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Sharing the Love: The Mediating Role of the Partner in the Employment Relationship

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The author of this dissertation is:

Kathleen L. Stone
Georgia State University
Robinson College of Business
35 Broad Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30303

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Nathan Bennett
Georgia State University
Robinson College of Business
35 Broad Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Sharing the Love: The Mediating Role of the Partner in the Employment
Relationship**

BY

Kathleen Lang Stone

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Of

Executive Doctorate in Business

In the Robinson College of Business

Of

Georgia State University

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
ROBINSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
2017

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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the Kathleen L. Stone Dissertation Committee. It has been approved and accepted by all members of that committee, and it has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctoral of Philosophy in Business Administration in the J. Mack Robinson College of Business of Georgia State University.

Richard D. Phillips

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Dr. Nathan Bennett (Chair)

Dr. Lars Mathiassen

Dr. Pam Ellen

DEDICATION

It takes a village to get a doctorate, and I would be remiss if I did not express my sincerest thanks to those who made this possible. This is dedicated to my parents, who gave me wings; to my siblings, who supported me in thoughtful ways; and to my colleagues, friends and neighbors, who were quick to provide cheers of support when I needed them most.

I'd especially like to recognize Steve Fallon, my mentor and leader, for investing in me and supporting me to achieve this milestone. To Elizabeth Goff, my immense thanks for being my trailblazer and preparing me for every step of this journey. To Professor Nate Bennett, thank you for challenging me and greatly improving my critical thinking skills.

Mike Stone serves as my inspiration for this dissertation and for all things; I am honored to be his partner and walk through life together.

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ABSTRACT

Employee benefits are a pivotal part of the exchange between employer and employee (Lucero & Allen, 1994). The average cost of an employee benefits program is about one-third of an employee's base salary ("Employer Costs for Employee Compensation Summary," 2016). Because a major goal of benefits programs is to maximize employee retention, human resources departments have evolved their benefits packages as preferences in the workplace change, for example offering employees more flexibility, giving employees time to serve their community and providing them with wellness incentives (Ko & SeungUk, 2014). While the employee is the primary beneficiary of company-provided benefits, additional benefit may accrue to the employer when the employee's partner is considered. Though previous research has demonstrated the partner's importance to the overall employment relationship, there is a dearth of research designed to offer an understanding of the ways an employee benefit package impacts a partner's view of the organization. This study considers the partner perceptions of employee benefits and the relationship these perceptions have with perceptions of work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, partner affective commitment and ultimately employee affective commitment. Survey results suggest the partner is an important consideration for employers due to the positive relationships demonstrated between both partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment and partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment. Because employee commitment has a strong relationship with desirable workplace attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction and intent to turnover, this study's results add to the limited research available regarding the partner's mediating role in the employment relationship.

Keywords: employee benefits, employee affective commitment, partner affective commitment, work-family conflict, work-family enrichment

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The employment relationship is founded on exchanges between employers and employees. Companies provide compensation and benefits to employees with the intention of retaining employment services for a period of time, preferably the long-term. Committed employees are highly desirable; employees who demonstrate affective commitment to their employer exhibit higher job empowerment and job satisfaction (Sahoo, Behera, & Tripathy, 2010). Affective employee commitment is also important to a company's bottom line (Ciccone, 2012). Commitment has ties to higher employee productivity, improved customer service and employee loyalty (Sahoo et al., 2010). Employers who maximize employee commitment should expect lower turnover and higher job satisfaction (C. Mathieu, Fabi, Lacoursiere, & Raymond, 2016). Because employee benefits are a primary component of the employment relationship exchange, they have the ability to impact employee commitment (Giancola, 2013). Human resources departments are tasked with designing competitive and cost-effective benefits programs. A carefully constructed benefits package can positively impact employee commitment and turnover intention (Ko & Hur, 2014). Benefits may be traditional, such as time off and retirement benefits, or unique, such as sabbatical leaves and free healthy snacks. Employee benefits packages are an essential part of the recruitment and retention of employees (Bates, 2016). Grounded in social exchange theory, this study evaluates the importance of employee benefits in the relationship exchange between employer and employee, highlighting the mediating role played by the partner.

Though employees are the primary focus of a company's benefits package, their partners are also impacted by the offerings, both directly and indirectly (Wayne, Matthews, Casper, & Allen, 2013). Many traditional employee benefits are offered not only to the employee, but also to the partner and employee's family. Here, a partner is the person who lives with the employee, shares common domestic life with them, and may or may not be married to the employee. Most often, the health insurance plan is a benefit offered to partners, but partners may also participate in wellness plans, attend company events or reap benefit from a flexible work environment. Because of these frequent interactions with the benefits offering, partners, too, have a role in the employment relationship (Wayne et al., 2013). Partners of employees may provide insights to employers to continue, discontinue or create employee benefits, which could impact both employees and their partners. Previous research has studied the impact of the partner on the employment relationship by assessing gender differences and marital satisfaction (Minnotte, Monnotte, & Pedersen, 2013), and family-supportive organizational perceptions (Wayne et al., 2013). This research asks how employee benefits programs could be considered as a way to positively impact partner affective commitment and therefore employee affective commitment with the organization.

Competitive employee benefits packages lead to employee satisfaction on the job; the Society for Human Resources Management found that employees have increasingly cited benefits as "very important" to job satisfaction (SHRM, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012). Employees who demonstrate job satisfaction are more likely to remain committed to their employer (Tett & Meyer, 1993). This study considers the partner's perceptions of benefits to

determine if positive partner perceptions of employee benefits packages lead to greater partner affective commitment to the employer. Such a finding would be important because benefits are important to employees yet expensive; they take up much of a human resources department's time and budget. Human resources departments may take action by assessing their current benefits strategy and determining ways to enhance communications of benefits to partners.

This study contributes to the knowledge base by demonstrating the impact an organization's benefits package has on the partner. The informed basic research engaged scholarship approach (Van de Ven, 2007) is appropriate for this study as it considers practitioner feedback throughout each of the study's activities (Van de Ven, 2007). Recommendations and suggestions for implementation are discussed.

TABLE ONE: RESEARCH DESIGN SUMMARY

P (Problem Setting)	Benefits are expensive and a pivotal component of the employer-employee exchange. How can HR design employee benefit offerings to impact partner affective commitment, increase the likelihood the employee will stay with the company, and thereby provide a positive return on investment?
A (Area of Concern)	The mediating role of the partner in shaping employee commitment to the employer.
F (Conceptual Framework)	Social Exchange Theory
FA (Key Constructs)	Affective Commitment Work-Family Conflict Work-Family Enrichment

M (Research Method)	Quantitative surveys completed by the employee and his or her partner (dyad)
RQ (Research Questions)	Do partner perceptions of employee benefits impact partner affective commitment to the organization? Does partner affective commitment impact employee affective commitment to the organization?
CP (Contribution to P)	Insights for HR departments regarding their employee benefits offering; suggestions for the best benefits to maximize both partner and employee affective commitment.
CA (Contribution to A)	By understanding the mediating role of the partner as it relates to his or her perceptions of specific employee benefits, the study assesses the relationship of those benefits with partner experiences of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment and ultimately partner affective commitment and its relationship to employee affective commitment.

