



AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Isaiah T. Wattree for the Master of Science  
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This study investigated relationships between flexible work arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout. 202 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers participated in a survey designed to measure the outlined variables. In this quantitative design experiment, participants followed a link to complete the online survey created on SurveyMonkey. I found that the availability of flexible work arrangements was positively related to work-family enrichment and organizational commitment but negatively related to burnout. Work-family enrichment completely mediated the relationship between flexible work arrangements, organizational commitment. Work-family enrichment also completely mediated the relationship between flexible work arrangements and burnout. These findings support the implementation of flexible working options in more organizations.

*Keywords: Flexible work arrangements, Work-family Enrichment, Organizational Commitment, Burnout*

FLEXIBILITY AND FAMILY:  
HOW FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGMENTS INFLUENCE ORGANIZATIONAL  
COMMITMENT AND BURNOUT

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by  
Isaiah T. Wattree  
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*James Perin*

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Flexible options at work have become more prevalent in recent years.

Organizations are beginning to allow employees to pick when, where, and how they do their work. With this new freedom for employees to choose comes questions regarding its effectiveness. Early research done on flexible work arrangements has shown the potential for positive outcomes in terms of work-family enrichment (McNall, et al., 2009), but there is still a variety of outcomes that have little to no research. Even with positive early results in work outcomes such as job satisfaction (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017), there is a need for more research in order to discover the effects of flexible work arrangements on a larger variety of outcomes.

Research on work-family enrichment has only increased recently. Early research on the work-family interface focused primarily on negative outcomes in the form of work-family conflict. There are opportunities to explore work-family enrichment relationships and the outcomes that are related. Early research has found evidence that work-family enrichment is related to higher work engagement from employees and works as a mediator for the relationship between supervisor support and engagement (Qing & Zhou, 2017). Work-family enrichment has also led to higher job satisfaction among employees (Michel, R. D. J., & Michel, 2015). With these early positive results related to work-family enrichment, I am interested in discovering more relationships with positive outcomes.

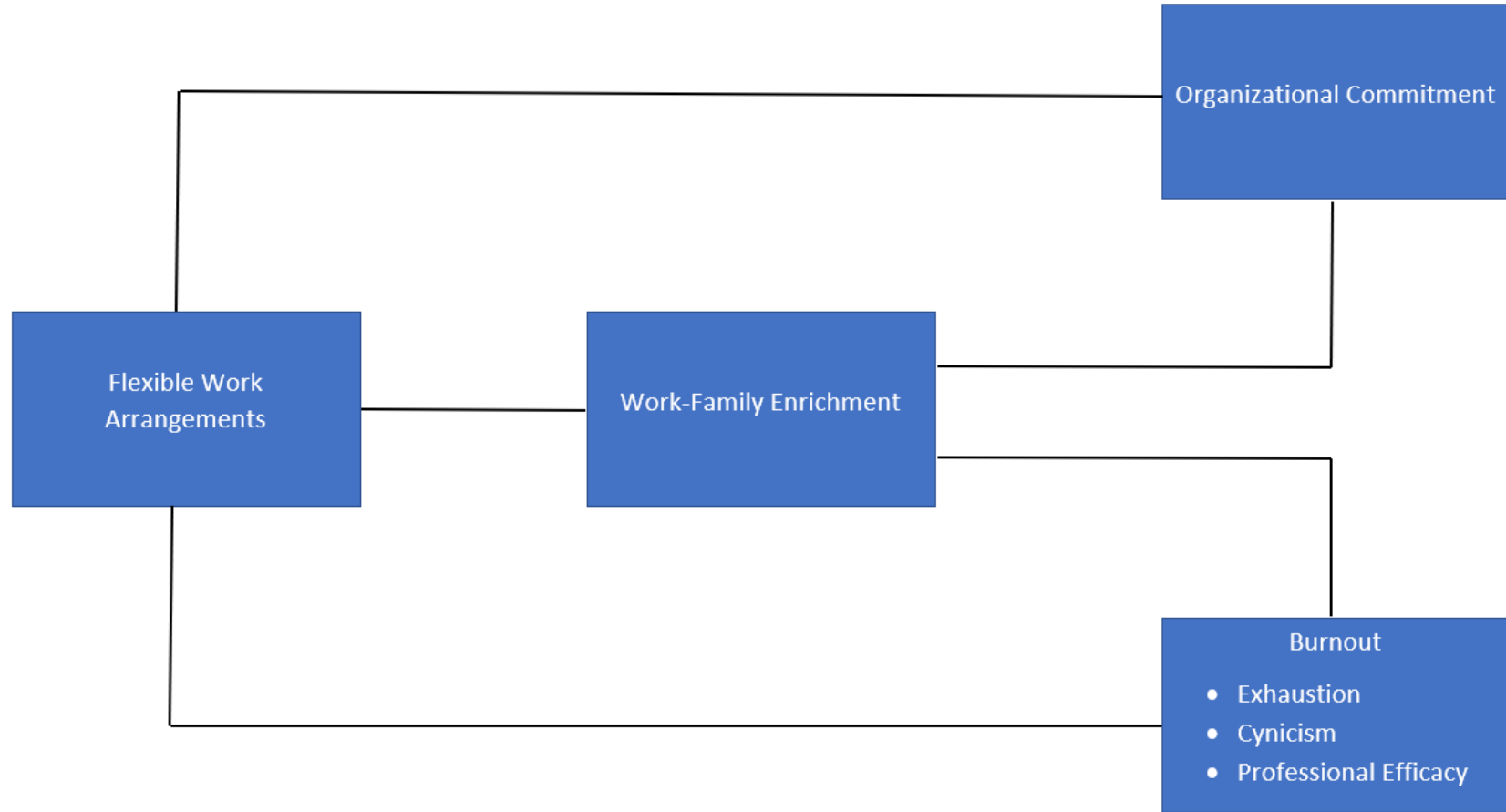
The relationship between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction has to an extent produced positive relationships (McNall, et al, 2009; De Menezes & Kelliher,

2017). Job satisfaction is a work outcome that can change relatively fast. Usually the effect of flexible work arrangements on job satisfaction is short-lived (Almer & Kaplan, 2002). Therefore, job satisfaction is not the best determinant of whether to offer flexible options to employees. A more applicable outcome for flexible work arrangements is organizational commitment, yet there is little research done into the relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment.

