A Dual Model of Work-Family Conflict and Enrichment in Collegiate Coaches

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The sport culture may contribute to high levels of work-family conflict and to lower job and life satisfaction as well as higher job turnover. Work-family enrichment may contribute to greater levels of career and organizational commitment, as well as decreased turnover intent. The purpose of this study was to examine how work-family enrichment and work-family conflict simultaneously influence job and life outcomes for mothers and fathers who are coaches. Specifically, this study examined the unique contributions of work-family conflict and enrichment to life satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career commitment. The participants in the study (N = 282) were a random sample of male and female collegiate coaches in a familial relationship in the United States. This web-based survey used multiple regression to analyze six conceptual models with gender, age and the presence of children at home utilized as control variables, and work-family conflict and work-family enrichment (in each direction) as independent variables. Results indicate that collegiate coaches with families are experiencing both work-family conflict and work-family enrichment. The findings highlight the need for future theoretical models to include both work-family conflict and work-family enrichment as both contribute uniquely to career and life outcomes.

Introduction

In participant-centered sport, coaches are at the core of the sport experience, and the coach’s enjoyment of his/her profession and subsequent satisfaction within that profession has been strongly linked to the athlete’s experience (McCormack & Chalip, 1988). Thus, it is important to continue to probe the factors that impact coaching satisfaction and overall life quality, as these are essential to the sport experience not only of the coaches, but also of the athletes.

Coaches’ satisfaction and life quality is highly influenced by the work-family interface (Bruening & Dixon, 2007, 2008; Dixon & Bruening, 2005, 2007; Dixon & Sagas, 2007; Dixon & Warner, 2010; Palmer & Leberman, 2009). A growing body of theoretical and empirical work has suggested that work-family interactions at the individual, organizational, and socio-cultural levels impact the work and life satisfaction, the commitment, the turnover intentions, and the
performance of college coaches. While most work has been conducted with mothers (e.g., Bruening & Dixon, 2007, 2008; Dixon & Bruening, 2007; Palmer & Leberman, 2009), it is highly likely that work-family interactions also impact coaches who are fathers (Dixon & Sagas, 2007; Hill, 2003; Hill et al., 2005).

**Previous Approaches to the Work-Family Interface**

*Work-Family Conflict*

The bulk of research on the work-family interface is based in a conflict perspective (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Work-family conflict is defined as “a type of inter-role conflict wherein some portion of work and family responsibilities are not compatible and therefore, have consequential effects in each domain” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). The current work-family literature strongly emphasizes the conflict between the multiple roles that workers and parents assume (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Research has demonstrated that simultaneously occupying the roles of worker and parent results in negative outcomes such as hypertension, increased alcohol consumption (Thomas, Beauvais, & Allen, 2006), and overall job/life dissatisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). On the whole, the conflict literature leaves the impression of individuals constantly embroiled in stress which detracts from their quality of life (Barnett, 1998; Barnett & Garies, 2006; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

*Work-Family Enrichment*

A more balanced perspective would recognize both the disadvantages and the potential advantages of engaging in multiple roles. In fact, recent evidence indicated that occupying the roles of worker and parent may also produce positive outcomes such as higher self-esteem and greater satisfaction in marriage and on the job (Barnett, 1998; Barnett & Garies, 2006). Therefore, several scholars have begun to argue for the importance of examining the positive effects of combining work and family roles (e.g., Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) offer one perspective that explains the positive interaction between work and family roles by introducing the concept of enrichment. They defined enrichment as “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73). They argue that work and family can actually enhance each other, and that focus for improving work and family interactions is to focus on the positive aspects, not the conflicting or negative. While this perspective is appealing and could offer new insights to the interaction between work and family (commonly referred as the work-family interface), it has not been empirically tested alongside conflict theory, especially in a coaching context.

*Mothers and Fathers*

In addition, much of the work-family research has largely focused on mothers (Hill, 2003; Hill et al., 2005; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002), which has been important because working women typically experience high amounts of role conflict as they battle the time and socio-cultural expectations of filling both worker and mother roles (Bruening & Dixon, 2007; Dixon & Bruening, 2007; Palmer & Leberman, 2007). There is much less research on working
fathers, which is problematic for at least two reasons. First, by only examining mothers, the work-family interface becomes labeled a women’s issue, and findings are not applicable to men’s lives as well. Second, fathers’ and mothers’ experiences from work-family interactions may be quite different (Levine & Pittinsky, 1998). For example, fathers may be less likely to utilize work-family benefits because to do so may demonstrate a lack of job commitment (Hill et al., 2005; Pleck, 1993). Fathers may also view family spillover into work as more problematic than work spillover into family. Fathers may experience guilt over time imbalances in their roles, although their guilt may be expressed differently than women (Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992). Thus, there may be important gender differences in the role-interface that could be uncovered and contributed to current literature through a study including both fathers and mothers.

The purpose of this study was to extend existing work-family study in sport by simultaneously examining the impact of work-life conflict and work-life enrichment among mothers and fathers who are college coaches. This study contributes to work-family theory in that it is one of the first empirical studies to simultaneously examine work-life conflict and work-life enrichment. It is also one of the few studies that include both mothers and fathers. It contributes to the sport management literature by providing insights into human resource management both at the individual and the structural levels. This study provides practical insights both for coaches and managers to improve coaches’ overall work and life quality.