Note: Format retrieved from (Mathiassen, 2015).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Exchange Theory as the Foundation for the Employment Relationship

Social exchange theory suggests that when one person does something for another, there is an expectation of some future return (Blau, 1964). The relationship will continue to grow so long as the return has a value associated with it (Emerson, 1976). This theory provides a foundation for understanding the roles that the employer and employees play when forming an employment relationship, with each party bringing certain attributes to the table (Blau, 1964). Often, the attributes of this exchange are discussed in the recruitment and retention processes. A company outlines its offer of employment through an employment letter, accompanied by detailed company benefits information that are realized once the relationship commences, while employees experience work-family conflict and work-family enrichment during their employment. Both parties enter the relationship understanding the exchange and the expectations each has of the other.

Studies of social exchange theory in the workplace have pointed to a number of potential indicators of social exchange relationships between the employee and employer, including perceived organizational support, affective employee commitment and trust (Colquitt, Baer, Long, & Halvorsen-Ganepola, 2014). The exchange of compensation and benefits plays a role in the employees view of the organization and intent to stay with the organization (Colquitt et al., 2014). In short, benefits matter (SHRM, 2012). Both employee and employer are looking

for a productive exchange (Kuhn, 1963), and employees have indicated that benefits are a primary way the employer demonstrates value to them (Giancola, 2013). Research has found that an employee takes a long-term approach when entering a new employment relationship (Saranya, 2016). Over time, the goal is to create a mutually trusting and rewarding relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) through the exchange of service for compensation and benefits.

This study expands the traditional relationship of social exchange that occurs between an employee and employer and introduces an additional member impacted by the exchange, the partner. Because of the close relationship between an employee and partner, employers may consider the partner an important factor when determining ways to impact employee commitment (Wayne, Randel, & Stevens, 2006). The partner, in addition to the employee, experiences work-family conflict and work-family enrichment (Wayne et al., 2013). A key exchange made in the employment relationship is the inclusion of various employee benefits for work provided by the employee, many of which also benefit the partner. Employee and partner are directly and indirectly impacted by the benefits offering designed by the human resources department. Benefits are a vital component of the employment relationship (Bates, 2016) (Giancola, 2013).

2.2 Employee Benefits: Purpose, Types, and Goals

Employee benefits are the various forms of non-wage compensation employers provide to employees as part of the offer of employment (Cicccone, 2012). These benefits are offered in exchange for the employee's work. Traditional employee benefits include health

insurance, retirement programs, and time off programs (Lucero & Allen, 1994). Increasingly, employers are realizing traditional benefits may not be enough to retain their workforce; they have responded by creatively designing more flexible benefits plans to address the needs of today's employee (Saranya, 2016). These flexible benefits include providing time off to attend family events, offering healthy food options at little to no cost to the employee, giving employees sabbaticals and paying a significant portion of employee education costs (Bates, 2016). Table Three provides examples of traditional and progressive employee benefits. Employees have responded positively to these benefit additions, with a recent study by the Society of Human Resource Management stating that 75% of employees are either satisfied or very satisfied with the current benefit offering from his or her company (Bates, 2016).

TABLE TWO: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Traditional Employee Benefits	Progressive Employee Benefits
Vacation time	PTO
Sick time	Dependent sick care
Retirement plan	Financial wellness classes
Health insurance	Wellness programs
Flexible work hours	Flexible work location
FMLA and other protected leaves	Sabbaticals
Onsite seminars	Reimbursement for higher education

Note. Retrieved from SHRM 2016 Employee Benefits Report. Copyright 2016, Alexandria, VA.

The goal of a successful benefits program is to recruit and retain stellar employees as part of the employment relationship exchange. Employees agree, stating in a recent survey that a more attractive benefits package would cause an employee to change jobs (MacPherson & Oehler, 2016). This survey defines employee benefits as ‘programs an employer offers in exchange for work’ and includes categories such as employee recognition, creative incentives and career development among the most desirable benefits (MacPherson & Oehler, 2016). Times are changing, and employers must consider new and unique ways to differentiate their benefits platform to ensure employee commitment.

In a recent study, one of the most important determinants of the employee’s decision to stay with his or her company was the benefits package (Saranya, 2016). The employee is not the only one who uses benefits offered by his or her company. An employee and partner are impacted by several employee benefit offerings (Wayne et al., 2013). Often, a partner is offered health insurance, invited to company events and provided company perks depending upon the industry of the organization. Partners benefit from flexibility offered to an employee, at times decreasing the amount of work-family conflict experienced (Green, Bull Schaefer, MacDermid, & Weiss, 2011).

Employers may need to tread carefully when it comes to revamping their benefits offering if it cannot be sustained (Lucero & Allen, 1994). Over time, employees have come to expect certain benefits from an employer, and changing those benefits or decreasing them can cause anger and resentment toward the employer (Lucero & Allen, 1994). When a human resources department considers the best ways to impact the employee and his or her partner and

family via the benefits program, they must determine policies and programs that are sustainable or risk losing the trust they built (Rousseau, 1989). Considering the high cost of benefits, this can be a challenging task for human resources departments to invest in the benefits that give them the most bang for buck.

Partners may be an afterthought when an employee benefits program is designed, but research shows they do have an impact on an employee's decision to stay with the company (Huffman, Casper, & Payne, 2013). Because employee benefits are a meaningful way for employers to reach partners, partners should be considered when designing the overall company benefits package. In essence, an employer should realize they are not only recruiting and retaining the employee, but also the partner. The partner's perceptions of the company have been shown to impact the company (Demerouti, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005) (Wayne et al., 2013)

2.3 Work-Family Conflict, Work-Family Enrichment and the Relationship with Employee Benefits

Several employee benefit offerings are designed to help employees and their families by providing time off, accessible health care, retirement/financial planning and opportunities to serve the community together. Employers realize the demands of an employee's family will cause stress at times, as they realize there are times the job will sometimes bring the employee stress at home (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It is inevitable that employees and their families will experience both work-family conflict and work-family enrichment during the

course of employment (Odle-Dusseau, Greene-Shortridge, & Britt, 2012). An employer's benefits package is one way a company can positively impact of instances of work-family conflict while working to maximize the experience of work-family enrichment, both for the employee and the partner/family (Carroll, Hill, Yorgason, Larson, & Sandberg, 2013).

Work-family conflict is defined as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Outcomes of work-family conflict from the employee's perspective include job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, turnover intentions, and lower productivity levels (T. Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000). Work-family conflict impacts an employee's life in a meaningful way, affecting social behaviors at work and at home (Iles, Schwind, Johnson, DeRue, & Ilgen, 2007). The increase in the amount of work-family conflict decreases marital satisfaction for both employee and partner (Carroll et al., 2013). This incompatibility (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) and stress caused by work-family conflict clearly have a negative impact on the employer, employee and the partner.

Work-family conflict has been shown to have costly effects not only on work and family relationships, but also on the general well-being and health of the employee (T. Allen et al., 2000). Though a previous study (Matthews, Wayne, & Ford, 2014) found that over time, employees are able to adapt to work-family conflict and improve well-being, this research acknowledges that the negative short-term consequences of work-family conflict make it difficult for employees and their families. During

periods of work-family conflict, the employee suffers and negatively impacts at least one of the two domains (T. Allen et al., 2000).