It is also important to look at the relationships between flexible work arrangements and negative outcomes. Flexible work arrangements might have the ability to positively affect negative outcomes such as turnover intentions (McNall et al., 2009). There is a chance that flexible work arrangements could also improve employee burnout. There's also been a relatively small amount of research done on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and workplace stress in the form of burnout. There are dangers to having employees in an organization who are under large amounts of stress. Muldoon, et al. (2011) found that work role stressors can lead to perceived injury risk at work. In order to minimize potential dangers at work, it is important to find ways to minimize stress and burnout in employees. The influence of flexible arrangements on burnout could be a way for employees to manage their workplace stress and prevent potential work-related injuries.

## **MODEL PROPOSAL**

I am seeking to understand more about flexible work arrangements and how they relate to organizational commitment and burnout. This study is also meant to explain how work-family enrichment partially mediates the relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-related outcomes (Organizational Commitment, Burnout).



*Figure 1.* Relationship between flexible work arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout. A solid line linking one box to another represents the relationship between variables. The relationships flow from left to right.

## **Theory Foundation**

The proposed model is based from two theories, Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989).

**Social Exchange Theory (SET).** A social exchange is the “general expectation of some future return, [although] its exact nature is definitely not stipulated in advance” (Blau, 1964, p. 93). When one party receives favorable treatment, the party feels they can trust the other and a strong relationship emerges. This trusting relationship leads to an internal need to reciprocate the favorable treatment received. A social exchange differs from an economic exchange. The major difference between social exchange theory and economic exchange theory is that economic exchanges deal primarily with environmental parameters such as market price. Economic exchange is not as flexible and can have some form of structured obligations on both parties. An example of an economic exchange would be purchasing an item at the store. In other words, receiving a good for a return of relative value (compensation). A social exchange involves a connection with another person and involves trust. Social exchange is usually more flexible and rarely involves explicit bargaining or legal obligations (Stafford, 2008). An example of a social relationship would be a romantic relationship between two spouses. According to social exchange theory when employees receive favorable outcomes (i.e., fairness, supervisor support, organizational rewards and favorable job conditions), they feel obligation to reciprocate for the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Receiving favorable outcomes from an organization can lead to job involvement, job satisfaction and affective commitment (Aryee, et al., 2005). The strength of the perceived support from an organization can lead to greater enrichment which will then positively influence affective

organizational commitment and negatively influence turnover intention (Wayne, et al., 2006). Inversely, those who feel they are investing more than they are receiving back in return are likely to report more symptoms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment (Schaufeli, et al., 1996).

**Conservation of Resources Theory (COR).** According to the conservation of resources theory (COR), when an individual loses resources an individual will suffer stress which can then influence outcomes. A resource can be anything that someone finds valuable (et al., specific objects, states, and conditions); (Hobfoll, 1989). When there are threats to an individual's resources, an individual is driven to certain levels of stress. If an employee considers flexibility as a resource, the inability to leave work when needed can cause a perceived loss of resources. Experiencing a loss of a valued resource at work can result in an employee intending on leaving the job in order to conserve this resource (Grandey & Copanzano, 1999). Perceived depletion of resources leads to burnout components such as emotional exhaustion (Neveu, 2007). When there is burnout, employees may perceive that the organization no longer provides the necessary work environment for them to utilize their abilities and satisfy their needs leading to a reduction in organizational commitment (Wright & Hobfoll, 2004).

### **Research Constructs**

**Flexible Work Arrangements.** The purpose of flexibility in the workplace is so employees can adjust in response to life events such as arrival of a new child at home, illness, or approaching retirement (Drago, et al., 2009). Flexible programs offer employees much more control than they would usually get from working traditional hours (Hayman, 2009). Flexible work arrangements also offer organizations to extend

their service hours due to market demands that require employees to work in the evenings (Uglanova & Dettmers, 2018). It is critical for organizations to understand how to manage their workers and what program works best for enhancing employee creativity and productivity. Some organizations use flexible work arrangements in order to try and maximize performance (Kotey & Sharma, 2016). Kelliher and Anderson (2010) found that a flexible work arrangement may impose, or enable work intensification, or it may engender a sense of obligation from employees where they reciprocate with additional effort. The findings of Kelliher and Anderson align with SET. Other companies look at schedule flexibility as potentially a way to improve health-related outcomes among workers that would allow them to remain at work longer (Grzywacz, et al., 2008). Regardless of the format, flexible work arrangements alter the organizations environment. Employees who usually would be working at the same time together now all have alternate schedules depending on the flexibility of the organization (Almer & Kaplan, 2002).

Although there are a lot of similarities, flexible work arrangements have many different definitions (De Menezes, & Kelliher, 2017). The reason flexible work arrangements have multiple definitions is because there are many different forms including flextime, job sharing, shift work, part-time, working from home, and tele-working (Cotti, et al., 2014; Dizaho, et al., 2017). Flextime refers to a working arrangement in which an employee can choose the time of work (Dizaho, et al., 2017). The hours of work must fall between the weekly or monthly requirements. Job sharing refers to working arrangement where a fulltime job is divided usually between two people (Dizaho, et al., 2017). Shift work is a work schedule whereby one employee



replaces or takes over the same job from another employee within a 24-hour period (Dizaho, et al., 2017). Part-time is when individuals work less than the fundamental fulltime hours (Dizaho, et al., 2017). Working from home or homework is a working arrangement where an employee regularly works all, or some of, their time at home (Dizaho, et al., 2017). Tele-working is work done from any location using technologies such as laptops, wireless internet connection and mobile phones (Dizaho, et al., 2017). One of the largest advantages of telecommuting is the ability to work from home (Allen & Shockley, 2009). Other studies define flexible work arrangements as a comparatively large amount of short-notice schedule flexibility or the ability to have a compressed workweek (Haley & Miller, 2015). Under a compressed workweek schedule, the workweek compresses into fewer than five days by increasing the alternative work schedules (Baltes, et al., 1999). Flexible work arrangements also can include sabbatical leave and career breaks in certain organizations (Ramakrishnan, & Arokiasamy, 2019). Out of all the defined flexible work arrangements the two most commonly studied are flextime and compressed workweek (McNall, et al., 2009). The definition of flexible work arrangements that I will be using for this study is work options that permit flexibility in terms of where work and/or when work is completed (Allen, et al., 2013).

**Work-Family Enrichment.** Previous research on the work-family interface has primarily focused on the negatives. It's only recently that researchers have started to focus on work-family enrichment as opposed to work-family conflict (Qing, & Zhou, 2017). Work-family conflict describes when work interferes with family and when family interferes with work. Conflict at work defines a type of inter-role stress that results from incompatible demands in the work in the work and family domains (Hill et al., 2008).

