applicable Exempt review category(s):

☐ 1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as

- (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or
- (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

☒ 2) Research involving the use of educational tests (*cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement*), survey procedures, interview procedure or observation of public behavior, unless:

- (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
- (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

☐ 3) Research involving the use of educational tests (*cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement*), survey procedures, interview

## REFERENCES

- A harmonious life lies in the balance. (2004). *Travel Trade Gazette UK & Ireland*, (2614), 42.
- Abercromby, M . *A Report on the Importance of Work-Life Balance*. Retrieved from <http://www.bia.ca/articles/AReportontheImportanceofWork-LifeBalance.htm>
- Baral, R., & Bhargava, S. (2011). Examining the moderating influence of gender on the relationships between work-family antecedents and work-family enrichment. *Gender in Management*, 26(2), 122-147.  
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17542411111116545>
- Blomme, R. J., Van Rheede, A., & Tromp, D. M. (2010). Work-family conflict as a cause for turnover intentions in the hospitality industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 10(4), 269-285. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/thr.2010.15>
- Borgogni, L., Dello Russo, S., Petitta, L., & Vecchione, M. (2010). Predicting job satisfaction and job performance in a privatized organization. *International Public Management Journal*, 13(3), 275-296.  
doi:[10.1080/10967494.2010.504114](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2010.504114)
- Brimmer, A.V. (2013). One big, not-so-happy family. *HR Magazine*, 58(10), 32-33.
- Burg-Brown, S. (2013). Work-life balance. *Journal of Property Management*, 78(4), 48-53.
- Clegg, J. (2008). I keep my customers, and my children happy. *Travel Trade Gazette UK & Ireland*, (2822), 44.

- Deery, M., & Jago, L. (2009). A framework for work-life balance practices: Addressing the needs of the tourism industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(2), 97-108. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/thr.2009.4>
- Fairweather, J. (2013). Working out a life balance. *Caterer & Hotelkeeper*, 203(4775), 20.
- Franquiz, A. (2013). Managers show gender bias in views on work/life balance. *HR Magazine*, 58(10), 16.
- Gordon, J. (2012). Appreciate the moment 7 ways to rethink work-life balance. *Public Management*, 94(3), 6-9.
- Hsieh, Y., & Eggers, P. D. (2010). Coping strategies used by lodging managers to balance work and personal lives: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 11(1), 39-58.  
doi:10.1080/15256480903539453
- Hsieh, Y., Kline, S. F., & Pearson, T. E. (2008). Lodging managers' perceptions of work and personal life: Balanced or imbalanced? *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 9(1), 18-35.
- Hsieh, Y., Pearson, T. E., & Kline, S. F. (2009). The moderating effects of job and personal life. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 8(1), 1-14.  
doi:10.1080/15332840802274387
- Hsu, S. & Wang, Y. (2008). The development and empirical validation of the employee satisfaction index model. *Total Quality Management*, 19(4), 353-366.



- Jehangir, M., Kareem, N., Khan, A., Jan, M.T., & Soherwardi, S. (2011). Effects of job stress on job performance & job satisfaction. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 3(7), 453-465.
- Karatepe, O. M. (2010). The effect of positive and negative work-family interaction on exhaustion. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(6), 836-856. doi:10.1108/09596111011063115
- Li, C. (2014). *Best advice: Seek work-life harmony-not balance*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140225112459-33767-best-advice-seek-work-life-harmony-not-balance>
- Rampell, C. (2009). *The happiest states in America*. Retrieved from [economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/10/the-happiest-states-of-america/?\\_r=0](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/10/the-happiest-states-of-america/?_r=0)
- Rigby, L. (2013, September 16). *Leanne Rigby: Work-life balance is a cause for concern*. Retrieved from <http://www.employeebenefits.co.uk/benefits/healthcare-and-wellbeing/leanne-rigby-work-life-balance-is-a-cause-for-concern/102783.article>
- Riordan, C. (2013). *Work-life "balance" isn't the point*, Retrieved from <http://blogs.hbr.org/2013/06/work-life-balance-isn't-the-poi/>
- Root , G. (2014). Factors affecting employee performance. *Small Business*. Retrieved from <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/factors-affecting-employee-performance-978.html>
- Slanickova, S. (2004). Time off for dependents. *Caterer & Hotelkeeper*, 193(4313), 40.
- Van Horn, C. (2013). What workers really want and need. *HR Magazine*, 58(10), 45-51.

- Walter, L. (2013). 5 ways to achieve and maintain work-life balance. *EHS Today*, 6(6), 10.
- Wang, Y., Liu, X., & Cong, Q. (2012). How to improve frontline employees' service remedial performance in hospitality industry: Modeling and empirical study. *Tourism Tribune*, 27(3), 69-77.
- Williams-Myers, C., & Kwansa, F. A. (2010). The workplace balancing act: Impact on performance and productivity. *Consortium Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 14(2), 41-64.
- Withiam, G. (2013). Work-family imbalance leads some employees to leave. *Hotel Management*, 228(7), 17.
- Working hours in hotel management (2014). *TheJobCrowd*. Retrieved from <http://www.thejobcrowd.com/careers/hospitality-leisure-and-tourism/hotel-management/working-hours>
- Work-Life balance needed for recovery from job stress. (2013). *Safety Compliance Letter*, (2548), 12-13.
- Yavas, U., Karatepe, O. M., & Babakus, E. (2011). Do customer orientation and job resourcefulness moderate the impact of interrole conflicts on frontline employees' performance? *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(2), 148-159.  
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/thr.2010.25>
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2010). *Business research methods*. Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning.

## **CURRICULUM VITA**

Amanda Connick

### **Contact information:**

Email: Connicka@unlv.nevada.edu  
amalunz@hotmail.com

### **Education:**

M.S. in Hotel Administration, June 2014, University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
B.A. in Travel and Tourism, June 2012, University of Nebraska, Kearney  
Associates Degree in General Studies, May 2009, Mid Plains Community College, North Platte, NE

### **Experience:**

Graduate Assistant: August 2012 - May 2014, University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Cultural Trail Supervisor: May 2012 - August 2012, Kearney Archway, Kearney, NE  
Front Desk Associate: August 2009 - May 2012, Holiday Inn Express, Kearney, NE

### **Activities and Honors:**

Director of Development for Hotel Graduate Student Association: 2013 – 2014, University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Social Networking Team Facilitator for National Society of Leadership and Success: 2014, National Society of Leadership and Success  
Dean's List: 2010 – 2012, University of Nebraska, Kearney  
Travel and Tourism Student of the Year: 2011 – 2012, University of Nebraska, Kearney  
Secretary of the Travel and Tourism Club: 2011 – 2012, University of Nebraska, Kearney

### **References:**

Jill Plumer  
plumerj@unlv.nevada.edu  
702-502-8534

Alison Green  
Alison.green@unlv.edu  
505-977-1200

April Tracy  
Acar05@hotmail.com  
308-293-3385