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Who Creates Family-Supportive Work Environments? Examining Characteristics of Leaders who Enact Family-Supportive Superviso Behaviors

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Who Creates Family-Supportive Work Environments? Examining Characteristics of Leaders who Enact Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors

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Biography

The author was born in Valparaiso, IN, October 20th, 1986. She resides in Valparaiso with her long-time partner, Sam, their teenage son, and beloved pets. She graduated from Wheeler High School in Valparaiso, IN in 2005 and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Indiana University Northwest in Gary, IN in 2011. She received her Master's of the Arts in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from DePaul University in 2015. For the last several years, she has worked as a leadership consultant and coach at Vantage Leadership Consulting.

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Abstract

Over the past several decades, a plethora of research has focused on better understanding how individuals can succeed in the workplace while navigating the complex intersection between work, family, and personal life. Offering flexible working arrangements (FWA), such as flextime and flexplace, is promising for employees who seek to find greater balance. However, supervisor support for use of FWA is critical, as supervisors often have discretion over their enforcement and use, and thus, can create (or inhibit) the development of a family-supportive work environment. Further, preliminary research indicates that expression of family-supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSBs) lend to positive outcomes for employees (e.g., decreased work-family conflict; increased job satisfaction; Odle-Dusseau, Hammer, Crain, & Bodner, 2016). Few studies have focused on understanding the supervisory behaviors and characteristics that predict enactment of FSSBs. Twenty-one participants who participated in a leadership development program were recruited via a large Midwestern financial organization. The study utilized archival multi-rater 360 leadership assessment data, as well as supplementary self-report survey data to examine how a series of manager behaviors, preferences, and characteristics impact endorsement of FSSBs. Plots and correlational analyses were examined to identify trends in the data and provide directions for future research. The research provides evidence that a manager's personal need for structure is negatively correlated with their likelihood to enact family-supportive behaviors. Moreover, direct reports' ratings of their managers' strategic focus has a negative relationship with enactment of FSSBs, whereas their ratings of their managers' outgoing nature has a positive relationship with enactment of FSSBs. Finally, this study did not find evidence that manager's endorsement of FSSBs

influences ratings of their overall effectiveness. Overall, these results suggest further exploring how personal need for structure, strategic focus, and outgoing style can be targeted in training and development for leaders who want to create family-supportive supervisor environments.

Introduction

Over the last several decades, changing workforce and family characteristics (e.g., increase in dual-earner couples, vast technological enhancements, intensified concern for greater work-family balance) have led to a proliferation of research on the work-family interface and its impact on variables such as job satisfaction, well-being, and work-family conflict (Allen & Eby, 2015; Greenhaus & Foley, 2007). Still, it remains difficult for many employees to successfully manage their work and home lives, and perhaps not surprisingly, evidence suggests that work-family conflict in the United States continues to be extremely high (Glavin & Schieman, 2012). For instance, 53% of employed parents report that balancing work and family is either somewhat or very difficult (Parker & Wang, 2013). Yet, despite acknowledgement of these topics for organizational leaders, little progress has been made toward understanding the characteristics of leaders who actively support employee's efforts to find balance between their work and personal lives. This research will summarize key concepts in the work-family interface, describe the importance of supervisory support on important employee health and well-being outcomes, and propose several leadership behaviors and characteristics that are expected to predict the enactment of family-supportive supervisory behaviors. First, to lay the foundation for the importance of this research, work-family conflict and its antecedents and consequences will be discussed.

Work-Family Conflict

Rising rates of work-family conflict have led to a culture of over-stressed, over-worked, and overwhelmed employees. In the literature, work-family conflict (WFC) 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). To break it down further, conflict is typically distinguished by its directionality, such that tensions can originate in either the work *or* family domain, resulting in work interfering with family (e.g., overtime hours getting in the way of family activities) or family interfering with work (e.g., a sick family member interfering with standard work hours; Kelloway, Gottlieb, & Barham, 1999). The conflict itself is depicted as coming from three main sources: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behavioral-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Time-based conflict occurs when attention or effort dedicated to one role hinders performance in the other (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, Granrose, Rabinowitz, & Buetell, 1989; Williams, 2001). For example, a lack of flexibility at work may make it difficult to care for young children at home; as such, this conflict arises from a lack of time to contribute to both roles. Major, Klein, and Ehrhart (2002) found that work time is significantly positively related to work interfering with family and that this interference results in increased levels of psychological distress.