This rationale is based on the assumption that if one's work-related problems and responsibilities begin to interfere with the accomplishment of one's family-related obligations that these unfulfilled family obligations may begin to interfere with one's day to day functioning at work (Frone, et al., 1992). It's important to understand that work-family conflict is a two-way relationship. If one's family related problems and responsibilities begin to interfere with the accomplishment of one's work related obligations, these unfulfilled work obligations may begin to interfere with one's day to day functioning at home (Frone et al., 1992).

Work-family enrichment describes the positive impact of the work-family interface measured by the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Michel, R. D. J., & Michel, 2015; Rastogi, et al., 2016). Like work-family conflict, work-family enrichment is bidirectional such that work can positively enrich family and family can positively enrich work (Kacmar, et al., 2014). Enrichment occurs when resources, such as psychological and physical social capital, skills and perspectives, flexibility, and material resources gained from performing one role, directly or indirectly improve performance in another role (Kacmar et al., 2014). When performance of the second role directly improves, it's referred to as the instrumental path (Kacmar et al., 2014). When the performance of the second role indirectly improves it is referred to as the affective path. Resources potentially gained from the first role can contribute to outcomes such as personal development, better skills, and positive mood (Kacmar et al., 2014). Kacmar and colleagues (2014) describe three different forms of work-family enrichment: capital, which occurs when involvement at work promotes psychosocial resources, such as

confidence, that help the employee to be a better family member; affect, which occurs when involvement in work results in a positive emotional state that helps the individual be a better family member, and; development, which occurs when involvement in work leads to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, or behaviors that help employees be a better family member. The fundamental thinking behind enrichment is that work and family each provide employees with resources such as enhanced esteem, income, and other benefits that may help the individual perform better across both domains (Carlson, et al., 2006). For the purpose of my model, I define work-family enrichment as the extent to which experiences in one role improves the quality of life in the other role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Greenhaus and Powell (2006), in their model of work-family enrichment, describe a variety of resources that influence the enrichment process. These resources include skills and perspectives such as interpersonal skills, coping skills, and respect for individual differences; psychological and physical resources such as self-efficacy, hardiness, and optimism; social-capital resources such as networking and information; flexibility such as flexible work arrangements; and material resources like money and gifts. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) defined flexibility as the ability to determine timing, pace and location at which requirements are met. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) concluded that freedom with roles at work may indirectly improve positivity which in turn could benefit interactions employees have with their families at home.

## **Hypotheses**

### **Flexible Work Arrangements as Antecedents of Work-Family Enrichment**

Using Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) model as a reference, flexible work arrangements

may have the ability to increase work-family enrichment. Past research has shown many positive outcomes resulting from flexible work arrangements including an increase in self-reported job satisfaction (Cotti, et al., 2014). Employees who utilize flexible work schedules have displayed higher levels of work-life balance than those who use a traditional fixed hour schedule (Dizaho, et al., 2017; Hayman, 2016). Ramakrishan and Arokiasamy (2019) found that a flexible work arrangement can positively attribute to improved employee performance. The ability to take time off for personal and family matters has led to a significant reduction in workplace stress and sleeping difficulties with employees (Haley & Miller, 2015). CPAs on flexible work arrangements generally have significantly larger job satisfaction and turnover intentions decline (Almer & Kaplan, 2002). McNall, et al., (2009) found that flexible work arrangements such as flextime and compressed workweek seem to help employees experience greater enrichment from work to home. There are also positive results by those nearing retirement. If organizations were to offer phased retirement programs, employees might be willing to stay longer and utilize these more flexible arrangements (Drago, et al., 2009). Combining these results suggests that organizational practices that involve providing flexible work arrangements could lead to positive outcomes both at home and at work and reduce work-family conflict (Allen, et al., 2013).

The structure of a flexible schedule seems to play a huge role in whether it positively affects employees. De Menezes and Kelliher (2017) found that formal arrangements for flexibility over working hours are negatively associated with performance, but they also show greater job satisfaction. Organizations that use highly flexible programs have also shown to be less effective in comparison to programs that

offer little or moderate flexibility (Baltes, et al., (1999). Most studies focus on large firms so, it is unclear if the positive effects of flexible work arrangements will apply to large firms as well. Small businesses are usually constrained by resources and are unable to provide flexible work arrangements (Kotey & Sharma, 2016). The influence of flexible work arrangements also depends on gender (Grzywacz, et al., 2018). Women appear to profit more from flexible arrangements in the long run in terms of increased satisfaction with leisure time, whereas men experience deterioration in satisfaction with leisure time (Uglanova & Dettments, 2018).

These inconsistencies found within previous research suggests that there is a great deal of variation associated with the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements (Allen & Shockley, 2009). This shows that there is a need for more research to establish a true relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-family enrichment. Focusing on Greenhaus & Powell's model of work-family enrichment there still is plenty of evidence that shows a possible relationship between flexibility and work-family enrichment. The findings of McNall, et al., (2009), that flexible work arrangements directly lead to greater enrichment from work to home, also directly supports this relationship. The positive effects of flexible work arrangements outlined in previous studies along with the findings of McNall et al., (2009) lead me to believe that if an organization offers flexible work arrangements to its employees, those employees will experience greater work-family enrichment.

The relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-family enrichment follows the laws of COR. Flexibility at work is a resource because it is something that employees view as valuable. Flexible work arrangements give an

employee more time to spend with their family which creates trust with that organization. When an employee gets to keep their resources and spend more time with their family, there will be positive outcomes both at home and at work. Thus, I predict the following:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** The availability of flexible work arrangements will positively relate to perceptions of work–family enrichment.

**Outcomes of Work-Family Enrichment.** To establish the importance of enrichment to organizations, a link must also be shown between work-to-family enrichment and work-related outcomes. The work-related outcomes that I will examine are organizational commitment and burnout.

Through the literature, organizational commitment has many different definitions. Early research describes organizational commitment involving an employee's loyalty to the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and the desire to maintain membership within the organization (Bateman & Strasser, 1984). Unlike job satisfaction, organizational commitment is a relatively stable attitude over time (Bateman & Strasser, 1984). Steers (1977) defines three different factors of organizational commitment: A strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership within the organization. In early research, the most commonly studied type of OC was attitudinal (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The attitudinal approach is so prevalent in research because organization commitment represents the attitudes employees have toward the organization, rather than their intentions to leave (Jaramillo, et al., 2005).

Organizational commitments current definition has three different forms.