The Current Coaching Environment

To gain an appreciation for the importance of examining work-family conflict and enrichment in coaches one must have some background knowledge into their lives/profession. Dixon and Bruening (2007) point out that coaching is a “multi-faceted, high paced work setting full of practices, recruiting, off-season workouts, administrative duties, and teaching responsibilities [that have] created an environment where only those willing to work twelve hours days, six days a week, for fifty weeks a year can thrive” (p. 384). In addition, coaches typically work to provide nighttime and weekend games and events that serve as entertainment for other members of their community. Very often other families participate in the sporting event as a leisure activity, while coaches are working. Thus work often interferes directly with the coach’s own family leisure time and children’s activities (Dixon & Bruening, 2007).

Extensive work hours exist not only during the playing season, but throughout the year as coaches spend time recruiting new prospects, supervising off season workouts, holding meetings, running camps and planning for the next season (Brown & Little, 2001). Doherty (1985) characterized a coach as a “toiler,” which is, “One who engages in fatiguing, emotionally stressful, and ever arduous work for long hours day after day” (p. 11). Such long days may leave little energy or time for coaches to fulfill their family role(s) when they return home.

Many scholars, both in and outside of sport, are beginning to strongly question and criticize this type of culture for its impact on the social institution of family (Brown & Little, 2001; Bruening & Dixon, 2007, 2008; Dixon & Bruening, 2007; Gambles et al., 2006; Palmer & Lieberman, 2009). They are concerned about the growing trend toward longer working hours and fewer hours spent with family. Particularly with fathers, work-family scholars are increasingly concerned that work is taking them away from family both physically and emotionally, and that this absence is having increasingly deleterious effects not only on individual families, but on our society as well (Hill et al., 2005).
Conceptual Framework: Simultaneous Work Family Conflict and Enrichment

Role Theory and the Work-Family Interface

Much of the study of the work-family interface is rooted in the broader concept of role theory. Role theory has been the most common explanation for the nature of the relationship between work and family (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Thompson et al., 2006). In general, role theory recognizes that individuals occupy multiple roles, often simultaneously. Two prominent roles, which are the focus of this study, are those of family member (specifically, spouse and parent) and worker (specifically, a wage earner).

Role theory, while it posits multiple role occupation, does not necessarily specify the dynamics of the interactions between multiple roles. Over the past fifty years, sociologists, psychologists, organizational behaviorists, and work-family scholars have examined the nature of this interaction, with most work being based in one of two major paradigms: conflict and enrichment. At the most basic level, conflict theorists (e.g., Adams, King, & King, 1996; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Murphy & Zagorski, 2006) have argued that a person has finite resources such as time and energy. The multiple roles a person occupies all vie for these limited resources, inevitably placing the roles in conflict and competition with each other.

Resources spent in one role must necessarily come at the expense of the other role, thereby resulting in negative outcomes from the stress and strain of juggling demands. In contrast, enrichment theorists (e.g., Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Marks, 1977) argue that resources are not necessarily finite and that the multiple roles a person occupies can serve to enhance and enrich each other, resulting in positive outcomes for the person and their sphere of influence. Each perspective and the empirical basis for support are explained in further detail below as a basis for building a framework that recognizes the simultaneous contribution of both conflict and enrichment.

Conflict Perspective

From a conflict perspective, as individuals take on multiple life roles, it becomes increasingly difficult to successfully manage each role because time and resources spent in one role necessitate time and resources away from the other. Thus, the navigation of multiple roles, especially those of worker and family member, results in interrole conflict, usually from the spillover of demands in one role to those of another (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Important to the conflict perspective is the assumption that work and family are separate and incompatible roles, and that the relationship between work and family comprise a zero-sum entity (Hill, 2003). Thus resources, notably time and energy (which are assumed to exist in fixed quantities) used in fulfilling one role’s requirements, no longer exist to fulfill requirements for a different role (Barnett et al., 1992; Hill, 2003; Murphy & Zagorski, 2006). Ultimately, this depletion of resources results in tension and conflict, both which may produce an associated cost. This cost is assessed by various outcomes of psychological distress, for example, decreased marital and job satisfaction (Barnett & Gareis, 2006).

In summary, from a conflict perspective the best outcome individuals or families can achieve is no conflict. Thus the focus is typically on reducing conflict, not on improving positive
outcomes, leaving one with the impression that there is nothing positive that can come from pursuing or fulfilling multiple roles (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Marks, 1977).

**Enrichment Perspective**

Sieber (1974) and Marks (1977), however, both questioned whether resources such as time, money, and energy were finite. They argued instead that such resources could expand based on relationships, skills, networks, etc. that were garnered through multiple role occupation. For example, a man might garner business contacts through marriage that would help enhance his material wealth, which would in turn enhance his family well-being. Building on this concept, several recent scholars have recognized and argued for the importance of examining the positive effects of combining work and family roles (e.g., Barnett, 1998; Barnett & Garies, 2006; Barnett & Marshall, 1993; Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002).

