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ENHANCING WORK AND LIFE BALANCE IN ATHLETIC TRAINING

Work Family Interface

- Work and Family Interface has been examined by scholars and organizations for several decades
- **Definition:** *WFC occurs when individuals experience difficulties managing responsibilities in their personal lives due to professional work demands*
 - Conflict between work and family is bidirectional
 - Research demonstrates work roles are more likely to interfere with family roles

NATA Strategic Plan (2001, 2003)

Becker-Doyle E. NATA Sees Future in Updated strategic plan. *J Athl Train.* 2003; 38 (3):192-193.

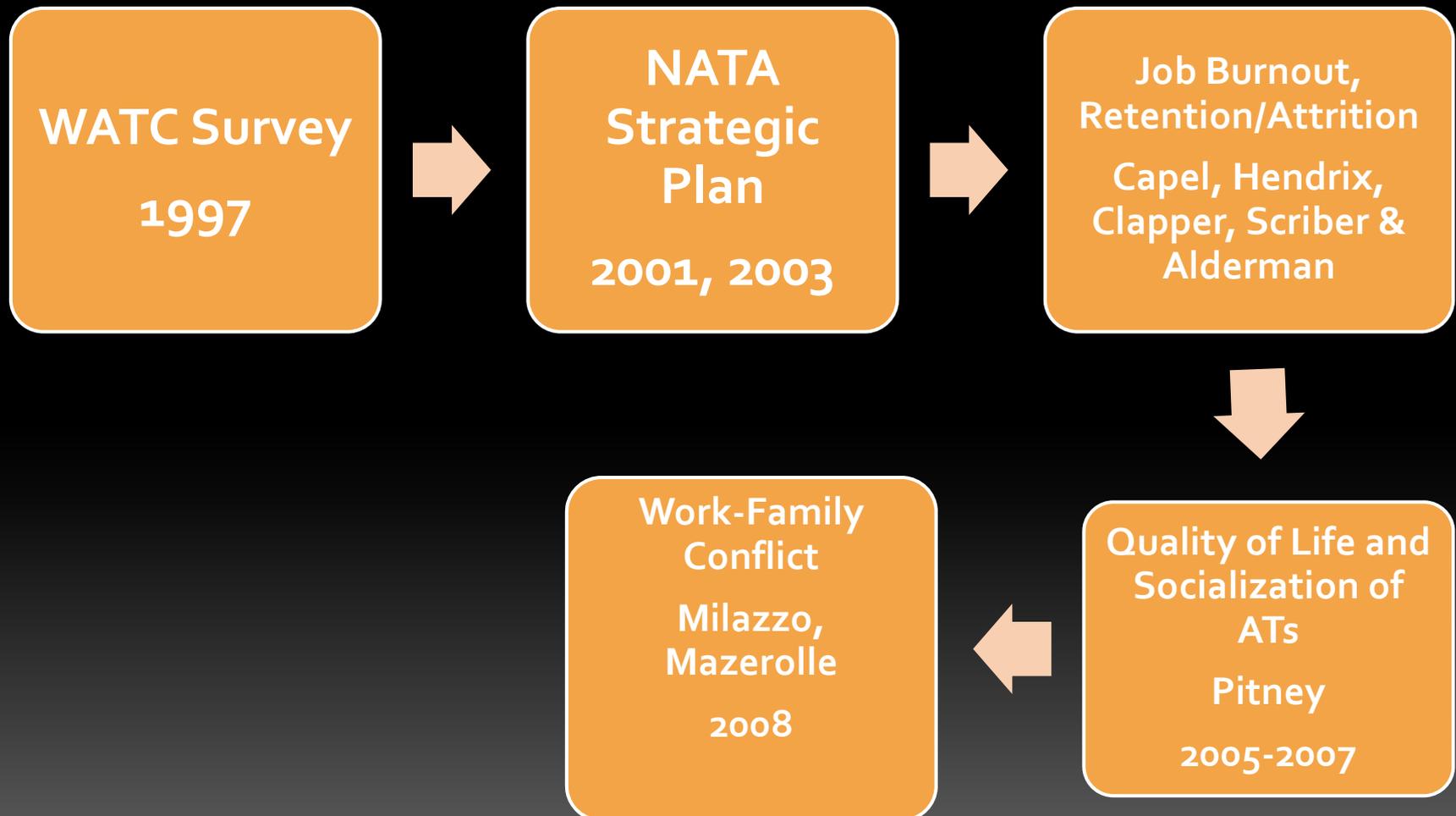
- Enhancing professional stature
- Increasing member's personal and professional satisfaction
 - "NATA working on behalf of certified athletic trainers to promote, advance, and improve...and the lives of its participants."
 - Women in Athletic Training committee focus on Quality of Life
- Strengthening credibility and visibility
- Ensuring financial stability