Employers who wish to combat the presence of work-family conflict offer various supports such as child care, flexible work schedules and communication courses (Carroll et al., 2013). These benefits can lead to improved performance on the job and improved ability to retain employees (Hammer, Neal, Newsom, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005).

Much of the research in this area is focused on the impact of work-family conflict on the employee, though there is some research to support the impact of work-family conflict on the partner. Most simply but importantly, work family conflict matters to both employee and partner (Minnotte et al., 2013). Arthur (2003) found that employees who took advantage of the family-friendly HR policies stated higher overall satisfaction with job and company. Further, employees whose partners took advantage of family friendly benefits were found to perceive more support for the organization (Schooreel & Verbruggen, 2016). Conversely, partners who experienced work-family conflict displayed more negative opinions about the employee's work and the organization (Green et al., 2011). This study looks specifically at the ways the partner's perceptions of work-family conflict relate to the partner's affective commitment.

Work-family enrichment occurs when an individual takes the resources created in one domain and transfers them to the other domain creating a better environment in both domains (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The notion of finding balance between work and family life matters to employees, and employers who wish to provide such balance must consider supporting employees' efforts to effectively perform their jobs and manage their families (van

Steenbergen, Kluwer, & Karney, 2014). The employer is sometimes viewed as the enemy of married life, but one study found that employers who promote work-family enrichment actually benefit married couples who reported stronger spouse relationships (van Steenbergen et al., 2014). Perceptions of organizations who provide work-family enrichment were more positive for both male and female employees (Dunn & O'Brien, 2013).

Work-family enrichment benefits employees. Studies have shown that employees who experience work-family enrichment experience increased job satisfaction (Hill, 2005; Wayne et al., 2006). Employees desire work-family enrichment as they seek balance to fulfill their roles.

There is a gap in the work-family enrichment research stream related to the partner's perspective of events in the employee's workplace (Dunn & O'Brien, 2013). These cross-over effects could prove beneficial for employers to recognize and understand. This study looks to understand the perceptions of work-family enrichment from the perspective of the partner in order to learn if there is a relationship between it and partner affective commitment.

2.4 Affective Commitment: Partner and Employee

Affective commitment is one of the three components of employee commitment developed by Meyer and Allen, the other two types being normative commitment and continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment is particularly critical to this research as it ties directly to an employees 'want' to be part of an organization (N. Allen

& Meyer, 1996). Previous research demonstrates that affective commitment to an organization increases involvement in employees' activities, drive to complete the organization's goals and desire to stay part of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employee job satisfaction has been found to positively relate to affective commitment to an organization (Arnold & Feldman, 1982). An employee who finds his or her work rewarding will be more likely to stay with the organization (J. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990); employers must determine the differentiators for employees when it comes to job satisfaction. Affectively committed employees form a bond to their organization, thus increasing their loyalty and sense of dedication to it (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001). This bond decreased an employee's intent to leave the company (Rhoades et al., 2001).

There are several studies linking affective commitment to increased desire to stay with an organization. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found that associations exist between affective commitment and fewer absences, higher performance and lower turnover, with turnover having the strongest relationship to affective commitment (J. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). An organization with employees who demonstrate high levels of affective commitment are less likely to quit and more effective in their job performance overall (Morrow, 2011).

These reasons should compel employers to determine effective ways of securing employee affective commitment. An employee demonstrating employee affective commitment has a desire to be fully engaged and participative at work (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002); employers get the most out of an employee who is affectively committed to

his or her organization. Much is known about the link between employee affective commitment and intent to stay with an organization.

The partner has been found to develop attitudes toward the employer, especially when benefits and policies promote the family dynamic (Wayne et al., 2013). The partner could be one such avenue to increase employee affective commitment should a relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment exist. This study analyzes both partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment to the organization. This study posits a relationship between the two to determine if the partner's affective commitment does, in fact, have a relationship to the employee's affective commitment to the organization.

2.5 The Partner as a Differentiator

How can employers maximize the partner's option to increase the employee's desire to stay with the company? Because employee benefits programs impact both the employee and partner, organizations that wish to increase employee affective commitment may look more carefully at the mediating role of the partner in the employment relationship. The partner could allow an employer the ability to impact employee affective commitment simply by the ways they communicate and include partners in the employment relationship. This study intends to demonstrate that innovative employer benefit packages that focus not only on the

employee but also on the partner will have a positive impact on the partner's, and ultimately, employee's affective commitment.

CHAPTER THREE: MODEL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter introduces the model, hypotheses and variables for the study. The model depicts the impact that a partner's perceptions play as a mediator in the relationship between an employee and his or her employer. Previous research has confirmed that a partner forms opinions of the employer (Wayne et al., 2013). This study pinpoints the partner's importance to the employment relationship by better understanding how a partner's perceptions of employee benefits, of work-family conflict or of work-family enrichment relate to partner affective commitment to the company. The relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment to the company is subsequently assessed.

To further understand the mechanisms of this exchange, this study considered the partner as an additional recipient of the employee benefits offering and a possible influence on the employee's positive work attitudes and commitment (Wayne et al., 2013). Couple-level research provides a deeper understanding of the employee's work demands, assesses the impact of these demands on employee and the partner and shows potential patterns which may or may not exist between the two (Swenson, Zvonkovic, Rojas-McWhinney, & Gerst, 2015). Benefits offered also relate to the way a partner views possible work-family conflict or work-family enrichment experienced.

3.1 Model and Hypotheses

3.1.1 Partner Perceptions of Benefits, Work-Family Conflict and Work-Family Enrichment

Employers and their HR departments communicate benefits to employees in various ways: through newsletters, brochures, online portals, and presentations. The partner receives direct and/or indirect communications from the employer, including benefits information mailed directly to the home and invitations to join benefits webinars and conference calls. The partner receives much of the information on company provided benefits from the employee. Based on the communication of benefits, the employee and partner develop certain perceptions of the benefits offered by the company during the employment relationship. In addition to the means by which they are communicated, these perceptions are based on the use of the benefits, or lack of use, and the communication that takes place between the employee and partner regarding the benefits. This study is concerned with the partners' perceptions of the benefits offering as a foundation for other opinions formed.

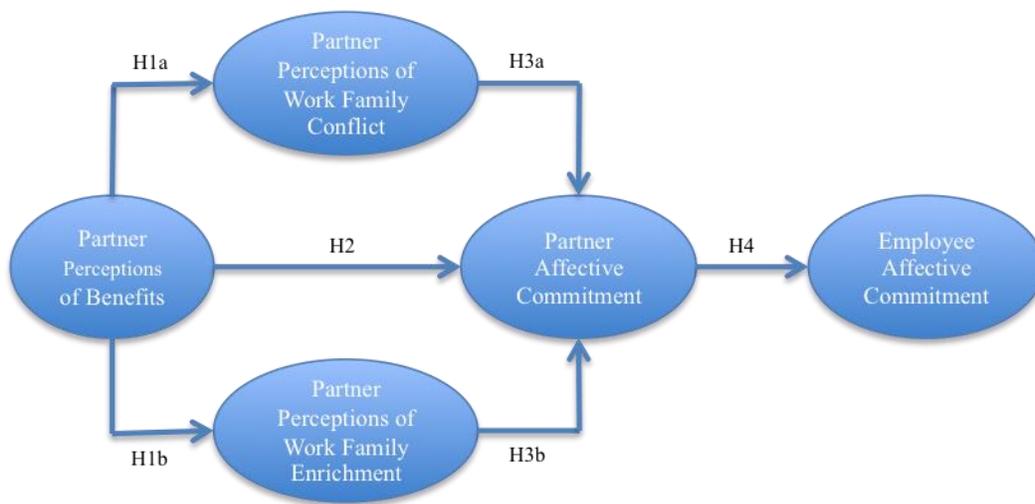


FIGURE ONE: RESEARCH MODEL

Partners recognize that many of the benefits offered by the company may have a tie to the amount of stress or strain experienced by the employee during his or her tenure (Streich, Casper, & Salvaggio, 2008). After experiencing such stress, the partner absorbs the harm done to the employee and looks to assign blame and negative opinions toward those entities (Green et al., 2011). Conversely, Carlson et al. found that the partner benefits when an employee experiences a greater sense of fulfillment at work (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006). The partner’s opinions of company benefits helps to explain the partner’s attitudes toward work-family conflict or work-family enrichment present; all of these perceptions have a relationship with the partner’s affective commitment to the company.