Empirical evidence has supported the claim that work and family roles can have a positive impact on each other. Men and women who engage in multiple roles have reported lower levels of stress-related mental and physical health problems and higher levels of subjective well-being than their counterparts who engage in fewer roles (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Crosby & Jasker, 1993; Simons, 1992; Thoits, 1992; Wethington & Kessler, 1989). Positive outcomes have been found for both mothers and fathers, but possibly with different mechanisms. For example, Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, and King (2002) found that simultaneously occupying multiple roles for high-level managerial women resulted in a higher level of life satisfaction and other psychological benefits, development of multi-tasking skills, higher self-esteem, and higher self-acceptance. Further supported by Barnett and Gareis (2006), their findings claimed that women gained a subjective sense of success in balancing work and family demands and an inherent satisfaction from this accomplishment. Women adding the working role benefitted from the reward of earning a salary, doing challenging work, utilizing all of one’s talents, having access to health benefits, and receiving social support (Barnett & Gareis, 2006).

Men also seemed to benefit from occupying multiple roles. According to Crosby (1991), multiple roles enhance psychological resources by offering diverse opportunities for gratification and validation of life. Further, Barnett et al. (1992) showed that men’s psychological well-being benefited equally from their experiences in their employee, spouse, and father roles, with fewer reported physiological symptoms of distress (Barnett & Gareis, 2006; Gore & Mangione, 1983). In particular, men seemed to benefit from creating satisfying relationships with their children (Barnett & Marshall, 1993; Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981; Kalmijn, 1999; Lein, Durham, Pratt, Schudson, Thomas, & Weiss, 1974). For fathers, multiple roles are beneficial when the family role can remain primary; feeling positive about the family role can significantly impact fathers’ perceptions about job and career commitment and satisfaction as well their own levels of life satisfaction (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Barnett, Marshall, & Singer, 1992; Hill, 2003; Verdoff, Doudan, & Kulka, 1981).

**Conflict and Enrichment: Co-Existing Concepts**

Conflict remains a relevant and effective concept that explains much of the negative side of work-family role interaction. However, accepting the assumption that the work-family
interface has positive qualities that benefit organizations and families, enrichment seems to be a promising conception of the work-family interaction. Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne and Grzywacz (2006) argued,

Work-family enrichment is conceptually and empirically distinct from work-family conflict. Conflict is a psychological stressor that results from irreconcilable between individuals work and family responsibilities. Enrichment is essentially a developmental phenomenon whereby individuals acquire gains through their engagement in one domain, and then apply those gains for the betterment of another domain. (p. 149)

The model of enrichment offers the prospect to demonstrate that individuals who are engaged in work and family roles are valuable and productive employees and positive family members. As the concepts of conflict and enrichment are not opposites of each other on a spectrum of work-family role interactions, it is expected that an individual may experience enrichment and conflict at the same time. Further, it has been well-established that the work-family relationship is bi-directional with work influencing family and family influencing work (Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Examining these constructs (both work-family conflict and enrichment, and their bi-directional nature) within the same study, therefore, is essential to advancing work-family theory both in and out of sport. Based on the above review and the important areas of inquiry revealed therein, the following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the impact of work-family conflict on coaches’ levels of organizational commitment, career commitment, and life satisfaction?
2. What is the impact of work-family enrichment on coaches’ levels of organizational commitment, career commitment, and life satisfaction?
3. Are there differences in these outcomes and/or relationships between mothers and fathers?
4. Are there differences in these outcomes based on the direction (work-to-family, family-to-work) of the relationship?

**Method**

**Participants and Procedures**

The approach for this study was a cross-sectional web-based survey following Dillman’s (2007) protocol. This type of method is helpful for understanding an issue across a wide population, especially when little is known about the issue (Dillman, 2007). Participants were recruited from published email addresses in coaching association directories such as the National Association of Collegiate Athletic Directors (NACDA). In addition, emails from college athletic websites were utilized to cross-check any missing or invalid information from the coaching directories to ensure the most accurate sample frame of college coaches possible. The sample included all college coaches from 4 year institutions across the United States who indicated that they were involved in a partnership or family relationship.

Participants were sent an e-mail that gave a brief explanation of the study and a link to the survey instrument. The anonymous survey took approximately fifteen minutes to complete. A
total of 441 collegiate coaches from throughout the United States opened the on-line survey questionnaire. After removing incomplete surveys, including those from coaches who did not indicate a family or partnership (cf., Clark, 2001; Dixon & Sagas, 2007), the final sample consisted of 282 coaches. The participants were men (68 %) and women (32 %) coaches who were also parents, including both head (58 %) and assistant coaches (42 %). The majority were either married or living with a significant other (n = 266), while single parents comprised 6% (n = 16) of the final sample. Households which had at least one child in the home made-up 73% of the final sample (n = 206). The participants were employed at various 4-Year college institutions including NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Division I (49%), II (17.7%), III (25.4%), or NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) (7.9%) institutions. The sample included both head (58%) and assistant (42%) coaches from 34 recognized collegiate sports. The greatest number of responses came from men’s football (12.3 %) and men’s baseball (10.8%) coaches, while women’s field hockey and men and women’s rifle team produce the lowest (.05%) response rates. As to the number of years active as a college coach 42.9% of the participants had worked more than ten years, 32.6% five to ten years and 24.5% less than five years.