Affective commitment: reflects an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization; continuance commitment: based on the perceived cost associated with discontinuing employment with the organization; and normative commitment: reflects a sense of obligation on the part of the employee to maintain membership in the organization (Meyer, et al., 1993; Meyer & Smith, 2000). Affective commitment has the strongest positive correlations with desirable work behavior such as performance and attendance (Meyer & Smith, 2000). Since affective commitment has the strongest correlation, that is the type of commitment I will be using to measure organization commitment in this study.

Research shows that there is a positive impact on organization commitment by organizations who offer family friendly programs (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Wang and Walumbwa (2007) found that childcare benefits were positively related to organizational commitment. When employees view the organization as less family supportive, those employees experience work-family conflict, less job satisfaction, less organizational commitment, and greater turnover intentions (Allen, 2001). Building a culture that is family supportive could have a lot to do with the commitment of an organization's employees. Lok and Crawford (2001) found that subcultures at work are predictive of commitment than the overall culture of the organization. There are opportunities for organizations to demonstrate their support offering different benefits to employees (Meyer & Smith, 2000). An employee's commitment to an organization could depend on their perception of rewards received from the organization in relation to the costs (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972). If employees feel they are treated fairly or in a way that

is favorable, they will be more inclined to do the same for the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Based from the findings of Wang and Walumbwa (2007), I believe work-family enrichment could help improve organizational commitment.

SET best explains the relationship between Work-family enrichment and organizational commitment. If an organization is backing their employees up and helping them to keep the resources that they find valuable, they feel obligated to them. The employee will want to maintain their relationship with the organization and will be committed. Thus, I predict the following:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Work-family enrichment will be positively related to organizational commitment.

There is a consensus about three core dimensions of the burnout experience (Maslach, et al., 2001). Subsequent research on this issue led to developing a theory of burnout based on these three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and lack of Efficacy. Exhaustion is the central quality of burnout and the most widely reported of the three dimensions (Maslach et al., 2001). When people describe themselves as experiencing burnout, they will usually refer to themselves as experiencing symptoms of emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion prompts actions to distance oneself emotionally and cognitively from work to cope with work overload (Maslach et al., 2001). Employees distance themselves from their work, actively ignoring the qualities that make them unique and engaging to people. When employees distance themselves, they develop a cynical attitude where they depersonalize their work and prioritize only what is in their best interest over the work they are doing (Maslach et al., 2001). Inefficacy has to do with reduced personal accomplishment when experiencing burnout.



Employees who experience this have a difficult time identifying the meaning of their work and may feel as if what they do doesn't matter (Maslach et al., 2001).

Burnout is a psychological syndrome experienced in a response to chronic job stressors (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). Burnout is a metaphor to describe a state of mental weariness (Schaufleli & Bakker, 2004). This syndrome occurs usually among individuals who do "People Work" of some kind. The key aspect of burnout is the increased feeling of emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson (1981). The earlier studies done by Maslach & Jackson (1981) primarily focused on a wide range of human services. Later, the studies branched into educational professions before finally focusing on the general employee. The development of burnout within an employee usually starts when an employee enters a job with positive expectations, enthusiasm, and a goal to be successful on the job. Over time, the worker feels overwhelming stress which impairs both personal and social functioning on the job. This experience carries cost for not only the individual employee but also the organization itself (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). As a result, employees will quit their job or stay and only do the bare minimum rather than performing their best (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). Burnout involves a prolonged response to chronic job stressors. Thus, organizational conditions should influence a worker's experience of burnout or engagement, which in turn will determine outcomes of importance to both the worker (i.e. family) and the organization (i.e. productivity; Leiter & Maslach, 2003). A person who is experiencing burnout could show signs of one or all three of these dimensions. Although, in order to accurately evaluate burnout, a measure must include all three dimensions. Relying on the findings of Leiter and Maslach (2003), who believed that

organizational conditions should influence a worker's experience of burnout, I believe that work-family enrichment will reduce burnout

In order to measure burnout, Maslach developed an instrument to gauge the three dimensions of burnout. This measurement is known as the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Today, the Maslach burnout inventory has different versions developed to fit different groups and different settings. MBI users can select the most appropriate MBI version for their use from among multiple alternatives. The MBI general survey is one of the more commonly used alternatives and measures occupational groups other than human services and education. These other occupational groups include customer service, maintenance, manufacturing, management, and most other professions. Items on the general survey have not changed since original publishing. This adaptation modifies the three scales to Exhaustion, Cynicism, and Professional Efficacy. The Exhaustion scale assesses feelings of exhaustion in general. This is different from other versions of the MBI because the exhaustion items do not make direct references to people as the source of such feelings. An example item of the exhaustion scale is: "Working all day is really a strain for me." The Cynicism scale assesses feelings of indifference or a distant attitude towards work and represents dysfunctional coping with job strains. Different from other versions, this version refers to the work itself instead of personal relationships at work. An example item of the cynicism scale is: "I have become less enthusiastic about my work." The Professional Efficacy scale assesses an individual's feelings of effectiveness at work. Items in this scale refer to satisfaction with past and present accomplishments. An example item of the professional efficacy scale is: "At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done." The scores of each component create three separate

scores. There is a 7-point response scale used to score each component. These three scores are what comprise the overall burnout syndrome (Maslach, et al., 1986).

COR tells us that when an individual loses resources an individual will suffer stress which can then influence outcomes. This means that when there are no threats to an employee's resources, the stress that the employee experiences should reduce. A reduction in stress should cause a reduction to level of burnout experienced by the employee because they no longer must worry about preserving a resource. Thus, I predict the following:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Work-family enrichment will be negatively related to burnout.

**The Mediating Role of Work-Family Enrichment.** So far, I have talked about the relationship between flexible work arrangement and work-family enrichment. I then discussed how previous research leads me to believe that work-family enrichment will be positively related to organizational commitment and negatively related to burnout. There is a possibility of flexible work arrangements being directly related to organizational commitment and burnout. McNall, et al., (2009) found that flexible work arrangements such as flextime and compressed workweeks not only lead to greater enrichment but also were related to higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intention. McNall, et al., (2009) also found that enrichment worked as a mediator of the relationship between flexible work arrangements and the organizational outcomes (i.e. job satisfaction and turnover intention). Flexible work arrangements can have a positive effect on job satisfaction and more flexibility is associated with larger reductions in the probability of being stressed (Baltes et al. 1999; Haley & Miller 2015). Grzywacz et al.,'s (2008) results indicate that

stress and burnout was lower among workers who engaged in all types of formal flexible work arrangements.