Work and Family Balance in Athletic Training

Women in Athletic Training Survey
1996-1997

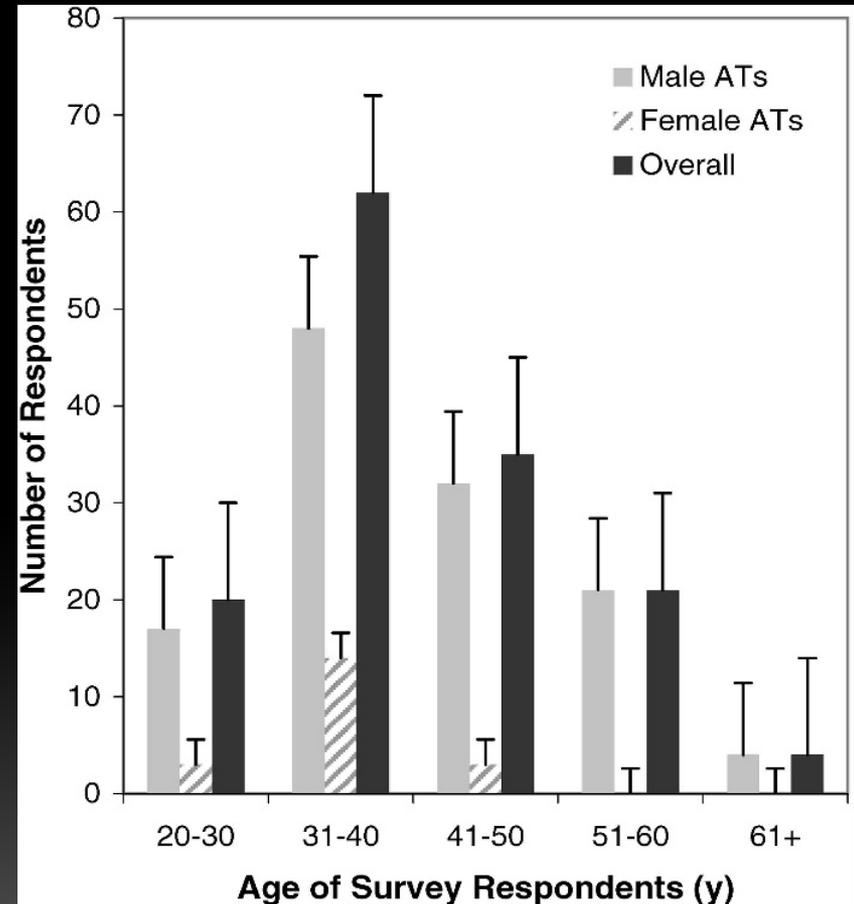
Major concern for ATs was work and life issues.

Work and Family Balance in Athletic Training



“Life” versus “Family” Balance in Athletic Training

- Work-life conflict may be a more appropriate description due to the demographic make-up of the Division I setting.
- The term “family” may need to be exchanged for “life” to reflect a more global perspective.
- “Yeah, (I) definitely experience challenges... Mostly my social life is affected because of work (long hours) and having to work weekends.”



Family in Athletic Training

54.5% (n 5 320) were single; 42.8% (n 5 251) were married, partnered, or living with their significant other

24.0% (n 5 142) had children: 7.6% (n 5 20) of the female ATs and 37% (n 5 122) of the male ATs