Control Variables

Demographics. A one page questionnaire was designed to elicit basic demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, children in the home, and university classification. Demographic information was collected for control purposes. Gender, age, and children living at home may account for some variance in predicting work-family conflict (Byron, 2005; Carlson, 1999; Clark, 2001; Frone et al., 1997; Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Higgens et al., 1994; Thompson et al., 2006); therefore, they were included as controls.

Independent Variables

Work-family enrichment scale. The first independent variable measured was work-family enrichment. Work-family enrichment was defined as “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73). Work-family enrichment was measured using an eighteen-item scale from Carlson et al. (2006). Carlson et al. (2006) detailed background information for the scale, including development and validation. The scale is bi-directional in that it assesses both directions of work-family enrichment (i.e., work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment). This instrument was chosen as it was the only instrument validated to measure enrichment as defined by Greenhaus and Powell (2006).

Respondents rated the degree to which each statement described their experiences on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Carlson et al. (2006) reported a coefficient alpha of .92 for the whole instrument, indicating high internal reliability. Carlson et al. (2006) also reported that the nine work-to-family items had a coefficient alpha of .92, while the nine family-to-work items achieved a coefficient alpha of .86. In the current study a coefficient alpha of .92 for the whole instrument was likewise achieved. Coefficient alphas of .92 and .91, respectively, for work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment were achieved.
**Work-family conflict.** Work-family conflict was defined as a form of interrole conflict whereby some functions of each role spill into those of the others (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It was measured using a ten-item scale from Netemeyer et al. (1996). The scale is bi-directional in that it assesses both directions of work-family conflict (i.e., work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict). Respondents rated the degree to which each statement described their experiences on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Netemeyer et al. (1996) reported a coefficient alpha of .88 for work-to-family conflict and of .86 for family-to-work conflict. In the current study a coefficient alpha of .87 for the whole instrument was achieved. Coefficient alphas were .87 and .85, respectfully, for work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict.

**Dependent Variables**

**Organizational commitment.** Affective organizational commitment was defined as the “employee’s desire to remain with the organization because they want to” (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 3). Allen and Meyer’s (1990) well-known eight-item scale of affective commitment was used to measure this construct. A five point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was used to capture responses. Allen and Myer (1990) reported a coefficient alpha of .87 for their affective organizational commitment scale. The current study had a coefficient alpha of .84.

**Career commitment.** Carless’ (2005) five-item scale was used for measuring career commitment. Career commitment was defined as an “affective attachment to a chosen career role or defined line of work.” Career commitment is “characterized by the development of personal career goals, the attachment to, identification with, and involvement in those goals” (Carless, 2005, p. 342). Respondents rated the degree to which each statement described their experiences on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Carless (2005) reported a coefficient alpha of .83 for the career commitment scale. The scale in the current study had a coefficient alpha of .80.

**Life satisfaction.** Finally, life satisfaction was measured using a single-item global measure created by Near, Rice, and Hunt (1978). For this item, a five point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from not satisfied (1) to extremely satisfied (5) was used to capture responses.

**Data Analysis**

For each scale, values reported were averaged. Each scale item ranged from 1 to 5. For example the five items used to measure work-to-family conflict ranged from 1 to 5. If a participant scored each item a 5, these were added together and then divided by 5 to produce the mean scale score of 5 (within a range of 1-5). For this example, the participant’s mean of 5 indicated that he or she experienced a high level of work-to-family conflict.

Multiple regression was used to analyze each conceptual model. The use of multiple regression was employed in order to establish that a set of independent variables (i.e., work-to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict) would explain a proportion of variance in a dependent variable (life satisfaction, career commitment, organizational commitment). Multiple
regression can also establish the relative predictive importance of the independent variable (by comparing beta weights).

In order to determine how much of the unique variance is attributed to any explanatory variable, the semi-partial correlation was used. Unique variance was calculated by squaring the semi-partial correlation and expressing the product as a percentage. For the current study, the unique variance was calculated for each predictor variable that was statistically significant within the respective models.

**Results**

Means and standard deviations for each study variable were calculated and are reported in Table 1.

Table 1 - *Means, and standard deviations of study variables (N=282)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>38.63</td>
<td>9.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWC</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFE</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEW</td>
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<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career commitment</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Judgments were made on 5-point scales. WFC = work-to-family conflict; FWC = family-to-work conflict; WFE = work-to-family enrichment; FWE = family-to-work enrichment.

For each scale, values reported were summed then averaged. Each scale item ranged from 1 to 5. Bivariate correlations of study variables are reported in Table 2.
Table 2 - Bivariate correlations of study variables (N=282)

** p< .01 * p=.05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>WFE</th>
<th>FEW</th>
<th>WFC</th>
<th>FWC</th>
<th>Org. C.</th>
<th>Career C.</th>
<th>Life Sat.</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>WFE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEW</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.409**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>FWC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-.091</td>
<td>-.121*</td>
<td>.429**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org. C.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career C.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-.163**</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.398**</td>
<td>.148**</td>
<td>.130**</td>
<td>.100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Sat.</td>
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<td>.312**</td>
<td>-.297**</td>
<td>-.295**</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>-.244**</td>
<td>.100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<td>.083</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>.047</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>.130*</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>-.093</td>
<td>-.123*</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>-.230**</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.009</td>
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<td>-.022</td>
<td>-.033</td>
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<td>.014</td>
<td>.294**</td>
<td>-.287**</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: WFC=work-to-family conflict; FWC=family-to-work conflict; WFE=family-to-work enrichment; FWE=work-to-family enrichment; Org. C.=organizational commitment; Career C.=career commitment; Life Sat.=life satisfaction; Child=children in the home

First, a t-test for dependent samples was conducted to examine gender differences in the independent variables. Surprisingly, these tests showed there was no significant difference between mothers and fathers in their levels of work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict, work-to-family enrichment, or family-to-work enrichment. Additional t-tests also showed no significant differences by gender on any of the outcome variables. Based on these results, gender was retained as a control variable, but analysis was conducted with mother’s and father’s results aggregated.