I believe that if there is a perception of high work-family enrichment because of the organizations flexible work arrangements, employees will experience more organizational commitment and less burnout. Flexible work arrangement can contribute to the level of organizational commitment and burnout experienced by the employee. Although, I still expect that the level of work-family enrichment experienced by the employee will change first before organizational commitment and burnout changes. Hence, work-family enrichment mediates the relationships between flexible work arrangements and the outcomes. I predict the following:

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Perceptions of work-family enrichment will partially mediate the positive relationship between the availability of flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment.

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Perceptions of work-family enrichment will partially mediate the negative relationship between the availability of flexible work arrangements and burnout.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODS

#### Research Design

This study used a quantitative design examining the relation between flexible work arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout. Using correlation coefficients, I examined the significance between the variables and control for several demographics. I conducted a Path analysis using SPSS Process to analyze the proposed model's predictive ability. Significances are set at the .05 level. Demographic information acquired includes age, gender, marital status, number of children, tenure, and number of hours worked per week.

#### Participants

This study consisted of participants employed in the United States and over the age of 18. I recruited 202 participants to complete a survey administered through an Amazon Mechanical Turk Human Intelligent Task (HIT). Evidence that Mechanical Turk is a valid way to collect data has been consistent and continues to accumulate (Mason & Suri, 2012). Populations when using this method are more diverse and produce a quality of equal or greater value than traditional participant pools (Chandler, Mueller, & Paolacci, 2014). The majority of the sample was male with 127 (63.8%). Most participants were 25-34 years old (57.4%) followed by 35-44 (22.8%), 45-54 (8.9%), 18-24 (6.9%), 55-64 (2.0%) and 65+ (2.0%). In order to participate in the HIT, each participant must be employed and over the age of 18. The largest portion of participants had been in their position for 5-9 (47.5%) years followed by 0-4 (37%), 10-14 (10.5%), 25+ (3.5%), 20-24 (1.0%) and 15-19 (.5%). Most participants reported that they worked a

40-44 (48.8%) hour workweek. Participants who were single made up 53.7%, participants who were married made up 42.3%. There were 53.6% participants that reported not having any children living in their home, 27.6% said one child, 13.8% said two children, 2.6% said three children, 1.5% said 4 children, and 1.0% said 5+ children. Participants held a variety of job levels including associate (28.5%), middle management (25.5%), entry level (18.0%), supervisor (16%), senior management (5.5%), owner/executive (4.0%), or another undefined level (2.5%).

### **Survey**

In order to analyze the five proposed hypotheses, I created a survey comprised of multiple scales. The survey includes 7 demographic questions such as “How many children live in your household?”, “What is your age?”, and “How do you identify?” The survey also included four sections based from scales previously validated in other studies. There is a total of 45 survey items, and the average response time to complete the survey was just under three minutes. I further elaborated on the details of each scale used below.

**Flexible Work Arrangements ( $\alpha = .86$ ).** I measured the availability of flexible work arrangements for employees using questions based on the survey created by Cotti, et al., (2014). Cotti and colleagues selected these items from the 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce survey. The NSCW is a national representative study of employees throughout the nation that asks questions that include employee access to flexibility (Cotti, et al., 2014). Five items make up this section including items such as “It is easy for me to take time off during my workday to take care of personal or family matters.” A 7-point Likert-scale will rate employees’ level of agreement with the statements made about flexibility (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Since this

scale derives from a larger survey, I conducted my own reliability assessment of the 5 items used to measure flexible work arrangements. I found a good reliability for this flexible work arrangement scale with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  being .86. I created a summative score consisting of all items tallied. For the 5-item scale, each participant yielded a score ranging from 5-35. I then used this summative item in the correlation.

**Work-family enrichment ( $\alpha = .95$ ).** I measured employee perceptions of work-family enrichment using a 9-item measurement derived from the 18-item scale developed by Carlson et al., (2006) and includes items such as "My involvement in my work helps me to understand different viewpoints and this helps me be a better family member," and "My involvement in my work puts me in a good mood and this helps me be a better family member." The items chosen measure specifically work-to-family enrichment where an employee's experiences at work influence the employee's experiences at home. A 7-point Likert-scale will rate employees' level of agreement (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The original 18-item scale focuses on both the impact work has on family and the impact family has on work. The 9-item measurement I used focuses only on the positive influence of work on family life. Since I used only 9 items from the designed 18-item scale, I conducted my own measurement for reliability. I found a good reliability score with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  being .95. I created a summative score, consisting of all items tallied. For the 9 items measuring work-family enrichment, each participant yielded an overall score between 9 and 63 for work-family enrichment depending on how they answered these 9 items. I then used this summative item in the correlation.

**Organizational Commitment ( $\alpha = .83$ ).** I measured an employee's affective commitment using an 8-item affective commitment scale influenced by the 6-item

affective commitment scale from Meyer, et al., (1993). Sample items from the 8-item affective commitment scale includes: “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization,” and “I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.” A 7-point Likert scale will rate organizational commitment (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). In order to test the internal reliability of this scale, I calculated Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the 8 items. I found a strong reliability score of .83. I created a summative score, consisting of all items tallied. For the 8 items measuring organizational commitment, each participant yielded a score between 8 and 56 for organizational commitment depending on how they answered these 8 items. I then used this summative item in the correlation.

**Burnout.** The Maslach Burnout General Survey measures the three components of burnout: Exhaustion ( $\alpha = .92$ ), Cynicism ( $\alpha = .88$ ), and Professional Efficacy ( $\alpha = .89$ ). The MBI general survey includes 16 items and individually scores each component of burnout. (Maslach et al., 1986). These three scores, when analyzed individually, gauge burnout syndrome. The 16-item survey includes items such as: “Working all day is really a strain for me,” “I have become less enthusiastic about my work,” and “At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.” A 7-point Likert scale will rate how often participants experience each component of burnout (1 = Never, 7 = Every Day). The internal reliability of all three scales were strong and had Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  values of .92 for exhaustion, .88 for cynicism, and .89 for professional efficacy. These internal reliability numbers are similar to studies with much larger sample sizes (Maslach et al., 1986). I tallied the composite score from each component in order to gauge each



participant's burnout. I then used each participant's burnout scores in correlation with other variables.