Once the partner's perceptions of employee benefits are established, the model shown in Figure 1 displays the relationship between these perceptions and the partner's perceptions of work-family enrichment and work-family conflict. Because some employee benefits, including time off programs and schedule flexibility, have an impact on the family, this study expects to demonstrate relationships between perceptions of employee benefits and impressions of work-family conflict and/or work-family enrichment present. The relationships between each of these variables provided insights into the partner's affective commitment to the organization.

In addition to the relationship with work-family conflict and work-family enrichment, the partner's perceptions of the benefits offering have an impact on their overall affective commitment to an organization. Because partners experience benefits at varying levels, from visiting a health provider on the company-provided health plan to using the company-provided discount to local daycare, this study seeks to solidify the relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment to the company.

H1a: Partner perceptions of benefits are negatively related to partner perceptions of work-family conflict.

H1b: Partner perceptions of benefits are positively related to partner perceptions of work-family enrichment.

H2: More positive partner perceptions of benefits relates to greater partner affective commitment to the organization.

H3a: Partner work-family conflict perceptions are negatively related to partner affective commitment.

H3b: Partner work-family enrichment perceptions are positively related to partner affective commitment.

3.1.2 Partner Affective Commitment and Employee Affective Commitment

As partners become more aware of benefits, work-family conflict or work-family enrichment available, they become more aware of employee attitudes toward the firm (Westman, 2001). They gradually develop their own perceptions based on their experiences. The crossover effect reciprocates when the partner experiences less stress due to benefits provided by the company and therefore develop a more positive attitude toward the employer based on direct experience (Westman, 2001). Regardless of the ways partners form opinions of the employer, they become a unique participant in the employment relationship exchange. Their feelings are shared with the employee, who may modify their own view of the organization as a result, as found in a previous study (Wayne et al., 2013). This mediating role played by the partner could relate to the employee's level of commitment to the company.

H4: Partner affective commitment has a positive relationship to employee affective commitment.

3.2 Data Analysis

Initially, data were collected from one organization. When a smaller than expected number of surveys were collected, the survey population was expanded to include professionals known to me personally. The survey produced 30 dyads from within the organization and 70 dyads from the professional sample.

When regressions were run, the 30 dyads from the same organization were studied to identify any differing patterns, behaviors or results with this data. The data was not found to be significant on its own. It was then grouped with the 70 dyads, and the total of 100 dyads were used for the regression analyses.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHOD

This chapter outlines the research design, instrument development including participant makeup and the data collection process for the study.

4.1 Research Design

In this study, a pair of surveys was designed that assessed the constructs, including partner perceptions of benefits, the relationship between employee benefits and work-family conflict and work-family enrichment, and partner and employee affective commitment to the organization. One survey was completed by the employee and one completed by the partner.

4.2 Participants and Procedure

Data were collected from a convenience sample of professionals known to the researcher. All couples were based in the United States. The designated employee of the couple required at least one year of service with their current company to participate. The employee and partner must also have been in a cohabitating relationship for at least one year. It was not required for the partner to have employment outside of the home. Couples that met these requirements were eligible to participate in the survey process.

TABLE THREE
Sample Characteristics

	<u>Partner</u>		<u>Employee</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Gender				
Male	54	54.0%	52	52.0%
Female	46	46.0%	48	48.0%
Age Group				
under 36	15	15.0%	17	17.0%
36 to 50	45	45.0%	44	44.0%
over 50	40	40.0%	39	39.0%
Years in Relationship Group				
less than 5	12	12.0%	12	12.0%
5 to 15	33	33.0%	33	33.0%
16 to 25	24	24.0%	24	24.0%
more than 25	31	31.0%	31	31.0%
Minor Dependents				
Yes	44	44.0%	45	45.0%
No	56	56.0%	55	55.0%
Employee Length of Service Group				
less than 5	N/A	N/A	40	40.0%
5 to 10	N/A	N/A	27	27.0%
more than 10	N/A	N/A	33	33.0%

Employees were sent emails with links to the partner and employee survey. They were asked to complete the employee survey and forward the link to the partner survey to their partner. They could also enter their partner's email address at the end of the employee survey to automatically send their partner a link to the partner survey. The surveys had two questions to match partner surveys to employee surveys; this formed a dyad, the unit of analysis. The dyad is

considered a fundamental unit for assessing interpersonal interaction and relations between two people (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006).

In total, 349 surveys were completed, 206 by employees and 143 by partners. Dyads were matched using two specific questions, the city where the couple met and the year the couple met. This study used only the surveys matched for employee and partner, resulting in a sample size of 100 dyads. Table Three provides an overview of the sample characteristics.

4.3 Measures

The employee survey was designed to assess work-family conflict, work-family enrichment and affective commitment from the employee perspective. The partner survey was designed to assess partner perceptions of benefits, work-family conflict, work-family enrichment and affective commitment of the employee's employer from the partner perspective. The purpose of this design was to understand the perceptions of the partner and use them to measure the overall impact on employee affective commitment and, in turn, demonstrate the importance of the partner as a mediator to the employment relationship.

The surveys contained questions regarding affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), work-family enrichment (Kacmar, Crawford, Carlson, Ferguson, & Whitten, 2014), and work-family conflict (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000). These measures were selected because they have been validated and they apply directly to the research being

conducted for this study. Descriptive statistics and scale reliabilities for all measures are reported in Table Three.

4.3.1 Affective Commitment

The Meyer and Allen organizational commitment scale (1991) was used as a measure of the extent to which the employee and partner demonstrate affective commitment to the organization. The 7-item scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A sample item from this measure is “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me” (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

4.3.2 Work-Family Conflict and Work-Family Enrichment

The work-family conflict scale developed by Carlson, Kacmar and Williams (2000) has undergone a thorough and rigorous process for validation. This scale includes all six dimensions of work-family conflict using 18 items (Carlson et al., 2000). The 5-point scale measured the extent to which each item is present, from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). A sample item from this measure is “Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job” (Carlson et al., 2000). The partner completed these questions to understand how work-family conflict impacts their affective commitment to the employer.

The third and final measure of the employee and partner surveys addressed work-family enrichment. The short form of this measure, developed by Kacmar, Crawford, Carlson, Ferguson & Whitten (2014), is used to understand how work-family enrichment impacts partner

affective commitment. The 5-point scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item from this measure is “My work puts me in a good mood and this helps me be a better worker” (Kacmar et al., 2014).