75% of the female ATs at Division I level were between the ages of 20-30

63% of all ATs were between the ages of 20-30

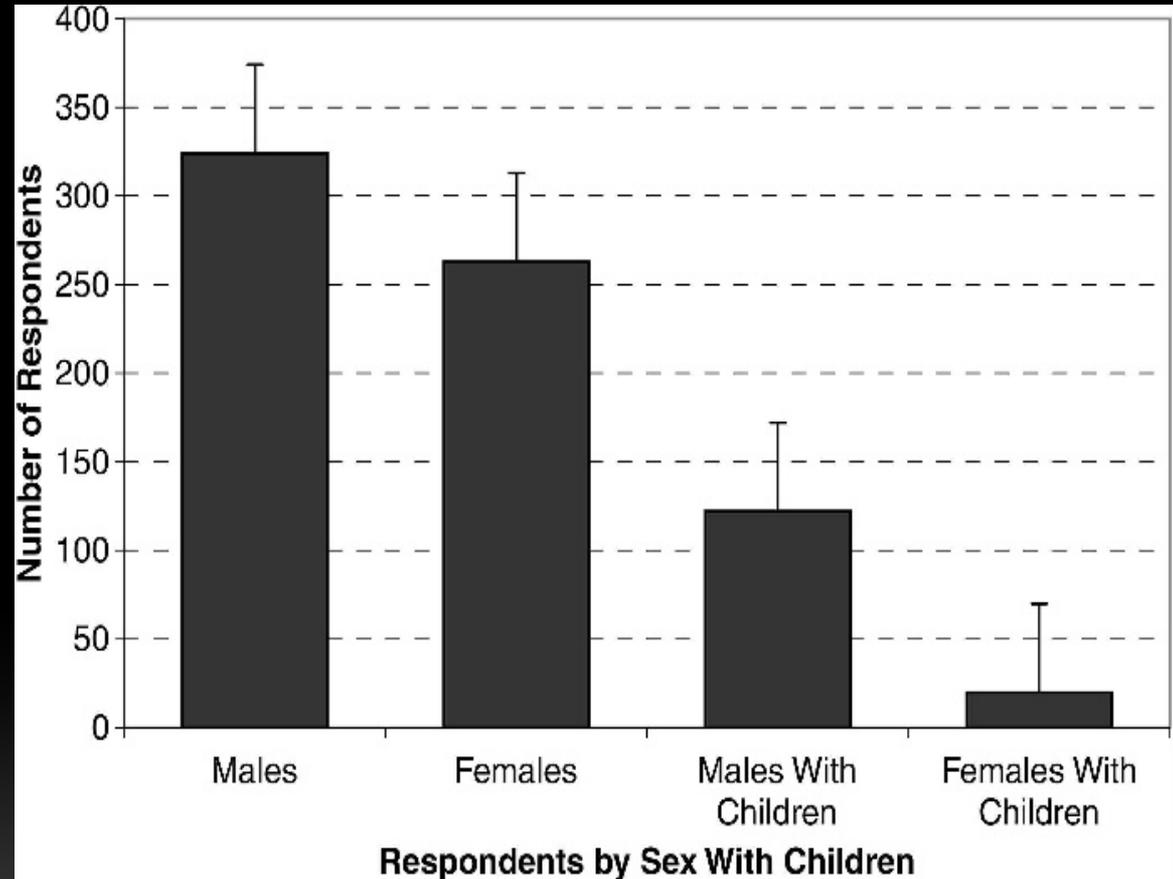
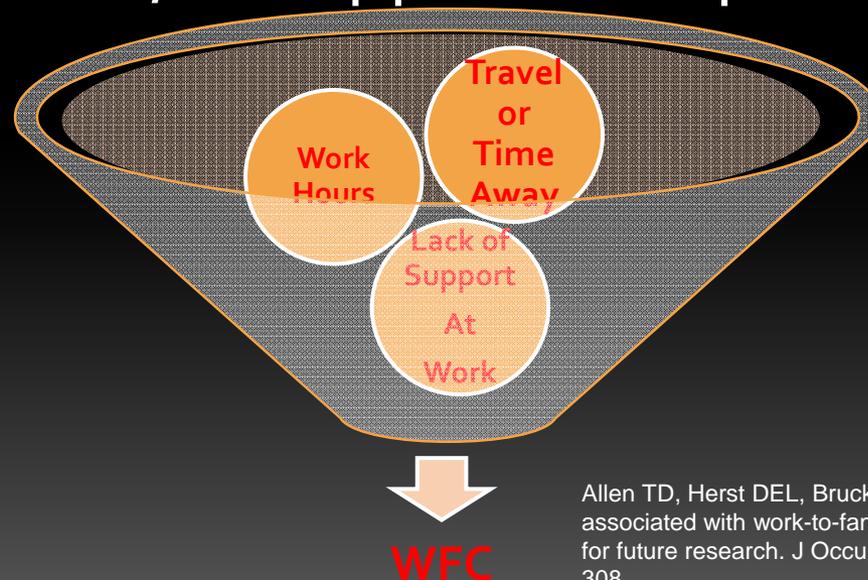


Figure 1. Male and female total respondents and those with children.

Mazerolle et al. Work-family conflict part I: antecedents of work-family conflict in National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I-A certified athletic trainers. J Athl Train. 2008;43(5):505-512.