### **Procedures**

I first presented participants with the informed consent through the HIT. Participants then followed a link to complete the online survey created on SurveyMonkey. The Survey began with questions over employee demographics. The complete survey consisted of 45 items for participants to complete. After completing the survey, participants received \$0.75 as compensation for their participation. I chose this amount of compensation based off the findings of Berinsky, et al. (2011). Berinsky and colleagues had no trouble recruiting 200 participants for similar compensation. All responses were kept confidential and stored in a secure database.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### Descriptive Statistics

Data collected from 202 participants were used in the data analysis. Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all study variables. Correlations were run between all scaled variables to identify the presence of relationships. There were multiple significant relationships between the demographic and model variables. Age was significantly and positively related to Professional Efficacy ( $r_s = .173, p < .05$ ). Average hours worked per week was significantly and positively related to Professional Efficacy ( $r_s = .217, p < .01$ ). Children in the household was significantly and positively related to Professional Efficacy ( $r_s = -.190, p < .01$ ). Current job level was significantly and positively related to exhaustion ( $r_s = .150, p < .05$ ) and professional efficacy ( $r_s = .181, p < .01$ ). Current job level was significantly and negatively related to flexible work arrangements ( $r_s = -.149, p < .05$ ) and organizational commitment ( $r_s = -.146, p < .05$ ).

There were also significant correlations between model variables. Flexible work arrangements were significantly and positively related to work-family enrichment ( $r_s = .5998, p < .01$ ), organizational commitment ( $r_s = .381, p < .01$ ) and professional efficacy ( $r_s = .180, p < .05$ ) but negatively related to cynicism ( $r_s = -.139, p < .05$ ). Work-family enrichment was significantly and positively related to organizational commitment ( $r_s = .524, p < .01$ ) and professional efficacy ( $r_s = .374, p < .01$ ) but negatively related to exhaustion ( $r_s = -.273, p < .01$ ) and cynicism ( $r_s = -.272, p < .01$ ). Organizational commitment was significantly and negatively related to exhaustion ( $r_s = -.473, p < .01$ ).

and cynicism ( $r_s = -.583, p < .01$ ) but positively related to professional efficacy ( $r_s = .278, p < .01$ ). Exhaustion was significantly and positively related to cynicism ( $r_s = .759, p < .01$ ). Cynicism was significantly and negatively related to professional efficacy ( $r_s = -.164, p < .01$ ). Further analysis of the relationships between flexible work arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout were conducting using a path analysis. Correlation coefficients are presented in table 1.

**Table 1.** Intercorrelations for all study variables (n = 202)

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender	-----											
2. Age	.243**	-----										
3. Years in current position	.081	.351**	-----									
4. Average hours worked per week	-.081	.126	-.101	-----								
5. Marital status	.162*	.323**	.228**	-.203**	-----							
6. Children in household	.054	.115	.169*	-.111	.382**	-----						
7. Current job level	.066	.029	-.138	.182**	-.129	-.234**	-----					
8. Flexible Work Arrangement ( $\alpha = .86$ )	.000	-.027	-.059	.032	.065	.097	-.149*	-----				
9. Work-Family Enrichment ( $\alpha = .95$ )	-.033	.005	-.098	.070	.025	.073	-.068	.598**	-----			
10. Organizational Commitment ( $\alpha = .83$ )	-.024	-.026	.010	.099	-.030	.016	-.146*	.381**	.524**	-----		
11. Exhaustion ( $\alpha = .92$ )	.125	.044	.011	-.094	.033	.022	.150*	-.114	-.273**	-.473**	-----	
12. Cynicism ( $\alpha = .88$ )	.072	-.062	-.009	-.138	-.041	-.036	.097	-.139*	-.272**	-.583**	.759**	-----
13. Professional Efficacy ( $\alpha = .89$ )	.085	.173*	-.099	.217**	.044	-.190**	.181**	.180*	.374**	.278**	-.090	-.164*

\* $p < .05$ \*\* $p < .01$ 

*Table 1.* Listed above are the intercorrelations between all measures collected. Significant relationships are denoted with a single asterisk if the relationship is significant at the .05 level, and a double asterisk if the relationship is significant at the .01 level.

**Table 2.** Means and Standard Deviations (n = 202)

Measure	M	SD
1. Flexible Work Arrangement ( $\alpha = .86$ )	4.09	1.52
2. Work-Family Enrichment ( $\alpha = .95$ )	4.51	1.46
3. Organizational Commitment ( $\alpha = .83$ )	4.17	1.27
4. Exhaustion ( $\alpha = .92$ )	4.04	1.56
5. Cynicism ( $\alpha = .88$ )	3.87	1.58
6. Professional Efficacy ( $\alpha = .89$ )	5.12	1.38

*Table 2.* Listed above are the means and standard deviations of all non-categorical variables.