4.3.3 Benefits

Perceptions of specific employee benefits were discerned by asking a series of self-developed questions for both the partner and the employee. The survey asked about the ease to use benefits such as health programs, time off, retirement planning and schedule flexibility. The 5-point scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item from this measure is “My partner’s job makes it easy for him/her to use his/her vacation time.”

4.3.4 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic information was included through self-developed questions pertinent to the study. The employee and partner completed a series of these questions, with two of the demographic questions being used to validate the dyad as a partnership. Survey participants indicated their gender, age group, length of time in relationship, length of service with the company and the presence of dependents under 18 in the household. Demographic data was used to better describe the sample and help to analyze the research questions.

4.4 Variables

4.4.1 Dependent Variables

Partner affective commitment was assessed as a dependent variable based on a partner's opinions of the employee benefits program, work-family conflict instances and work-family enrichment instances. Employee affective commitment was assessed as a dependent variable to understand the relationship between it and partner affective commitment. The key dependent variable for this study is employee affective commitment. The relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment was analyzed to determine if the partner is an important mediator for the employment relationship. This connection provides HR departments with a potential strategy for employee benefits components and communications, finding ways to target the partner.

4.4.2 Control Variables

Demographic information, including gender, age, length of time in relationship, length of service with the company, number of dependents and percentage of household income were used as control variables. Twenty-one survey dyads worked for the same organization, and those dyads were assessed as a control variable as the employees receive the same benefits package.

4.5 Data Collection

The data for this research were collected from the partner and employee surveys described above, from December 2016 to January 2017. Qualtrics, an online survey platform provided by Georgia State University, hosted the surveys. The employee and partner completed the surveys on one occasion anonymously.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

This chapter provides information on the data collected through the survey process and an analysis of the results. An overview of descriptive statistics is provided, followed by data analysis of the constructs, control variables and relationships between them. The results of analyses to test study hypotheses are shared.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for study variables , as well as Chronbach's alphas for scales, are reported in Table Four. Frequencies showed no errors and normally distributed data. Before embarking on the tests of hypotheses, the data were subject to a series of analyses intended to determine if assumptions of the multivariate techniques to be employed were satisfied. Factor analysis was conducted in order to assess each question's relationships and patterns (Burns & Burns, 2013). The results are shared in Appendix D. Two survey questions in the partner perceptions of benefits construct did not load with the remaining set of survey questions and were subsequently dropped from the analysis. It should be noted that one construct in partner perceptions of benefits, one construct in partner perceptions of work-family enrichment, two constructs in partner affective commitment and one construct in employee affective commitment loaded between .500 and .600. Because removing these questions did not create a definitively higher Cronbach's alpha and because these questions added value to the construct, they remained as part of the survey and data analysis.

TABLE FOUR
Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations and Reliability Analysis

Measure	Partner		Employee		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.															
1. Gender: Partner (1)	1.46	0.50	N/A	N/A	-														
2. Gender: Employee (1)	N/A	N/A	1.48	0.50	-.646**	-													
3. Age Group: Partner (2)	2.24	0.70	N/A	N/A	-0.085	0.040	-												
4. Age Group: Employee (2)	N/A	N/A	2.22	0.72	0.081	-0.100	.728**	-											
5. Years in Relationship Group: Partner (3)	2.74	1.03	N/A	N/A	0.077	-0.088	.659**	.650**	-										
6. Years in Relationship Group: Employee (3)	N/A	N/A	2.74	1.03	0.077	-0.088	.687**	.691**	.857**	-									
7. Minor Dependents: Partner (4)	1.56	0.50	N/A	N/A	-0.071	0.045	.223*	.216*	0.129	0.188	-								
8. Minor Dependents: Employee (4)	N/A	N/A	1.55	0.50	-0.173	-0.016	.201*	.306**	0.143	0.182	.656**	-							
9. Employee Length of Service Group (5)	N/A	N/A	1.94	0.86	0.066	-0.122	0.184	.237*	.264**	.275**	0.057	0.078	-						
10. Partner Perception of Benefits	3.71	0.74	N/A	N/A	0.073	0.016	-0.029	-0.090	-0.113	-0.087	-0.195	-0.167	-0.124	(.87)					
11. Partner Perception of Work-Family Conflict	3.25	1.01	N/A	N/A	-0.156	0.122	0.003	0.035	0.010	0.037	0.155	0.162	0.041	-.579**	(.93)				
12. Partner Perception of Work-Family Enrichment	3.43	0.80	N/A	N/A	-0.026	0.105	0.167	0.190	0.085	0.187	0.055	0.155	-0.122	.493**	-.457**	(.93)			
13. Partner Affective Commitment	4.09	1.37	N/A	N/A	0.023	0.015	0.134	0.181	0.126	0.189	-0.019	-0.019	-0.032	.370**	-.326**	.583**	(.85)		
14. Employee Affective Commitment	N/A	N/A	5.08	1.38	-0.083	.207*	0.064	-0.075	0.025	0.007	0.045	0.104	-0.125	0.124	-.197*	.213*	.269**	(.88)	

Note. Cronbach's alphas indicating internal consistency reliabilities are in parentheses on the diagonal.

(1) 1 = male 2 = female. (2) 1 = under 36 2 = 36 to 50 3 = over 50 (3) 1 = less than 5 2 = 5 to 15 3 = 16 to 25 4 = more than 25 (4) 1 = yes 2 = no (5) 1 = less than 5 2 = 5 to 10 3 = more than 10

*p < .05. **p < .01.

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Because the possibility of high correlations between variables with reflective constructs, an assessment of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) was conducted (Belsley, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980). A VIF result was computed for each of the constructs, shown in Appendix D.

All VIF values for the constructs are well below the 3.3 threshold confirming the model does not have issues with multicollinearity (Belsley et al., 1980).

5.2 Tests of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. Table Five provides an overview of the regression analysis with controls. In all models run, control variables were not found to be significant in interpreting data results.

To test the first hypothesis, partner perceptions of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment were each regressed against partner perceptions of benefits and controls including gender, age, length of relationship, minor dependents and employee length of service. The results show a significant, negative relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner perceptions of work-family conflict ($R^2 = .35$, $F = 42.10$, $p < 0.001$). The partner perceptions of benefits showed a negative relationship of $Beta = -0.75$ which was significant at $p < 0.001$. This implies that as partner perceptions of benefits increase, partner perceptions of work-family conflict decrease in support of H1a. Next, the results show a significant, positive relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner perceptions of work-family enrichment ($R^2 = .35$, $F = 35.75$, $p < 0.001$). The partner perceptions of benefits showed a positive relationship of $Beta = .55$ which was significant at $p < 0.001$. This implies that as partner perceptions of benefits increase, partner perceptions of work-family enrichment increase in support of H1b.

To test the second hypothesis, partner affective commitment regressed against partner perceptions of benefits and controls including gender, age, length of relationship, minor dependents and employee length of service. The results show a significant, positive relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment ($R^2 = .19$, $F = 15.83$, $p < 0.001$). The partner perceptions of benefits showed a positive relationship of $Beta = 0.70$ which was significant at $p < 0.001$. This implies that as partner perceptions of benefits increase, partner affective commitment increases in support of H2.