A t-test for dependent samples was conducted to determine significance of the scores for work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. Work-to-family conflict reflected a mean score of 3.52. The mean score for family-to-work conflict was 2.43. According to the results t (281) 21.852, p < .001 there were significant differences between work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict, suggesting that coaches perceive more problems with work conflicting with family, than vice versa.
The subjects seemed to experience a high level of overall work-family enrichment. The work-to-family enrichment mean was 3.56, while the family-to-work enrichment mean was 3.73 suggesting that coaches saw the family role improving their work role and vice versa. A t-test for dependent samples was conducted determined, $t(281) = -8.285, p < .001$ there were significant differences between work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment.

Regarding the dependent variables of organizational commitment, career commitment, and life satisfaction, the participants reported average life satisfaction ($M = 3.61$) which was higher than the midpoint of the scale. Overall the subjects’ scores appeared fairly neutral and homogenous in their responses concerning organizational commitment with a mean score of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 0.30.

**Conceptual Model 1**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Work-to-Family Conflict} & \Rightarrow \text{Life Satisfaction} \\
R^2 = .17 \\
\text{Family to Work Conflict} & \Rightarrow \text{Life Satisfaction} \\
R^2 = .14 \\
\text{Age} & \Rightarrow \text{Career Commitment} \\
R^2 = .16
\end{align*}
\]
Conceptual model 1 (see Figure 1) examines the relationship between work-to-family conflict and enrichment on life satisfaction. To address this pathway, a multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, age, gender and children in the home, along with work–to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was life satisfaction.

A significant overall model emerged \((F(5, 276) = 12.156, p < 0.01)\). The adjusted \(R^2\) revealed that the model accounted for 17% of the variance. The regression results of this analysis are reported in Table 3.

**Table 3 - Multiple regression of work-to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict on life satisfaction (N=282)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>-.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in the home</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFE</td>
<td>.424**</td>
<td>.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
<td>-.227**</td>
<td>-.196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \(R^2=.18, .17; *p <.05, **p <.01, WFC = work-to-family conflict; WFE = work-to-family enrichment.\)

The results revealed that both work-to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict were both significant in predicting life satisfaction.

The standardized coefficients (beta) give a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model. In relation to life satisfaction, work-to-family enrichment \((\beta = .316)\) contributed more to the model than work-to-family conflict \((\beta = -.196)\). Work-to-family enrichment’s contribution was in a positive direction, meaning that as the level of work-to-family enrichment increased, life satisfaction level increased. Work-to-family conflict’s contribution, however, was in a negative direction. As work-to-family conflict increased, life satisfaction levels decreased.

Unique variance was calculated by squaring the semi-partial correlation and the product was then expressed as a percentage. In relation to life satisfaction, work-to-family enrichment contributed 9.1% of unique variance and work-to-family conflict contributed 3.1% of unique variance.
variance, suggesting that both work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment are useful in determining life satisfaction levels.

**Conceptual Model 2**

Conceptual model 2 examines the impact of family-to-work enrichment and conflict on life satisfaction. To address this pathway, a second multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, along with family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was life satisfaction.

A significant overall model emerged ($F (5, 276) = 11.258, p<0.01$). The adjusted $R^2$ revealed that the model accounted for 14% of the variance. The regression results of this analysis are reported in Table 4.

**Table 4 - Multiple regression of family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict on career commitment (N=282)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.010*</td>
<td>-.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in the home</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWE</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWC</td>
<td>.101*</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $R^2$=.05, .03; *p < .05, **p < .01, FWC = family-to-work conflict; FWE = family-to-work enrichment.*

The results of this analysis revealed that both family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict were significant in predicting life satisfaction. In relation to life satisfaction, family-to-work enrichment ($\beta=.288$) contributed slightly less to the model than family-to-work conflict ($\beta=-.266$). Similar to work-to-family enrichment, family-to-work enrichment’s contribution was in a positive direction, meaning that as the level of family-to-work enrichment increased, life satisfaction level increased.

Family-to-work conflict’s contribution however was in a negative direction. As family-to-work conflict increased, life satisfaction levels decreased. In relation to life satisfaction, family-to-work enrichment contributed 7.8% of unique variance. Family-to-work conflict contributed 6.8% of unique variance. As with the first model, the results suggest that both conflict and enrichment are useful in determining life satisfaction levels.

**Conceptual Model 3**

To address model 3, a third multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, along with work-to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was organizational...
commitment. The results of this analysis revealed that neither work-to-family enrichment nor work-to-family conflict was significant in predicting organizational commitment ($F(5, 276) = 1.14, p > .05$).