Strain-based conflict results when high levels of tension or fatigue in one domain spill over into the other. For example, research has found that stress experienced in the work domain can spill over and impact relationships (e.g., marriage) in the family domain (Kelloway & Barling, 1994).

Lastly, behavioral-based conflict happens when expectations or habits in one role impact and hinder performance in the other (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011). For instance, the expectation to be “always on and

connected" at work may make it difficult to fully focus on and be present with one's family at home, thus, resulting in negative spillover from work-to-home.

Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict. While much of the work-family literature has focused on outcomes of WFC, it is important to understand the variables that lead to the emergence of WFC. The literature suggests that, regardless of the type of WFC that emerges, WFC is preceded by a myriad of antecedents, coming from both the work and family or personal domains. For example, Michel and colleagues (2011) conducted a meta-analysis to provide a quantitative review of the antecedents of work-family conflict. They present a theoretically driven model of WFC, which separates work and family domain variables into four categories: role stressors (e.g., role ambiguity), social support (e.g., supervisor or co-worker support), role involvement (e.g., work centrality), and work-family characteristics (e.g., flexibility in one's schedule). Each will be described briefly in turn below.

Role stressors can be defined as stressors that originate in either the work or family role. For example, work role ambiguity refers to a lack of necessary information about responsibilities and duties in a given work role (Beehr & Glazer, 2005). Resource drain theory suggests that when individuals experience work role ambiguity, it places demands on their resources (e.g., time, energy), and thus, subtracts from their available resources, which can result in conflict when it comes to meeting family demands and pressures (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Social support, in general, refers to the information, aid, and concern that is provided by others in the work and family domains. The support can come in many forms, such as spousal support, supervisor support, or organizational support. Resource

drain theory implies a negative relationship between support and WFC, such that support serves as a resource that helps an individual meet demands in their environment more readily. For instance, workers in unsupportive work environments tend to experience more negative family consequences than those in supportive environments (Hughes & Galinsky, 1994).

Role involvement indicates the level of connection or attachment one has to their work and/or family role. For instance, those with high role centrality view their role as an employee or parent as an important component in their lives and identity (Hirschfeld & Feild, 2000). Thus, strong involvement in any one role has the potential to lead to conflict between the two domains; though, when work role centrality is high, the negative relationship between WFC and organizational attitudes tends to be suppressed (Carr, Boyer, & Gregory, 2008).

Lastly, work-family characteristics refer to specific features in each domain that can impact performance or effectiveness overall. Work- and home-based characteristics also differentially impact the level of conflict experienced by employees (DiRenzo, Greenhaus, & Weer, 2011). For instance, type of job, job autonomy, and salary are all work characteristics that can influence one's capacity for managing the intersection between domains, and thus precede WFC (Morgenson & Campion, 2003). Family climate, marital status, and number of children, on the other hand, are family domain characteristics that can impact role performance and demands, and thus influence the emergence of WFC as well.

Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict. Evidence suggests that the existence of WFC can lead to many adverse outcomes such as stress and strain, life dissatisfaction,

and poor physical health (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). In the work domain, increased WFC has been linked to job dissatisfaction, greater intentions to turnover, and increased absenteeism (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002). More recent meta-analytic findings indicate that both work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW) are consistently related to outcomes within specific domains (i.e., work-related outcomes such as work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intentions to turnover, and family-related outcomes such as family satisfaction and family-related strain) as well as domain unspecific outcomes (i.e., life satisfaction) (Amstad et al., 2011).