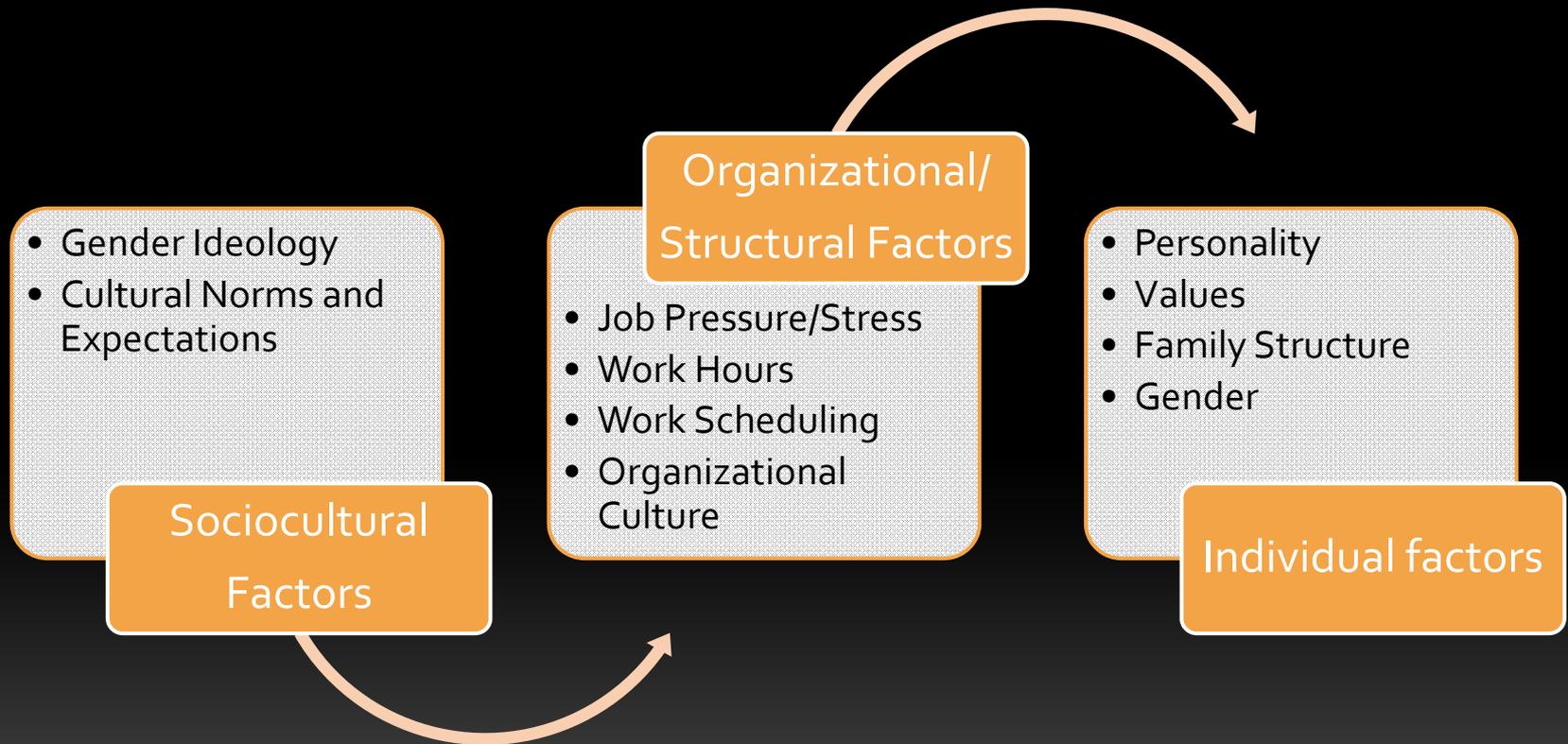
Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict in Working Professionals

- Extensive, irregular, or inflexible work hours, work overload and other forms of job stress, interpersonal conflict at work, extensive travel, career transitions, unsupportive supervisor or organization



Allen TD, Herst DEL, Bruck CS, Sutton M. Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: a review and agenda for future research. J Occup Health Psychol. 2000;5(2):278–308.

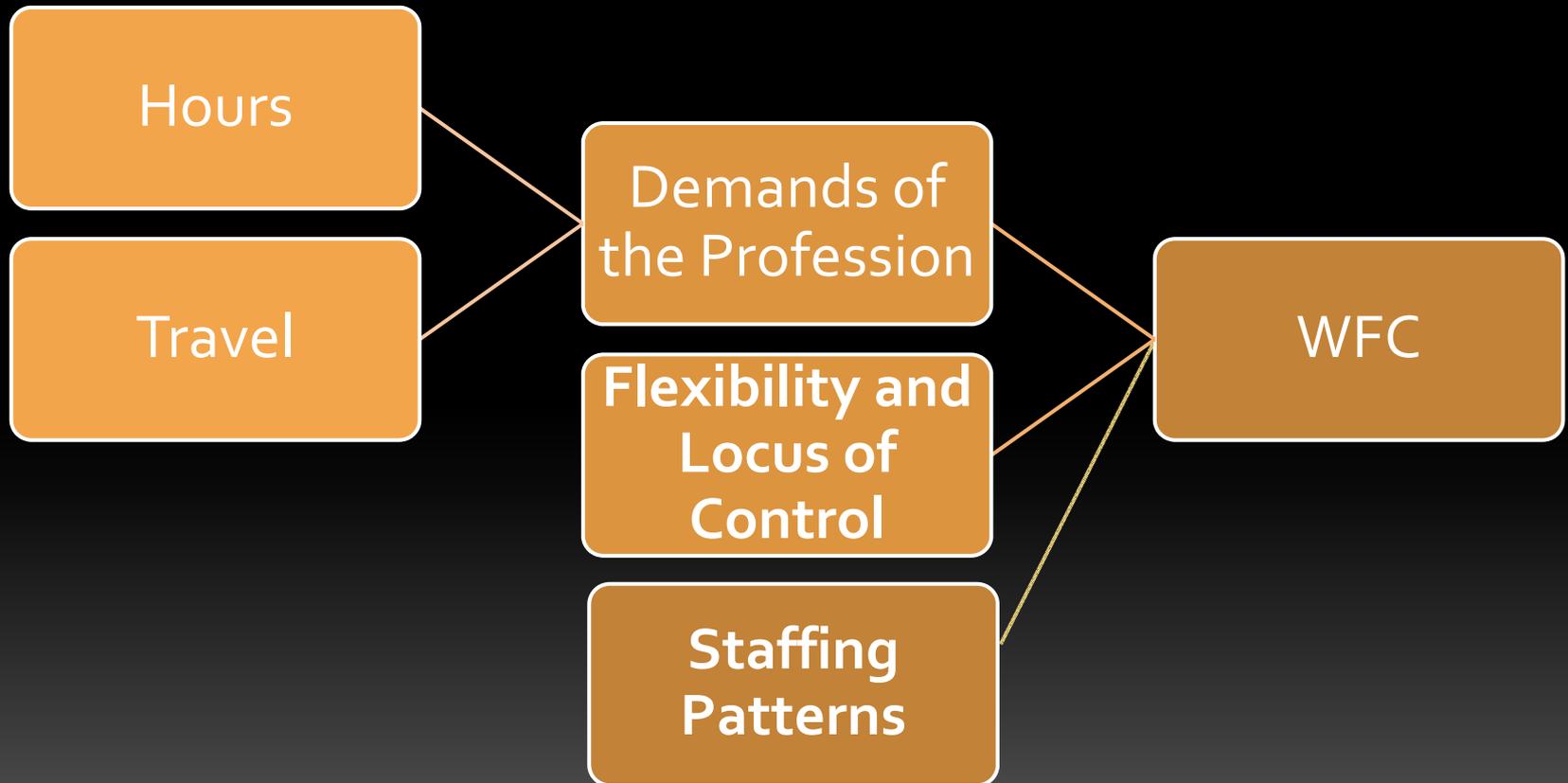
Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict in Sport