**Conceptual Model 4**

To address model 4, a fourth multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, along with family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was organizational commitment. The results of this analysis revealed that a significant overall model did not emerge ($F(5, 276) = 1.29, p < .05$). Neither family-to-work enrichment nor family-to-work conflict was significant in predicting organizational commitment.

**Conceptual model 5**

To address conceptual model 5, a fifth multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, along with work–to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was career commitment.

A significant overall model emerged ($F(5, 276) = 11.634, p < .01$). The adjusted $R^2$ revealed that the model accounted for 16% of the variance. The regression results, reported in Table 5, revealed that work-to-family enrichment was not significant in predicting career commitment.

Table 5 - *Multiple regression of work-to-family enrichment and work-to-family conflict on career commitment* (N=282)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>$B$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>-.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.007*</td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in the home</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>-.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFE</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>-.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
<td>.257**</td>
<td>.368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2$ = .17, .16; *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, WFC = work-to-family conflict; WFE = work-to-family enrichment.

However, work-to-family conflict was significant in predicting career commitment. Age was also significant in predicting career commitment.

Work-to-family conflict ($\beta = .368$) was a much stronger contributor to the model then was age ($\beta = -.130$). Work-to-family conflict contributed 13.2% of unique variance. The unique variance contributed by age was 1.3%. The results suggested that work-to-family enrichment does not contribute to career commitment. Work-to-family conflict’s contribution was in a positive direction, meaning that as the level of work-to-family conflict increased, career
commitment level increased (or vice versa). The results also suggested that as an individual increased in age, his/her commitment to career decreased.

**Conceptual Model 6**

To address conceptual model 6, a sixth multiple regression analysis was conducted in which the three demographic variables, along with family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict were entered into the equation as independent variables. The dependent variable was career commitment.

A significant overall model emerged \( (F(5, 276) = 2.759, p < .05) \). However, the predictability of the model is very low with the adjusted R square showing the model accounted for 3% of the variance. The regression results of this analysis are reported in Table 6.

**Table 6 - Multiple regression of family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict on career commitment \( (N=282) \)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.010*</td>
<td>-.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in the home</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWE</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWC</td>
<td>.101*</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. R^2= .05, .03; *p < .05., **p < .01, FWC = family-to-work conflict; FWE = family-to-work enrichment.*

The results of this analysis revealed that family-to-work enrichment was not significant in predicting career commitment. Yet, family-to-work conflict and age were significant in predicting career commitment.

Unlike conceptual model 5, family-to-work conflict \( (\beta=.139) \) contributed less to the model than age \( (\beta=.172) \). Similar though, the results suggested that as an individual ages their commitment to career decreased. Family-to-work conflict contributed 1.9% of unique variance. The unique variance contributed by age was 1.9%. The results suggest that family-to-work enrichment does not contribute to career commitment. Family-to-work conflict was positively related to career commitment, suggesting that as the level of conflict increased so did the level of career commitment (or vice versa).

In summary, six conceptual models were tested which produced four significant models. The results indicated work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment were both significant predictors of life satisfaction. Work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict were significant predictors of life satisfaction and career commitment. Age was a significant predictor of career commitment and a minor contributor to the overall variance of career commitment. Figure 1 illustrates an overall picture of the significant pathways which have been discussed.
Discussion

The current study explored the concept that coaches can simultaneously experience both conflict and enrichment. The study indicated that collegiate coaches with families, both mothers and fathers, are indeed experiencing both work-family conflict and work-family enrichment. This finding supports the notion that work-family issues are not isolated to mothers only, but impact both mothers and fathers at similar levels (Hill et al., 2005; Pleck, 1993). Likewise, the study helped to confirm that conflict and enrichment are bidirectional (Carless et al., 2005; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) in that the work role affects the family role and the family role affects the work role.

Coaches are similar to other populations in that they reported greater levels of work-to-family conflict \((M = 3.52, SD = .81)\) than family-to-work conflict \((M = 2.43, SD = .78)\) (Casper, Martin, Buffardi, & Erdwins, 2002), suggesting that indeed coaching jobs are demanding and may require some level of family sacrifice. Concerning enrichment, coaches reported higher levels of family-to-work enrichment \((M = 3.93, SD = .64)\) than work-to-family enrichment \((M = 3.56, SD = .70)\). The reported scores of family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict indicated that a coach’s family is a positive influence in their lives, and may be that their family role seemed to help them in the performance of their work role. For example, as argued by Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002), parents may learn coping and problem-solving skills in their parental role that assist them in performing their work roles.

Regarding work-to-family conflict, the family role does not conflict highly with the coaches’ work role as compared to the work role conflicting with the family role (as indicated by the level of work-to-family conflict). However, the results indicated that it is the work-to-family direction in conflict that has the greatest influence on coaches, supporting the notion that the coaching profession can have a negative effect on family life (Coakley, 1986; Bruening & Dixon, 2007; Dixon & Bruening, 2007). For example, Bruening and Dixon (2007) and Dixon and Bruening (2007) found that coaching mothers, particularly at the NCAA division I level, faced strong emotional, physical, and time conflicts from work into their families. In fact, a number of the women in their studies chose to leave the coaching profession because it was so strongly negatively impacting their families.