To test the third hypothesis, partner affective commitment was regressed against partner perceptions of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment and controls including gender, age, length of relationship, minor dependents and employee length of service. The results show a significant, negative relationship between partner perceptions of work-family conflict and partner affective commitment ($R^2 = .16$, $F = 11.32$, $p < 0.001$). The partner perceptions of work-family conflict showed a negative relationship of $Beta = -.25$ which was significant at $p < 0.001$. This implies that as partner perceptions of work-family conflict increase, partner affective commitment decreases in support of H3a. Next, the results show a significant, positive relationship between partner perceptions of work-family enrichment and partner affective commitment ($R^2 = .39$, $F = 43.80$, $p < 0.001$). The partner perceptions of perceptions of work-family conflict showed a positive relationship of $Beta = .33$ which was significant at $p < 0.001$. This implies that as partner perceptions of work-family enrichment increase, partner affective commitment increases in support of H3b.

To test the fourth hypothesis, employee affective commitment was regressed against partner affective commitment and controls including gender, age, length of relationship, minor dependents and employee length of service. The results show a significant, positive relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment ($R^2 = .17$, $F = 7.72$, $p < 0.01$). Partner affective commitment showed a positive relationship of Beta = .28 which was significant at $p < 0.01$. This implies that as partner affective commitment increases, employee affective commitment increases in support of H4.

In addition to a review of the significance between constructs, unstandardized coefficients were assessed. This analysis confirmed the fact that control variables provided no insights. These coefficients provided insights on the strength of the impact of relationships between constructs, especially between partner perceptions of work-family enrichment and partner affective commitment.

TABLE FIVE
Regression Results with Control Variables

Hypotheses	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable(s)	Unstandardized		R ²
			Coefficient	p-value	
1a	Partner Perception of Work-Family Conflict				0.359**
		Gender: Partner	-0.096	0.674	
		Gender: Employee	0.190	0.402	
		Age: Partner	-0.044	0.825	
		Age: Employee	0.070	0.711	
		Years in Relationship	-0.052	0.670	
		Minor Dependents	0.086	0.638	
		Length of Service: Employee	-0.007	0.948	
		Partner Perception of Benefits	-0.752	0.000	
1b	Partner Perception of Work-Family Enrichment				.346**
		Gender: Partner	-0.018	0.921	
		Gender: Employee	0.149	0.410	
		Age: Partner	-0.012	0.941	
		Age: Employee	0.256	0.094	
		Years in Relationship	0.029	0.769	
		Minor Dependents	0.181	0.218	
		Length of Service: Employee	-0.118	0.166	
		Partner Perception of Benefits	0.554	0.000	
2	Partner Affective Commitment				.189**
		Gender: Partner	-0.052	0.882	
		Gender: Employee	0.073	0.833	
		Age: Partner	-0.112	0.714	
		Age: Employee	0.418	0.151	
		Years in Relationship	0.094	0.616	
		Minor Dependents	0.023	0.934	
		Length of Service: Employee	-0.070	0.668	
		Partner Perception of Benefits	0.704	0.000	
3a	Partner Affective Commitment				.162**
		Gender: Partner	-0.244	0.349	
		Gender: Employee	0.130	0.614	
		Age: Partner	-0.191	0.402	
		Age: Employee	0.214	0.327	
		Years in Relationship	0.037	0.793	
		Minor Dependents	0.265	0.201	
		Length of Service: Employee	0.023	0.851	
		Partner Perception of Work-Family Conflict	-0.246	0.001	
3b	Partner Affective Commitment				.386**
		Gender: Partner	0.074	0.673	
		Gender: Employee	0.169	0.336	
		Age: Partner	0.091	0.553	
		Age: Employee	0.096	0.518	
		Years in Relationship	-0.039	0.682	
		Minor Dependents	0.077	0.581	
		Length of Service: Employee	-0.122	0.142	
		Partner Perception of Work-Family Enrichment	0.328	0.000	
4	Employee Affective Commitment				.169*
		Gender: Partner	0.238	0.499	
		Gender: Employee	0.638	0.071	
		Age: Partner	0.422	0.171	
		Age: Employee	-0.565	0.058	
		Years in Relationship	0.060	0.753	
		Minor Dependents	0.112	0.687	
		Length of Service: Employee	-0.147	0.371	
		Partner Affective Commitment	0.275	0.007	

* Significant at the 0.01 level

** Significant at the 0.001 level

5.3 Results Summary

The hypotheses testing results are summarized in Table Six. Overall, the data analysis supported six of the six hypotheses.

TABLE SIX
Hypothesis Testing Results

<u>Research Model</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Regression Analysis</u>
H1a	Partner Perception of Benefits > Partner Perception of WFC	Supported
H1b	Partner Perception of Benefits > Partner Perception of WFE	Supported
H2	Partner Perception of Benefits > Partner Affective Commitment	Supported
H3a	Partner Perception of WFC > Partner Affective Commitment	Supported
H3b	Partner Perception of WFE > Partner Affective Commitment	Supported
H4	Partner Affective Commitment > Employee Affective Commitment	Supported

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

This study was motivated by the opportunity for employers to consider the partner and their perceptions, specifically those of employee benefits, work-family conflict, and work-family enrichment, as a way to enhance partner affective commitment and thereby employee affective commitment. A model was tested to explain the ways a partner impacts the employment relationship. Studies on the relationship between partner, employee and employer have previously focused on burnout (Demerouti et al., 2005), family-supportive organizational perceptions (Wayne et al., 2013) and work-family conflict (Carroll et al., 2013). This practical question regarding the partner's role in the employment relationship has been addressed in the literature in a limited fashion. The gap in understanding the relationship employee benefits have in the partner's commitment to the organization is an opportunity to provide employers, and specifically human resources departments, with an avenue to impact the employee's affective commitment.

A survey completed by 100 dyads was used to analyze relationships between the constructs. Results found a significant relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner perceptions of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment. Partner perceptions of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment were also significantly related to partner affective commitment. Notably, a key finding of this study is a significant relationship between partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment, furthering the importance of the employee benefits communication to partners, especially when they can decrease work-family conflict and/or enhance work-family enrichment.

Ultimately, this study highlights the importance of the partner to the employment relationship thus adding to the literature regarding the mediating role of a partner (Wayne et al., 2013). Partner affective commitment was found to have a significant relationship with employee affective commitment. Results emerged to advance both the literature and practice.

6.1 Contributions to the Literature

This dissertation contributes by adding several salient findings to the literature regarding the partner's mediating role in the employment relationship. The role of the partner in the employment relationship was analyzed from a social exchange theory perspective. Whereas typical employment relationship participants are considered the employer and employee, the study demonstrates the importance of another member for exchange, the partner. Similar to a previous study (Wayne et al., 2013), the finding that a partner has an influence on the employee's exchange with the employer is important for companies to consider.