Dixon MA, Bruening JE. Perspectives on work-family conflict in sport: an integrated approach. *Sport Manage Rev.* 2005;8(3):227–253.

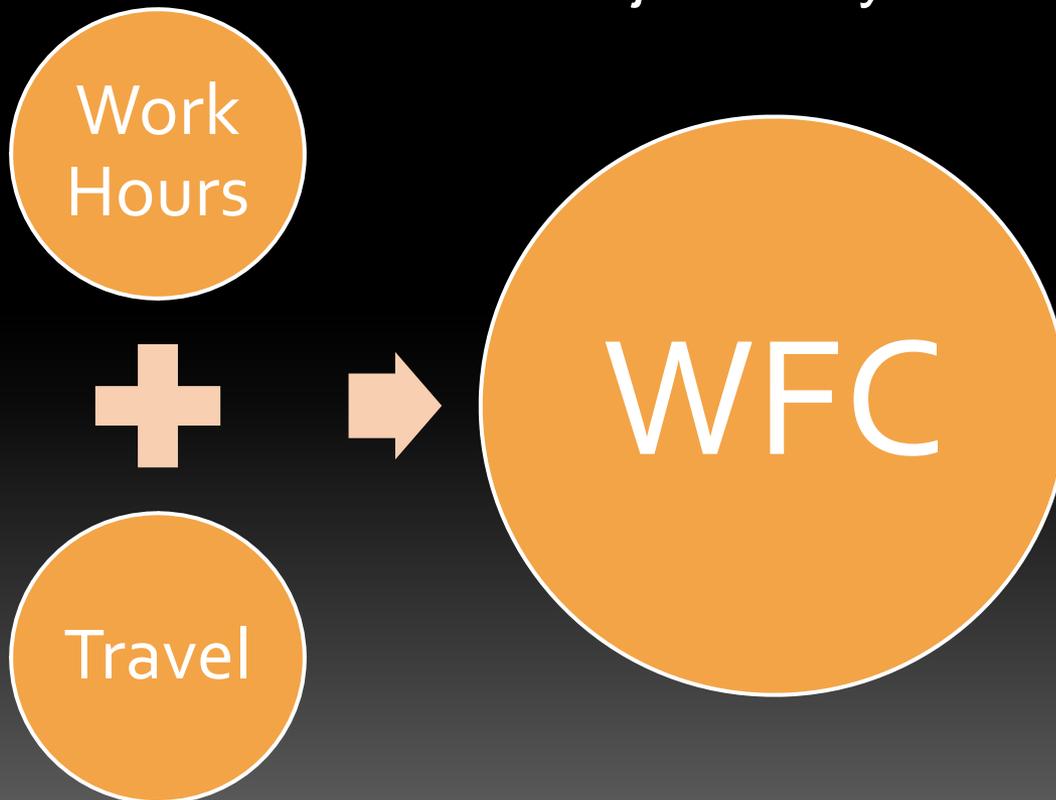
Dixon MA, Bruening JE. Work-family conflict in coaching I: a top-down perspective. *J Sport Manage.* 2007;21(3):377–406.

Overall Picture in Division I Athletics



Antecedents of WFC in Athletic Training

* Organizational/Structural Factors as theorized by *Dixon and Bruening (2005)* serve as the major catalyst to WFC



*Factors are comparable to other working professionals in athletic training and sport.