Gender Differences

There was no gender differences reflected in the overall levels of conflict or enrichment. This is consistent with previous literature that indicated that work-family interactions impact both genders (Hill, 2003; Hill et al., 2005; Pleck, 1993). Pleck (1993) argued that gender differences lie in the interpretation and experience of conflict and enrichment rather than necessarily the levels thereof. That is, men may have similar levels of reported conflict, yet it manifests differently in their actions and behaviors. This study only examined the levels of conflict and enrichment, not the meaning or responses to it. Clearly more study, particularly qualitative investigation, of these interactions is necessary.

Life Satisfaction

The first two conceptual models focused on the bidirectional nature of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment in relation to life satisfaction. The first model illustrated
that work-to-family conflict is significantly related to life satisfaction and accounted for 5.38% of the variance on this dependent variable. As work-to-family conflict levels increased, life satisfaction decreased. Similar to work-to-family conflict, family-to-work conflict had a negative relationship to life satisfaction and accounted for 6.91% of variance. As family-to-work conflict scores increased, life satisfaction decreased. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that a consistent negative relationship exists among all forms of work-family conflict and life satisfaction, supporting the assertion that work-family conflict does detract from life satisfaction (Dixon & Sagas, 2007; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

Work-to-family enrichment was also important in predicting the outcome variables. Work-to-family enrichment was significantly related to life satisfaction and accounted for a little over 9% of the variance. While not quite as strong of an influence, family-to-work enrichment was also significantly related to life satisfaction and accounted for about 8% of variance. Whether in the direction of work-to-family or family-to-work, enrichment manifested a positive effect on life satisfaction. Increases in enrichment scores were related to an increase of life satisfaction scores. It should be noted that in both models 1 and 2 the enrichment variable is the greatest contributor to life satisfaction. Enrichment contributed more to life satisfaction than did conflict in either model.

Models 1 and 2 also show that the absence of conflict does not equal enrichment, nor does the absence of enrichment equal conflict: coaches are experiencing both. The two constructs are intermeshed and both are needed in a model to get a better understanding of outcomes. The results from this study support previous findings that conflict and enrichment are conceptually and empirically distinct and are not opposites on a spectrum (Carlson et al., 2005). While research has focused on the negative outcomes of multiple roles, the results of these models support the concept that the advantages of pursuing multiple roles are likely to outweigh the disadvantages (Barnet & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Likewise, the results from models 1 and 2 convey the logical notion that enrichment should be included in future models of life outcomes.

**Organizational Commitment**

Neither work-family conflict nor work-family enrichment (regardless of the direction) was significant in predicting organizational commitment. This finding is interesting, as it was expected that higher work-family conflict would be associated with lower organizational commitment. Work-family conflict is a stressor (Frone, 2003), which has been suggested to contribute to turnover intention (Dixon & Bruening, 2005; Greenhaus et al., 2001). In addition, high turnover has been linked to lower commitment levels (Raedeke, et al., 2002). Therefore, it was expected that organizational commitment would be negatively affected by work-family conflict.

The transitory nature of the occupation (Brown & Little, 2001; Edwards & Benson 1995) may foster the belief that job termination may come at any time from the organization. Perhaps it is such beliefs that contribute to coaches not forming a strong attachment to the organization and therefore a lack of organizational commitment, even in the face of strong career commitment. That is, regardless of the direction (work-to-family or family-to-work) or level of conflict or enrichment, coaches expect they will not remain with one particular organization. This belief may foster the concept that coaches need to look out for themselves, be ready to capitalize upon
a successful season (or positive publicity) and take any opportunity to secure a more lucrative or stable position within the occupation. Therefore, coaches may be more willing to leave an organization for another while the environment is favorable, than employees in other occupations.

**Career Commitment**

The final two conceptual models examined the relationship between work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, and career commitment. Each year a considerable number of coaches leave the occupation (Raedeke et al., 2002). Models 5 and 6 sought to determine if conflict or enrichment contributed to the level of career commitment.

Similar to organizational commitment, it was initially expected that a high level of work-family enrichment would positively contribute to the level of career commitment, while a high level of conflict would negatively contribute to career commitment. The logic behind this concept is the belief that work-family enrichment leads to positive outcomes, with one possible positive outcome being career commitment. It is assumed that individuals enter careers (such as coaching) for the long term. It is also believed that individuals who experience the positive nature of work-family enrichment in which “experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p.73) will continue with their roles throughout their working life. As reported in the results, neither work-to-family nor family-to-work enrichment was significant in predicting the level of career commitment.

Both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict were positively related to career commitment. This might be explained by Carlson and Kacmar (2006) who found that the values individuals hold to work and family roles, such as commitment, influence the outcomes of work-family conflict. If sport nurtures the concept of sacrifice for success, with coaches (and athletes) being praised for sacrificing all other aspects of their lives in pursuit of achieving athletic goals (Dixon et al., 2006; Sage, 1998), perhaps coaches as a whole, value their work roles more than their family roles. Coaches may exhibit a greater commitment to their work role, which in turn increases their work-family conflict.