Grounded in social exchange theory, the relationship between employer and employee was examined introducing a new member of the exchange, the partner. Employee benefits and their impact on the partner were reviewed; the findings indicate the partner's opinions of benefit programs have a significant relationship with partner perceptions of work-family conflict, partner perceptions of work-family enrichment and partner affective commitment. A similar finding regarding the importance of overall partner perceptions and their tie to commitment has been reported (Demerouti et al., 2005). The context of partner perceptions of employee benefits has not been studied from the perspective of the partner in

previous research. These findings provide guidance for employers when considering benefits programs, specifically those programs promoting work-family enrichment, which had a significant relationship with partner affective commitment. Benefits are an important part of the foundational trust built between employee, employer and partner (Rousseau, 1989). This finding relates to a previous study tying employee benefits to employee affective commitment to organization (Huffman et al., 2013).

The mediating roles of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment were found to have a significant relationship with both partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment. These findings are supported by previous studies (Wayne et al., 2006), (Green et al., 2011). This ties directly to the social exchange relationship, noting the work-family conflict and work-family enrichment experience by employee and partner and the direct impact it has on employer-provided benefits.

The study found a significant relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment. This finding is consistent with a previous study that found more positive partner attitudes toward the employee's work schedule led to increased partner commitment to the organization and ultimately employee commitment to the organization (Wayne et al., 2013).

6.2 Lessons for Practice

This study addresses the fact that employers are challenged to find ways to increase employee affective commitment. One way they do this is to develop a competitive

benefits package. The insight regarding the partner as a mediating role in the employment relationship challenges the employer to consider ways to involve the partner in benefits offerings and communications. This study's findings on the influence of the partner is important for companies wishing to increase employee affective commitment; partners perceptions of benefits relate to their overall commitment to the organization.

Companies should pay attention to the mediating relationships of partner perceptions of work-family conflict and partner perceptions of work-family enrichment between partner perceptions of benefits and partner affective commitment. An analysis of the current benefit offering and the types of benefits, which are designed to minimize work-family conflict and promote work-family enrichment, should be undertaken. Communication to the partners and families of employees specifically highlighting the work-family enrichment benefits available to them is important.

6.2.1 Implications for HR Practitioners

Interpreting these findings from the perspective of an HR leader provides specific insights, which may be beneficial to other practitioners in the field. HR departments continually look for ways to differentiate to attract and retain the best talent; benefits programs are designed with the spirit of employee commitment at their foundation.

In order to engage the partner, HR departments may wish to implement all or some of the following initiatives. Creating a 'spouse/partner committee' of current employees'

partners would allow HR to have guidance regarding not only benefits design, but also overall impressions of the company from the perspective of the partner. A spouse/partner orientation, offered monthly, could be conducted via webinar to acclimate the new partners to the organization, its culture, applicable policies and benefits. To further develop employees, HR departments may wish to offer training on communication and other life skills, inviting partners to attend sessions. A survey of satisfaction with benefits could be sent to partners. Lastly, during annual benefits open enrollment periods, partners could be invited, via webinar or in person, to engage in the meetings outlining the updated benefits offering.

6.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study is bound by several limitations, which should be recognized. The causality of these variables was specifically selected for this study's model. There is a possibility that alternative causal directions (i.e. partner perceptions of work-family conflict and work-family enrichment to partner perceptions of benefits) would merit important results (Wayne et al., 2013). Future research may wish to study alternative causal models to understand the full picture of the construct relationships.

This study focused on surveys taken at one point in time. To further the area of study surrounding the partner's ongoing impact on the employment relationship, future research may consider conducting surveys over multiple points in time. Researchers could conduct the surveys during benefits open enrollment time and then administer them quarterly to assess changes in partner perceptions throughout the year.

This study used a convenience sample to assess 100 dyads. A larger sample, perhaps within one organization, would provide feedback more specifically regarding employee benefits as all employees in the company would have the same benefits package. Future studies may consider looking at dual-earners to understand how they are unique when it comes to the employee benefit offering and its tie to commitment.

This study focused on the employee benefits package. Findings indicate a relationship between employee benefits and work-family conflict, work-family enrichment and affective commitment. Future research may wish to more deeply analyze the connections between benefits and work-family conflict and work-family enrichment to understand how they specifically tie to these experiences, both from the partner and employee perspective.

The quantitative nature of this study did not provide insights into the partner's thoughts regarding employee benefits, including benefits that they value most or least. Qualitative research would provide this area of study with more depth regarding the feelings a partner associates with employee benefits, work-family conflict, work-family enrichment and affective commitment. Future researchers may wish to conduct a similar quantitative study followed by qualitative interviews with a group of participants to better interpret results.

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, a model was tested supporting the relationship between partner affective commitment and employee affective commitment. The study's findings suggest that the partner plays an important role in the employment relationship. As companies and human

resources departments wish to retain their talent, they may consider the partners perceptions of benefits as a sound strategy as benefits are designed to positively impact both the partner's and the employee's affective commitment. This study is an important one in furthering research regarding the partner's mediating role in the employment relationship.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Employee Survey

Q1 You are invited to participate in a research study for Katie Stone, a student at GSU, because you are a full-time employee who has been with your current employer for at least one year. Participation will require around 10 minutes of your time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a brief survey. This survey will ask you questions on your perceptions, attitudes, and demographics. Participation in research is voluntary. We will keep your responses private to the extent allowed by law. Katie Stone will have access to the information you provide. We will not collect any identifiable information from you (e.g., your name, social security number). The results of this study will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. Contact Katie Stone at kstone10@student.gsu.edu if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study. Call Susan Vogtner in the Georgia State University Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu if you want to talk to someone who is not part of the study. You can talk about questions, concerns, offer input, obtain information, or suggestions about the study. If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please acknowledge by clicking the button below to begin the survey. Thank you.

Q2 For the following questions, consider the employment relationship you have with your current employer. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree that these questions currently apply to your employment relationship with your employer?

Q3 I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q4 I enjoy discussing my current employer with people outside of it.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q5 I really feel as if my current employer's problems are my own.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q6 I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to my current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q7 I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q8 I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to my current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q9 My current employer has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q10 I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q11 For the following questions, consider your involvement with your work and family. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? My work.....

Q12 Helps me to understand different viewpoints and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q13 Helps me to gain knowledge and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q14 Helps me acquire skills and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q15 Puts me in a good mood and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q16 Makes me feel happy and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q17 Makes me cheerful and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q18 Helps me feel personally fulfilled and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q19 Provides me with a sense of accomplishment and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q20 Provides me with a sense of success and this helps me be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q21 For the following questions, consider your involvement with your work and family. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Q22 The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q23 The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q24 Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q25 My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q26 Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q27 For the following questions, consider the benefits provided to you by your current employer. My job with my current employer makes it easy for me to....

Q28 Take my vacation time.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q29 Take my sick time when necessary.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q30 Take care of my health through my current employer's health benefits offering (medical benefits, dental benefits, etc.).

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q31 Live a healthier life through my current employer's various health and wellness programs offered.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q32 Develop myself and grow personally.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q33 Maintain strong relationships with my family.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q34 Have the flexibility to change my schedule when necessary.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q35 Have the ability to attend family and/or life events that are important to me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q36 Plan for my and my family's future.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q37 Please complete the following questions.

Q38 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q39 How old are you?

- under 36 (1)
- 36 to 50 (2)
- over 50 (3)

Q40 How many years have you been in your current relationship with your spouse/partner?

- Less than 5 (1)
- 5 to 15 (2)
- 16 to 25 (3)
- More than 25 (4)

Q41 Do you have minor dependents?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q42 How many years have you been with your current employer?