*Nurses, EMTs, and ER physicians also report similar findings

Antecedents of WFC in Athletic Training

- Flexibility and Control Over Work Schedules
 - Linked to successful management of home and personal responsibilities
 - Control over work schedules anecdotally linked to reduction in conflict for working individuals
 - “The irregularities is the most problematic...Not knowing ahead of time your schedule...makes it difficult to make plans/get things accomplished outside the workplace.”
 - “Ultimately, the head coach has the control over the schedule and the hope is they involve you.”

Antecedents in WFC in Athletic Training

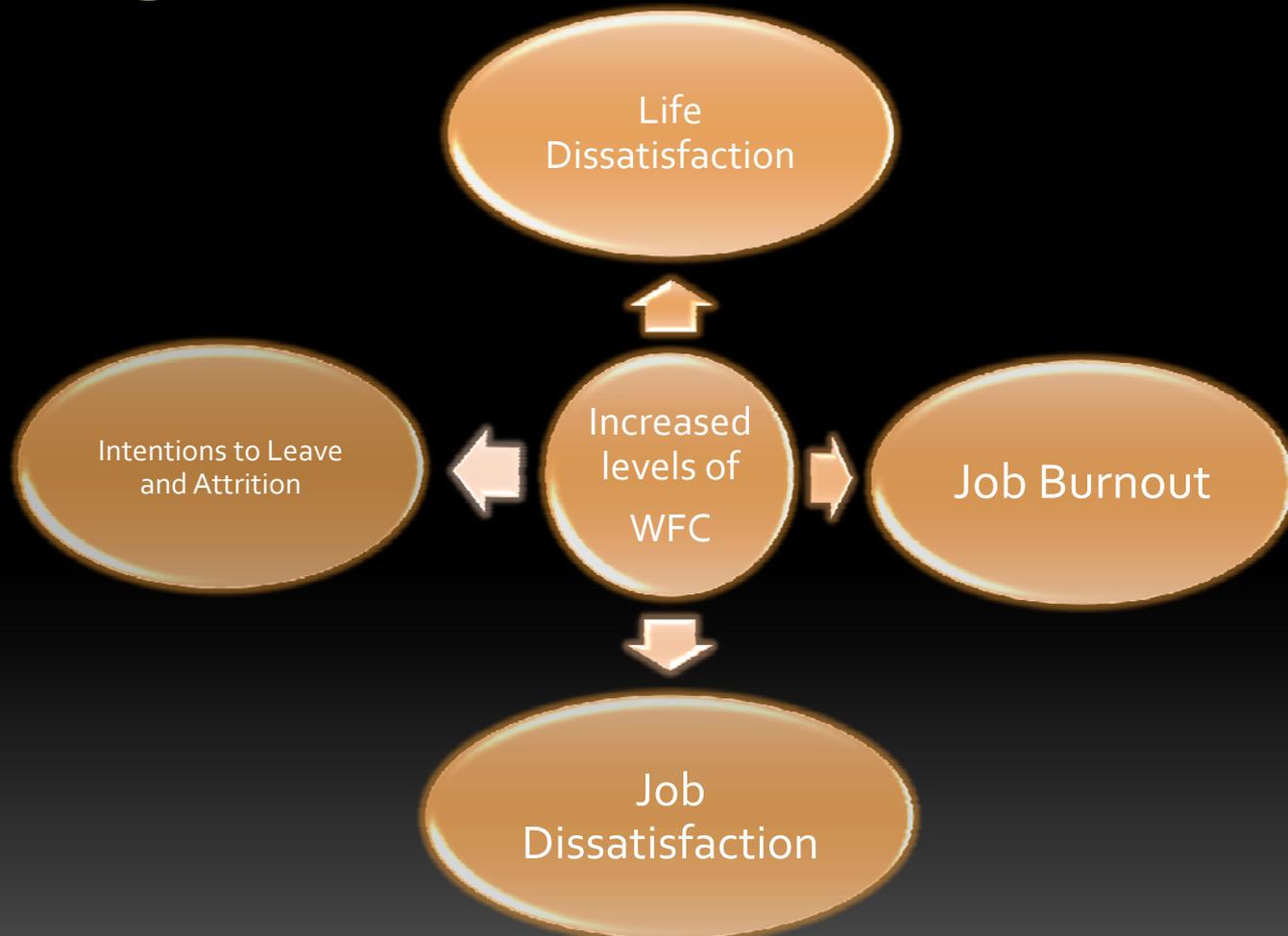
Mazerolle et al. Work-family conflict part I: antecedents of work-family conflict in National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I-A certified athletic trainers. J Athl Train. 2008;43(5):505-512.

- Staffing Patterns
 - On average 7 full-time ATs employed at Division I schools
 - Most not meeting NATA's Guidelines for Appropriate Medical Coverage
 - On average each full time AT covers 3 teams
 - "When the staffing patterns are adequate in terms of the number full-time staff members to cover the load required of an AT then I think there will be less conflicts. Until we can hire more ATs to effectively cover all the teams then the struggle will still exist."