Also of significance in this model was the variable of age. As age increased, career commitment decreased. The result is supported by the work of Evans and Bartolome (1984) who found that young adults were more career focused and less family centered. Likewise, Carlson and Kacmar (2006) theorized that the importance of work and family roles may fluctuate over time, affecting the consequences of work-family conflict, which in this study was career commitment.

Perhaps this result takes into account that an individual’s perspective on life tends to change as they mature. For example, as individuals age and sacrifices (i.e. finances and time) are made in behalf of their family role, they may make family a higher priority than their career. Instead of a poor season being the reason for a coach ending a career, often the concept of spending more time with family is given for a coach’s resignation or retirement. Often this reason is ridiculed as a noble excuse for exiting after poor performance, but perhaps spending more time with family is a valid reason for leaving the coaching occupation.

In summary, prior studies that examined the relationship between work and family life emphasized the conflicting responsibilities and time commitments of professional and familial roles, but this study supports a growing consensus that researchers have traditionally underestimated the positive outcomes attached to work-family enrichment. The coaches in this
study reported that their experiences in their work role contributed to and improved their quality of life and helped them to fulfill family roles. Likewise, their family role seems to improve their quality of life and helps them to fulfill their work role.

These findings support the notion that work experiences can enrich family life and that the coaches’ family role benefits their work role. However, this study is not able to determine which resources are being used, how they are developed, and which are of the greatest consequence in assisting coaches from one role to another. Future models of life outcomes must acknowledge and account for the potential benefits of work-family enrichment and continue to explore the mechanisms by which it operates, lest they overemphasize a conflict only model that fails to consider the positive effects of adopting multiple social roles simultaneously.

In terms of practical implications, the reported scores of family-to-work enrichment and family-to-work conflict are encouraging to coaches who are considering the addition of the family role in their life. As the results suggest, while conflict will not necessarily be absent between the work and family realms, a coach’s family is a positive influence in their life. Their family roles frequently help them in the performance of their work role and rarely conflict with the work role. These results may also encourage sport organizations in employing coaches with family responsibilities. For managers who make the final decisions on hiring and firing coaches, this study suggests that a coach’s work-family conflict and work-family enrichment have little bearing on his or her performance or institutional commitment. While conflict and enrichment may positively affect individual quality of life, they do not negatively impact organizational or career commitment.

Further, the implications for human resource managers or athletic directors (who often have the most direct influence on coaching management; Dixon & Bruening, 2008), are that organizations need to continue to help coaches reduce work-family conflict. As stated in previous studies, this may be in the form of reduced face time at the office, increased staff support, and/or increased time-frames for on-field performance (Dixon & Bruening, 2007; 2008).

If conflict and enrichment both play a role in the work-family interface, it is clear that from an individual level, coaches can possibly work toward embracing both perspectives. They can seek to reduce conflict through their own coping and support networks (Dixon & Bruening, 2007; 2008; Palmer & Leberman, 2009), but they can also learn to embrace an additive approach (Barnett et al., 1992) whereby they seek opportunities for family to enhance work and work to enhance their family life. Additional research investigating which aspects of family life and which responsibilities of a coach’s family role contribute to their work performance might make the process of enrichment more clear, and allow decision makers to identify those individuals more likely to experience the positive aspects of assuming a work and family role simultaneously.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study offers an important contribution to the literature on the potential benefits of work-family enrichment, but there are limitations. Since this study focused on collegiate coaches, the generalization of the findings could be limited to coaches of collegiate sports. Differences in the nature of coaching at various levels may result in different results for youth or elite sport coaches. The coaches of this study work in the collegiate setting, therefore they may have greater flexibility than other settings. Such differences may affect how work-family conflict is managed or experienced. Future research should expand the occupational base of sport and
examine the work-family interface in the lives of other employees in the sport industry including sport information directors, sport marketers, executives, athletic directors, facility managers, etc. Further research may also examine the differences in work-family enrichment and work-family conflict among coaches of different sports, such as high profile sports (e.g., football, basketball) and minor sports (e.g., cross country, rowing), or in sport positions such as athlete (Palmer & Leberman, 2009), support staff, or front office staff.

This study is limited by its cross-sectional design in terms of causal inferences. Additional research such as a qualitative study among both coaches and their parenting partners may reveal insights into directionality of relationship as well as the resources generated among the coaching profession which contribute to work-family enrichment. It is still unclear which resources coaches perceive as important to the concept of enrichment, how those resources are generated, and how they contribute to life quality from one role to the other role. A better understanding of the factors that contribute to work-family enrichment will potentially allow coaches to modify their dual work and family roles to experience the benefits of enrichment. Additionally, identifying the specific resources that contribute to enrichment may make it possible for athletic directors to identify those coaches whose family situations make them most likely to experience high levels of enrichment.

Similarly, such work needs to be carried out to better understand the value of work-family enrichment for organizations. As these studies provide evidence that family roles produce outcomes that are beneficial to organizations, athletic directors will be more likely to promote organizational environments that foster enrichment. While this study provided new insights, more research is needed, especially in the area of work-family enrichment to examine if the findings of this study can be replicated with other industries. In turn, this will help determine if the present findings are unique to coaching and/or the sport industry. Work-family enrichment is a relatively new concept (in comparison to work-family conflict) that will benefit from further research in order to provide deeper understanding of the work-family experience.
References


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