- Less than 5 (1)
- 5 to 10 (2)
- More than 10 (3)

Q43 In what city and state did you meet your spouse/partner?

Q44 In what year did you meet your spouse/partner?

Appendix B: Partner Survey

Q2 You are invited to participate in a research study for Katie Stone, a student at GSU. You are invited to participate because you are the spouse or partner of a current full-time employee who has been with their company for at least one year. Participation will require around 10 minutes of your time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a brief survey. This survey will ask you questions on your perceptions, attitudes, and demographics. Participation in research is voluntary. We will keep your responses private to the extent allowed by law. Katie Stone will have access to the information you provide. We will not collect any identifiable information from you (e.g., your name, social security number). The results of this study will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. Contact Katie Stone at kstone10@student.gsu.edu if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study. Call Susan Vogtner in the Georgia State University Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu if you want to talk to someone who is not part of the study. You can talk about questions, concerns, offer input, obtain information, or suggestions about the study. If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please acknowledge by clicking the button below to begin the survey. Thank you.

Q3 For the following questions, consider the employment relationship you have with YOUR OWN EMPLOYER. If you are not currently employed, please select not applicable. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree that these questions currently apply to your employment relationship with your own employer?

Q4 I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q5 I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q6 I really feel as if my organization's problems are my own.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q7 I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q8 I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q9 I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to my organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q10 My organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q11 I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)
- Not Applicable (8)

Q12 For the following questions, consider the employment relationship you have with YOUR SPOUSE/PARTNER'S CURRENT EMPLOYER. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree that these questions currently apply to your relationship with his/her current employer?

Q13 I would be very happy if my spouse/partner spent the rest of his/her career with their current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q14 I enjoy discussing my spouse/partner's employer with people outside of it.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q15 I really feel as if my spouse/partner's employer's problems are my own.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q16 I think my spouse/partner could easily become as attached to another organization as he/she is to their current employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q17 I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my spouse/partner's employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q18 I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to my spouse/partner's employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q19 My spouse/partner's employer has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q20 I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my spouse/partner's employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Moderately Disagree (2)
- Slightly Disagree (3)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (4)
- Slightly Agree (5)
- Moderately Agree (6)
- Strongly Agree (7)

Q21 For the following questions, consider your involvement with your work and family. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? My partner's work.....

Q22 Helps him/her to understand different viewpoints and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q23 Helps him/her to gain knowledge and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q24 Helps him/her acquire skills and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q25 Puts him/her in a good mood and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q26 Makes him/her feel happy and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q27 Makes him/her cheerful and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q28 Helps him/her feel personally fulfilled and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q29 Provides him/her with a sense of accomplishment and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q30 Provides him/her with a sense of success and this helps him/her be a better family member.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q31 For the following questions, consider your involvement with your partner's work and family. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Q32 The demands of my partner's work interfere with our home and family life.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q33 The amount of time my partner's job takes up makes it difficult for him/her to fulfill family responsibilities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q34 Things my partner wants to do at home do not get done because of the demands my partner's job puts on him/her.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q35 My partner's job produces strain that makes it difficult for him/her to fulfill family duties.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q36 Due to work-related duties, my partner has to make changes to our plans for family activities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q37 For the following questions, consider the benefits provided to your partner by their current employer. My partner's job makes it easy for him/her to....

Q38 Take his/her vacation time.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q39 Take his/her sick time when necessary.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q40 Take care of his/her health through the company health benefits offering (medical benefits, dental benefits, etc.).

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q41 Live a healthier life through various health and wellness programs offered by his/her employer.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q42 Develop himself/herself and grow personally.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q43 Maintain strong relationships with his/her family.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q44 Have the flexibility to change his/her schedule when necessary.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q45 Have the ability to attend family and/or life events that are important to him/her.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q46 Plan for his/her future and our family's future.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q47 Please complete the following questions.

Q48 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q49 How old are you?

- under 36 (1)
- 36 to 50 (2)
- over 50 (3)

Q50 How many years have you been in your current relationship with your spouse/partner?

- Less than 5 (1)
- 5 to 15 (2)
- 16 to 25 (3)
- More than 25 (4)

Q51 Do you have minor dependents?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q52 In what city and state did you meet your spouse/partner?

Q53 In what year did you meet your spouse/partner?

Appendix C: Factor Analysis

CFA Loadings of Survey Questions

	<u>Partner</u> <u>Perception of</u> <u>Benefits</u>	<u>Partner</u> <u>Perception of</u> <u>Work-Family</u> <u>Conflict</u>	<u>Partner</u> <u>Perception of</u> <u>Work-Family</u> <u>Enrichment</u>	<u>Partner</u> <u>Affective</u> <u>Commitment</u>	<u>Employee</u> <u>Affective</u> <u>Commitment</u>
My partner's job makes it easy for him/her to...					
Take his/her vacation time.	0.825				
Take his/her sick time when necessary.	0.802				
Take care of his/her health through the company health benefits offering (medical, etc.).	0.707				
Live a healthier life through various health and wellness programs offered by his/her employer.	0.597				
Have the flexibility to change his/her schedule when necessary.	0.773				
Have the ability to attend family and/or life events that are important to him/her.	0.823				
Plan for his/her future and our family's future.	0.709				
The demands of my partner's work interfere with our home and family life.					
The amount of time my partner's job takes up makes it difficult for him/her to fulfill family responsibilities.		0.863			
Things my partner wants to do at home do not get done because of the demands my partner's job puts on him/her.		0.922			
My partner's job produces strain that makes it difficult for him/her to fulfill family duties.		0.922			
Due to work-related duties, my partner has to make changes to our plans for family activities.		0.902			
		0.818			
My partner's work...					
Helps him/her to understand different viewpoints and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.594		
Helps him/her to gain knowledge and this helps him/her to be a better family member.			0.704		
Helps him/her acquire skills and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.707		
Puts him/her in a good mood and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.876		
Makes him/her feel happy and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.897		
Makes him/her cheerful and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.870		
Helps him/her feel personally fulfilled and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.819		
Provides him/her with a sense of accomplishment and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.858		
Provides him/her with a sense of success and this helps him/her be a better family member.			0.830		

I would be very happy if my partner spent the rest of his/her career with their current employer.				0.712	
I enjoy discussing my partner's employer with people outside of it.				0.593	
I really feel as if my partner's employer's problems are my own.				0.522	
I think my partner could easily become as attached to another organization as he/she is to the current employer.				0.611	
I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my partner's employer.				0.745	
I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to my partner's employer.				0.867	
My partner's employer has a great deal of personal meaning for me.				0.822	
I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my partner's employer.				0.693	

I would be very happy if I spent the rest of my career with my current employer.					0.743
I enjoy discussing my employer with people outside of it.					0.543
I really feel as if my employer's problems are my own.					0.709
I think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to my current employer.					0.637
I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my employer.					0.821
I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to my employer.					0.839
My employer has a great deal of personal meaning for me.					0.822
I do not feel a sense of 'belonging' to my employer.					0.656

Note: CFA = confirmatory factor analysis

Appendix D: Collinearity Analysis**Structural Model Collinearity**

Predictor Latent Variables	VIF
Partner Perception of Benefits	1.083
Partner Perception of Work-Family Conflict	1.059
Partner Perception of Work-Family Enrichment	1.092
Partner Affective Commitment	1.046

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