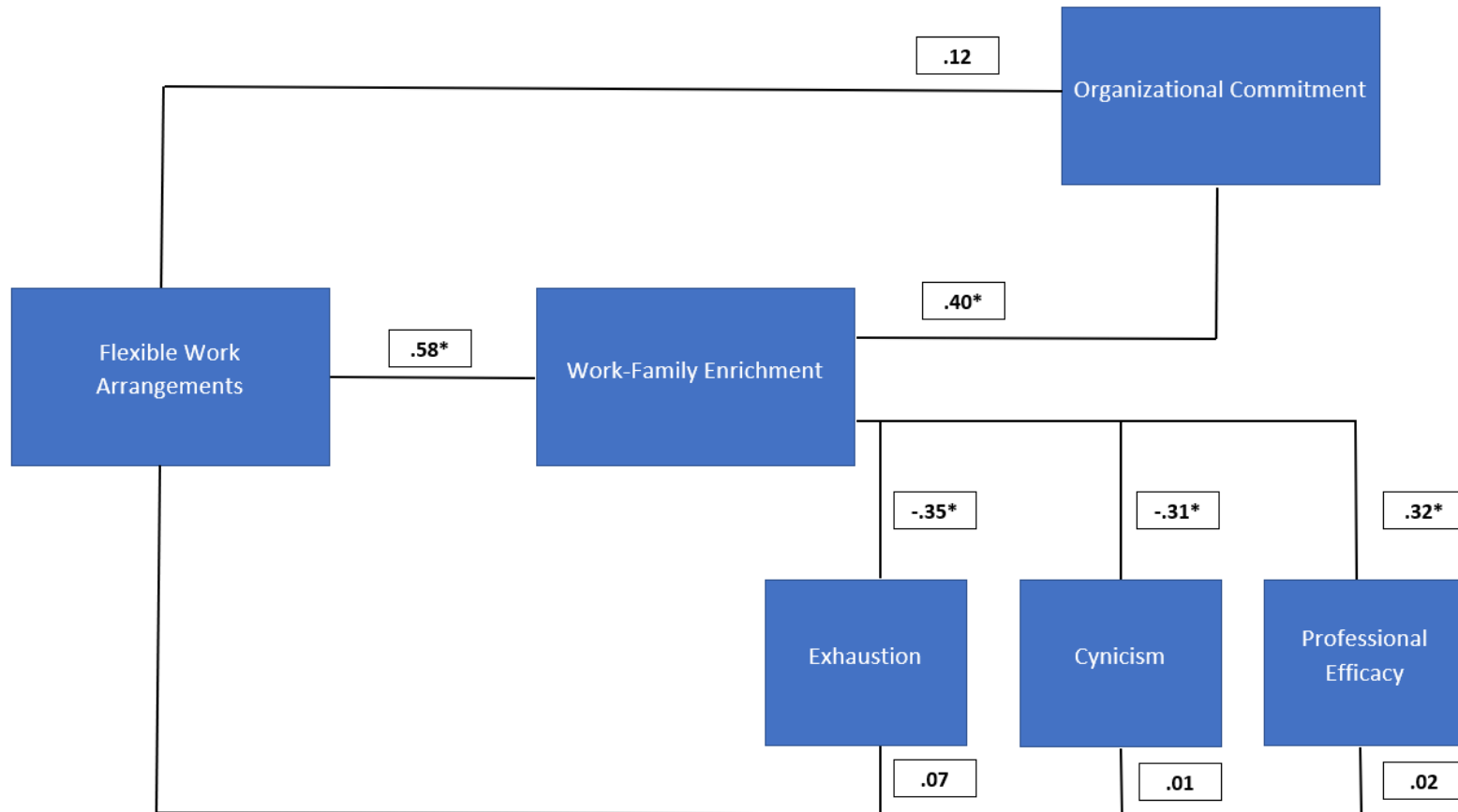
## Testing the Hypotheses

To test the proposed model and further analyze the relationships between variables, a path analysis was run using Model 4 of Hayes' Process plug-in (Hayes, 2018). Figure 2 illustrates the relationships between the proposed model and outlines relationships. Results indicate a significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-family enrichment ( $b = .58, p < .05$ ). These results support hypothesis 1, the availability of flexible work arrangements positively relate to perceptions of work-family enrichment. The results also show a significant relationship between work-family enrichment and organizational commitment ( $b = .40, p < .05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 2 that proposed work-family enrichment will be positively related to organizational commitment is supported. Hypothesis 3 that work-family enrichment will be negatively related to burnout was also supported. Results indicate a significant relationship between work-family enrichment and the three dimensions of burnout: exhaustion ( $b = -.35, p < .05$ ), cynicism ( $b = -.31, p < .05$ ), and professional efficacy ( $b = .32, p < .05$ ). Since work-family enrichment was negatively related to exhaustion and cynicism but positively related to professional efficacy, these results support Hypothesis 3.

Results indicate that flexible work arrangements have a significant relationship with organizational commitment through the complete mediation of work-family enrichment. Thus, there is no direct relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment. There is an indirect relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment where work-family enrichment works as a

mediator. These results indicate that Hypothesis 4 stating that there will be partial mediation is not supported ( $p = .08$ ).

Like organizational commitment, results also show flexible work arrangements having a significant relationship with all three dimensions of burnout through the complete mediation of work-family enrichment. Flexible work arrangements did not have a direct relationship with exhaustion ( $p = .44$ ), cynicism ( $p = .92$ ), or professional efficacy ( $p = .80$ ). Hypothesis 5 stating that work-family enrichment will partially mediate the relationship between flexible work arrangements and burnout is not supported. Figure 2 depicts all variable relationships and mediation effects.



*Figure 2.* Relationship between flexible work arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout. A solid line linking one box to another represents the relationship between variables. The relationships flow from left to right. An asterisk indicates the relationship is statistically significant at the .05 level



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study indicate that there is a relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-family enrichment. This relationship is positive and states that as the availability of flexible work arrangements increases, so should work-family enrichment. The support of hypothesis 1 is similar to the findings of McNall, et al., (2009). These findings add more information that suggest flexible work arrangements can positively influence the work-family interface by reducing stress that may cause work-family conflict (Allen, et al., 2013). Findings also support the laws of Conservation of Resources theory. Flexibility at work is a resource that employees find valuable because it allows for more time with family. The ability to leave work when needed is a valuable resource because it allows employees to respond to family related emergencies as well.

The relationship between work-family enrichment and organizational commitment was also positive. Hypothesis 2 is supported, for when there is a positive influence on the work-family interface, there is an increase in organizational commitment. This relationship supports the laws of SET. If an employee's work helps to strengthen their relationships at home, then in return the employee will be more committed to that organization. These findings are similar to those of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) that when people are treated in a way that is favorable, people are inclined to reciprocate that same treatment. Favorable treatment for an organization could be in the form of organizational commitment. By offering family friendly benefits to employees' organizational commitment for an employee will increase (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007).

Findings supported hypothesis 3 that work-family enrichment will be negatively related to burnout. Significant relationships were found between work-family enrichment and all three scales of burnout. Work-family enrichment was negatively related to exhaustion and cynicism but positively related to professional efficacy. These findings should come as no surprise according to the laws of COR. When an individual loses resources, an individual will suffer stress. A resource can be anything that someone finds valuable (Hobfoll, 1989). This stress over time can eventually lead to burnout. Perceived depletion of resources also leads to feelings of emotional exhaustion (Neveu, 2007). Emotional exhaustion is one of the three major components of burnout. If these laws hold true, then the opposite should apply as well. When an individual's resources aren't put in danger, that individual should experience less stress. Individuals who experience less stress will experience less symptoms of burnout. The enrichment that an employee feels from work to home should cause less stress, less emotional exhaustion, and an increase in professional efficacy.

Hypothesis 4 that perceptions of work-family enrichment will partially mediate the relationship between the availability of flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment was not supported. Instead, work-family enrichment worked as a full mediator of the relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment. There was no significant relationship found directly between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment. This was unexpected since flexible work arrangements were found to have positive effect on important job outcomes in previous research (McNall, et al., 2009). Hypothesis 5 that perceptions of work-family enrichment will partially mediate the availability of flexible work arrangements and burnout was also

not supported. All three components of burnout did not have a significant direct relationship with flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements were only indirectly related to exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy with work-family enrichment acting as a full mediator. These findings were unexpected since previous research indicate that stress and burnout was lower among workers who engaged in all types of formal flexible work arrangements (Grzywacz et al., 2008). A possible explanation for why flexible work arrangements was not directly related to either organizational commitment or burnout is that employees don't view flexible work arrangements as a valuable resource. Instead, it is only when flexible work arrangements influence something that employees find valuable that there is a significant relationship.

