

An Examination of Work-Family Conflict and Related Theories in NCAA Division I Facility and Event Managers

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Facility managers are responsible for day-to day operations, game management, and special events in athletic venues including stadiums and arenas. At times, these professionals are invisible, working behind the scenes, until there is a problem. At other times, facility and event managers are providing the highest level of customer service to meet the needs of their clients, including coaches, concert promoters, faculty members, and others. Their schedules are determined by the events hosted in their venues, and often they are in their facilities several hours before events begin and several hours after the last guests have gone home in addition to their daily work schedules. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that facility and event managers experience the challenges of balancing work and family because of their long hours and lack of control over their schedules.

Work-family conflict (WFC) has been studied extensively in the corporate context (Anderson, Morgan, and Wilson, 2002) and is a growing line of inquiry in the sport context. In the sport literature, the majority of the research in WFC examines this construct and the related theories of life satisfaction (LS) , job satisfaction (JS), job burnout (JB), and career commitment (CC) as they relate to the challenges coaches, athletic trainers, and sports information professionals face (Dixon & Bruening, 2005; Dixon & Bruening, 2007; Hatfield & Johnson, in press; Inglis, Danylchuk & Pastore, 2000; Mazerolle, Bruening & Casa, 2008; Mazerolle, Bruening, Casa & Burton, 2008; Pastore, 1991; Sagas & Cunningham, 2005). The goal of this study is to examine WFC and the related theories in collegiate facility and event managers and to identify ways that that their profession challenges them to balance work and family while also providing opportunities for enrichment of their family lives.

The NCAA portal (www.ncaa.org) was used to access each institution's website. Once on the website, the highest ranking facility and event management professional in the athletic department was identified and an email inviting that individual to participate in the study was sent. At many NCAA Division I member institutions, facility and event management are combined into one position, and at others these responsibilities are separated. Therefore, although there are 347 Division I institutions listed on the NCAA portal, 445 professionals were invited by email to participate. The survey link was provided in the email. The online survey was assembled to include five scales that had previously been tested for validity and reliability (Fields, 2002) and included a section for demographic information and open ended items. Informed consent was obtained prior to obtaining access to the survey. Following the initial invitation to participate and follow-up reminders, the survey was open for five weeks.

In total, 445 facility and event managers in NCAA Division I institutions were contacted, and 101 participated in the study, for a response rate of 23%. The survey results revealed that 86% of the respondents experience WFC. These results are similar to those of previous studies examining other athletic department personnel. Further, the results clearly show that facility and event managers are satisfied with their jobs (59.6%) and lives (73.9%), while only 16.2% frequently experience high levels of job burnout. A majority of participants (56.6%) indicated that they are committed to their careers while 14.4% expressed that they are considering careers outside of facility and event management.

Correlations were run to examine the degree of relationship between each of the scales. Correlation results differed from previous research as WFC was only significantly correlated with JB and CC, while work-family conflict was shown to be correlated with all scales for sports information professionals. However, each of the other scales (LS, JS, JB, CC) was moderately (0.5 – 0.6) and significantly correlated to each other. These data clearly show that there is relationship between these constructs.

After determining that there were significant relationships between scales, regression analyses were run between WFC and each of the other scales. WFC was not a significant predictor of LS or JS it predicted very little variability of these scales. WFC could successfully predict variability in JB and CC with CC having the strongest predictive quality. Again, these results differ from those collected from other intercollegiate athletic staff members. Data from the qualitative questions support the results from above and provide additional insights.

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