Demographics and WFC

- Married working professionals with children experience more WFC
 - Regardless of marital or family status ATs experience WFC
- Female working professionals tend to experience more WFC
 - No gender differences among ATs
 - Note:
 - Only 20 Female ATs with families are still working at the Division I level—*Mazerolle et al.*

The Impact of WFC on the Working Professional



Kossek EE, Ozeki C. Work-family conflict, policies, and the job-life satisfaction relationship: a review and directions for organizational behavior-human resources research. *J Appl Psychol.* 2001;1998;83(2):139-149.

Allen TD, Herst DEL, Bruck CS, Sutton M. Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: a review and agenda for future research. *J Occup Health Psychol.* 2000;5(2):278-308.

Impact of WFC: Athletic Training versus Other Working Professionals

•WFC directly contributed to job satisfaction ($p < .001$), job burnout ($p < .001$), and intention to leave the profession ($p < .001$).

Negative relationships were found between WFC and job satisfaction ($r = -.52, p < .001$).

Positive were noted between WFC and job burnout ($r = .63, p < .001$) and intention to leave the profession ($r = .46, p < .001$).

Measure	Allen et al.	Mazerolle et al.
JS and WFC	-.23	-.52*
LS and WFC	-.28	-.11
JB and WFC	.42	.64*
ITL and WFC	.29	.46*

*Significant at the $p < .05$

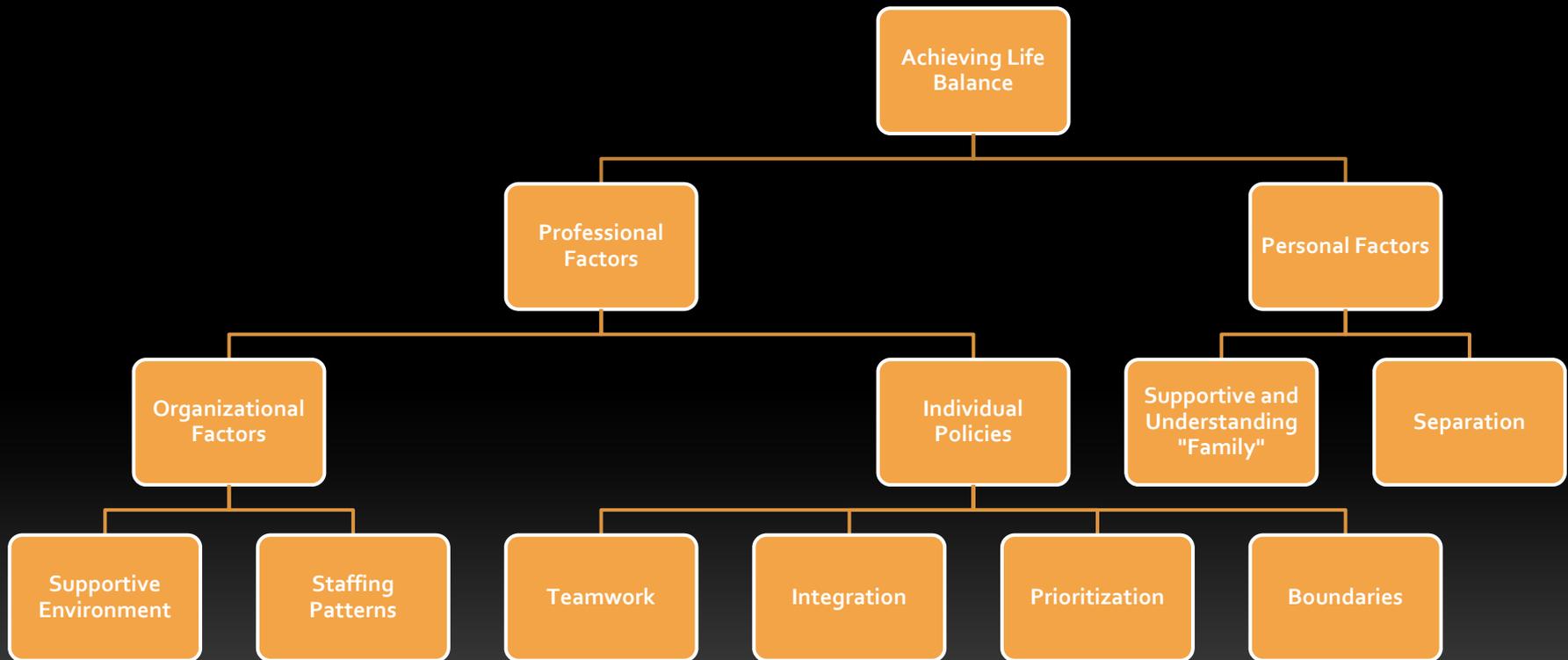
Organizational Efforts to Mitigate WFC in the Workplace

- Organizational support has been shown to be the critical link in reducing the occurrence of WFC
 - Family-supportive work cultures are related to lower WFC and higher Job Satisfaction
- Achieving work-family balance is linked with increased employee involvement, decreased turnover, and increased employee performance
- Flex time, on-site day care, and family leave as ways to help employees find a balance between their work and home life

Investigating Work and Life Balance Strategies

- Qualitative method to investigate effective strategies implemented by D-I ATs
- On-line interviewing with follow-up interviews
 - Convenience and snowball sample
- 28 ATs (15 females and 13 males) ATs aged 35 ± 9
 - 19 ATs FBS and 9 ATs at FCS
 - 7 HAT and 21 AATs

Finding Balance in Division I Athletics



Professional (Organizational) Factors

- **Staffing Patterns**

- My biggest challenge before [at my former school] was an imbalance with staff to patient ratios. At my current institution, we have a rather large staff. One of the greatest benefits of our large staff is that people are willing to assist if someone requires help.”
- I think more staff [would increase personal time]. Often times you do not have one sport assignment, you get multiple ones. That is what makes the hours so long.”

