

APPENDIX 2:

*ADMINISTERING, SCORING, AND
INTERPRETING THE SIX BOUNDARY
AMBIGUITY SCALES*

ADMINISTRATION

All of the boundary ambiguity instruments in this packet are self-report paper and pencil scales. The respondent is given a copy of the scale either by mail, or in a clinical or research setting under supervision. Instructions are on the questionnaires, as are the places for respondents to indicate their answers to each item. The scales take from five to fifteen minutes to complete.

simply the summation of responses across items, *after* numerical answers to particular items have been reversed.

To partially avoid problems with people tending to respond in a certain way (response set), some items are worded so that a numerically greater answer indicates higher psychological presence or boundary ambiguity while other statements are worded so that higher numerical answers represent lower amounts of boundary ambiguity. Responses to these latter items must be reversed and recoded *before* summing across items to obtain a total score. For example, an answer of "5" would change to "1".

SCORING

An individual's boundary ambiguity score is

Each scale has its own specific instructions for

SCALE #1: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR WIVES OF MIA MEN

1. Reverse and recode items 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15
(1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1)
2. After recoding, total boundary ambiguity score is the sum of all individual items.

SCALE #2: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR WIDOWS

1. Recode items 1, 2, 3, 4, 12
(1=4) (2=3) (3=2) (4=1)
2. Compute total score by adding recoded items and all other items.

SCALE #3: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR PARENTS OF ADOLESCENTS LEAVING HOME

1. Recode item 2
(1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1)
 2. Compute total score by adding recoded items and all other items.
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SCALE #4: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR ADOLESCENT AND ADULT CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

1. Recode items 3, 11, 12, 13, 19, 21, 25
(1=4) (2=3) (3=2) (4=1)
2. Compute total score by adding recoded items and all other items.

SCALE #5: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR DIVORCED ADULTS

1. Recode items 2, 9, 11, 17, 19, 20, 22
(1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1)
2. Compute total score by adding recoded items and all other items.

SCALE #6: BOUNDARY AMBIGUITY SCALE FOR CAREGIVERS OF PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA

Compute total score by adding all items.

scoring:

INTERPRETATION

The higher the score, the more that respondent perceives his or her family boundary as ambiguous. At this time, information is being gathered concerning the interpretation of boundary ambiguity scores across varied populations. Norms must be established for each population studied. Currently, the best interpretation of scores is to examine within-sample comparisons, using central tendencies and measures of variation as well as correlations with other variables.

Given that boundary ambiguity is theorized as a *perceptual* variable, one that varies within cultural, community, and familial contexts, the authors of this publication are eager for more empirical findings from studies with many populations, including those experiencing different types of loss, and those with various ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The best guide to understanding and

interpreting boundary ambiguity scores and to applying the construct in clinical/intervention settings is an integration of data from studies of varied populations, including those experiencing ambiguous and clear-cut losses. This publication is a beginning toward that end.

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