### **Limitations**

A clear limitation within this study is that some of the data is categorical such as age and gender. Because categorical data doesn't have a standardized interval scale, respondents are not always able to effectively gauge their options before responding. There is also a limit to the kind of statistical analysis that can be performed on categorical data. For example, quantitative analysis cannot be performed on categorical data. Possibly the greatest limitation of this study is that the sample came from a single source during a single period. A cross-sectional study such as this leads to common method variance. Common method variance is variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs of interest (Podsakoff, et al., 2003). Some of this studies variance could be due to using Amazon Turk. Variance could also be due to the survey being administered during a short period of time. It is unclear if results would have been different if the survey were to be administered using a source other than

Amazon Turk, or if participant perceptions would be different over a longer period. Another limitation involves the sample size for this study. With a larger sample size, it is possible that flexible work arrangements would have a significant relationship with organizational commitment. For future research, a source other than Amazon Turk should be used to extract data. Future research should also include a larger sample size in order to determine if there is a direct relationship between flexible work arrangements and organizational commitment. Finally, there has been little to no research done on the longitudinal effects of flexible work arrangements. This is an approach that should be used in the future.

### **Practical Implications**

Overall, the findings of this study suggest organizations should consider offering more flexible work options for their employees. Policies such as flextime, job sharing, shift work, part-time, working from home, and teleworking can all possibly lead to employees experiencing increased work-family enrichment. It is important that organizations understand the needs of their employees and provide innovative ways to improve employee productivity (Kotey & Sharma, 2016) It is possible that creating more family friendly programs in the workplace for employees to respond to life events happening at home can cause those employees to be not only more productive but also more committed in the long term (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Flexible options at work is an idea that is growing rapidly, and if organizations want to continue to be able to attract and retain talent, they need to provide flexible options. Providing flexible work arrangements can help employees view an organization as not only a safe work environment but also as a family friendly work environment (McNall et al., 2009).

It is especially important that organizations pay attention to organizational commitment and burnout because both are significant indicators of turnover. DeConinck and Bachmann (1994) found that among marketing managers, those who had higher levels of organizational commitment had lower intentions to leave their organization. Kim and Stoner (2008) found that social workers who experienced greater symptoms of burnout also had higher turnover intentions. To retain talent, organizations must be sure that employees are committed and find meaning in their work. By offering family friendly benefits to their employees, organizations can make a huge impact on how their employees view them. When a resource such as the ability to leave work in case of a family emergency are threatened, employees will leave an organization in order to conserve this resource (Grandey & Copanzano, 1999). If organizations choose to stay with the same traditional setup, they will see their employees leave to pursue employment other places.

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**Appendix A**

International Review Board Approval Letter and Permissions

# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL AND  
DISTANCE EDUCATION

**Research and Grants Center**  
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December 6, 2019

Isaiah Wattree  
PSYCH/SE  
1011 East Street  
Emporia, KS 66801

Dear Isaiah Wattree:

Your application for approval to use human subjects has been reviewed. I am pleased to inform you that your application was approved and you may begin your research as outlined in your application materials. Please reference the protocol number below when corresponding about this research study.

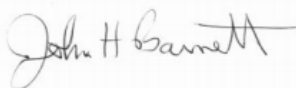
Title:	Family and flexibility: How flexible work arrangements influence organizational commitment and burnout.
Protocol ID Number:	20050
Type of Review:	Expedited

If it is necessary to conduct research with subjects past this expiration date, it will be necessary to submit a request for a time extension. If the time period is longer than one year, you must submit an annual update. If there are any modifications to the original approved protocol, such as changes in survey instruments, changes in procedures, or changes to possible risks to subjects, you must submit a request for approval for modifications. The above requests should be submitted on the form Request for Time Extension, Annual Update, or Modification to Research Protocol. This form is available at [www.emporia.edu/research/irb.html](http://www.emporia.edu/research/irb.html).

Requests for extensions should be submitted at least 30 days before the expiration date. Annual updates should be submitted within 30 days after each 12-month period. Modifications should be submitted as soon as it becomes evident that changes have occurred or will need to be made.

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I wish you success with your research project. If I can help you in any way, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dr. John Barnett  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

bj  
cc: Jeffrey Muldoon

## **Appendix B**

### Informed Consent



You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between flexible working arrangements, work-family enrichment, organizational commitment, and burnout. I am asking participants to complete this electronic survey. It will take about 10-15 minutes. Your responses will be automatically compiled in a spreadsheet and cannot be linked to you. All data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Your employer will not see this information. The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only and will not be used for any decision making in the company. You will receive \$0.75 for your participation in this study. I hope that the information obtained from this study may increase the body of knowledge about the use of flexible work arrangements in organizations and provide information that can be implemented to improve organizational commitment and reduce burnout.

By clicking on the link below, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without any penalty. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty. At the end of the survey, you will receive a code to paste into the box below to receive credit for taking the survey.

Thank you for your attention. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [iwattree@g.emporia.edu](mailto:iwattree@g.emporia.edu).

## Appendix C

Survey as Viewed by Online Participants

## Flexible Work Arrangements

1. How do you identify?

- Man
- Woman
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

2. What is your age?

3. About how many years have you been in your current position?

4. On average how many hours do you work per week including overtime?

5. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

6. How many children live in your household?







	Every day	A few times a week	Once a week	A few times a month	Once a month or less	A few times a year or less	Never
I feel burned out from my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I am making an effective contribution to what this organization does.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have become less interested in my work since I started this job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have become less enthusiastic about my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my opinion, I am good at my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel exhilarated when I accomplish something at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I just want to do my job and not be bothered.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I doubt the significance of my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Flexible Work Arrangements

Thank you for your participation. Your Survey Code is: **67212**

12. Please enter your MTurk ID number and press "Done".

With my typed signature below, I, (Isaiah Wattree), hereby submit this thesis/dissertation to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulation governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, digitizing or other reproduction of this document is allowed with proper attribution for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author. I also agree to permit the Graduate School at Emporia State University to digitize and place this thesis in the ESU institutional repository, and ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database and in ProQuest's Dissertation Abstracts International.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Isaiah Wattree

Typed Signature of Author

\_\_\_\_\_  
April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Date

Family and flexibility: How flexible work arrangements influence organizational  
commitment and burnout.

Title of Thesis