Professional (Organizational) Factors

- **Supportive Working Environment**
 - “We all end up trying to help each other when we can. Whether it is by covering a part of practice so you can go home early, or traveling with a team so you can attend a family event”
 - Surround yourself with co-workers with the same values [family oriented and team oriented]. [As a staff member] Always be willing to assist a co-worker and go above and beyond, and the help will be there when you need it as well.

Professional Factors

■ Head ATs Leadership

- “As the head athletic trainer I have worked hard to establish an atmosphere that allows and encourages us to work together and to cover for each other when possible.”
- “I'm responsible for fostering a family environment in my department. ”
- “If you work for someone who believes that more time spent at work means that you are doing a better job and who does not spread responsibility in coverage among staff, it gets difficult to have that balance.”

Professional (Individual) Factors

- **Prioritizing Self and Responsibilities**
 - “I try to maintain balance is by prioritizing and time management. I find that being able to put the things that are important to you first it helps in keeping you from getting absorbed by one aspect.”
 - “I also feel that it is important to make sure that you take the time to relieve stress . Whether it be with a group of friends, or by yourself, you should make time to do some things that you enjoy doing.”
 - “Make self care a priority.”

Professional (Individual) Factors

Mazerolle SM, Pitney WA, Casa DJ, Pagnotta KD. Promotion of Work and Life Balance among Division I Athletic Trainers. *J Athl Train.* 2010. In Review.

- **Setting Boundaries by saying “No”**
 - “Learn how to say no, but don't overuse the word. Only say no when your work-life balance, relationship or family will be affected.”
 - “It is possible to be great at your job- while not permitting others to take advantage of you. If you're asked to do something extra- certainly consider the opportunity- however don't feel obligated- especially if you're not going to be compensated for it.”
 - “Set your boundaries early. ”
 - “Set boundaries and stick to them [this will help achieve] that balance that we all strive to get.”

Professional (Individual) Factors

- **Teamwork among staff members**
 - “I am trying to create more balance by splitting coverage with the other football ATC on staff (new position this year). I am hoping that with 2 of us to cover the team now things will be better.”
 - “Take advantage of co-workers. Teamwork is the best way; find a way to help one another out.”

Professional (Individual) Factors

Mazerolle SM, Pitney WA, Casa DJ, Pagnotta KD. Promotion of Work and Life Balance among Division I Athletic Trainers. J Athl Train. 2010. In Review.

■ Integration

- “I try to include my daughters in as many work related things as possible.”
- “When there is extended downtime during my workday I try to spend some time with my wife. We usually try to meet up for lunch on campus.”
- “There are kids all over our department, at intermittent times. Everyone is exposed to less stress because they have the alternative to have their child with them at work if need be.”

Personal Factors

Mazerolle SM, Pitney WA, Casa DJ, Pagnotta KD. Promotion of Work and Life Balance among Division I Athletic Trainers. J Athl Train. 2010. In Review.

- **Supportive Family Network**
 - “My family accepts what I do for my career but also knows that when I am with them I embrace that time and that I am ALWAYS available if they need me.”
 - “My particular family has been very instrumental in supporting me and helping me with balance.”
 - “My family has learned to schedule around the football season, since I don't get a day off from August to December. This helps with the work-life balance so that I don't miss as many family gatherings.”

Personal Factors

Mazerolle SM, Pitney WA, Casa DJ, Pagnotta KD. Promotion of Work and Life Balance among Division I Athletic Trainers. *J Athl Train.* 2010. In Review.

- Separation between work and life
 - “I try to achieve this by not bringing work home with me. At the end of the day, if there is an individual injured, an exercise I need to make, or an evaluation I need to do better, I wait until the next day, when I am at work to do these things.”
 - “Leave work at work.”
 - “I NEVER take work home with me. I will stay at my job as long as I need to in order to accomplish my tasks, but as soon as I leave, I leave it all. I try to make a clear distinction between my work life and my personal life.”

Moving on from Here

- **NATA's Role:**
 - Enforcement of the recommendations and guidelines for appropriate medical coverage for intercollegiate athletics
 - Position Stands or Consensus Statements on Life-Balancing
 - Funding continued research
 - Comparison of other clinical sites
 - Comparison of time of year influences
 - Examining personality traits and sociocultural factors influencing WFC

THANK YOU!