It is important to note that, while early depictions of WFC often focused on negative outcomes, more recent theories also conceptualize the positive side of the work-family interface. In particular, research suggests that participating in a fulfilling, energizing, and engaging career path can positively spillover to improve family life and vice versa (Liu, Kwan, Wu, & Zheng, 2018). This stream of literature has expanded the work-family interface through focusing on work-family enrichment or facilitation (Rothbard, 2001; Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2007). Meta-analytic evidence suggests that resource-providing contextual characteristics (e.g., social support and workplace autonomy) have stronger rellationships with enrichment than do resource depleting workpacle characteristics, such as role overload (Lapierre et al., 2018).

The Work-Home Resources model (W-HR; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), for example, specifies that people have both demands and resources in their work and family domains. Work-family enrichment is a process by which resources can be accumulated and then utilized to enhance outcomes in the other domain, thereby,

facilitating positive outcomes through the intersection of multiple roles. It is therefore possible that, with the right levels of support, training, and organizational intervention, work and life demands can be reduced, while work and life resources can be maximized. Flexible working options are one promising solution that may address work-life conflict and contribute to work-life enrichment.

Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA)

Flexible work is a broad term used to describe any policy or benefit that allows employees to have some control over when, where, or how they work (Williams, Blair-Loy, & Berdahl, 2013). Flexible working arrangements (i.e., FWA) are formally defined as "alternative work options that allow work to be accomplished outside of the traditional temporal and/or spatial boundaries of the workday" (Rau, 2003). For example, flextime allows employees to adjust their start and stop times, whereas flexplace provides the option of telecommuting, or working from remote locations (Rau & Hyland, 2002). In recent years, some organizations have been publicly commended for their focus on creating family-friendly workplace cultures, through offering benefits such as flexible working arrangements (FWA), onsite childcare, and generous maternity and paternity leave (e.g., Patagonia; Schulte, 2014).

And for good reason: such offerings have, to an extent, allowed organizations to better attract and retain diverse talent, while helping individuals better integrate their work and personal lives (Munsch, Ridgeway, & Williams, 2014). Moreover, the focus on the topic of supporting working parents, and caregivers more broadly, has continued to rise in popularity, both in the academic literature and popular press (SHRM, 2010). A quick online search identifies hundreds of thousands of articles on this topic, and many

businesses, research centers, and functional units within organizations have been created to address the subject and provide solutions for caregivers seeking to find success both in their careers and personal lives. For example, The Mom Project began as a start-up to connect women with employers who are committed to work-life integration (The Mom Project, 2020), whereas The National Fatherhood Initiative equips people and their staff with the skills and resources to effectively engage working fathers in their children's lives (The National Fatherhood Initiative, 1994).

In an attempt to address increasing work-family conflict (WFC) as well as the changing nature of the workforce (e.g., an increase in the number of dual-earner families), many organizations have also begun to offer FWA to their employees. The rationale behind offering these policies is well-developed and intended to benefit both individuals and organizations. From an organizational perspective, FWA are expected to decrease the likelihood that tensions between work and family lead to increased stress and strain (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Further, their use is reported to increase worker productivity and decrease intent to turnover (Galinsky & Bond, 1998). For individual personnel, the option to engage in flexible work can serve as a protective mechanism, or "buffer", which facilitates work-family balance and results in increased commitment and loyalty to their role or organization (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Kelly, 1999). The availability of FWA also facilitates employees' experience of work-to-family enrichment such that they are better able to capitalize on the positive spillover that can occur when engaging in both domains (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2010).

One question that has been explored in the literature is whether FWA are directly related to the levels of work-family conflict experienced by personnel. In other words, do

FWA decrease work-family conflict? And if so, to what extent? Research has found that the effects of these policies differ based on the type (e.g., flexplace, flextime) as well as 'use versus availability' (i.e., not only if policies are available for use, but also whether employees use them). More specifically, based on meta-analytic findings, the likelihood that work will interfere with family lessens with the existence of FWA, and flextime has a stronger relationship with work interfering with family than flexplace (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013). Moreover, perceived usability (versus simply availability) of FWA has been linked with lower levels of work-family conflict (Hayman, 2009). As such, it is becoming clear that the perceived usability and type of FWA are key elements in determining their effectiveness.

The "Usability Problem". Building on this argument, although the availability of FWA tends to result in positive attitudes toward an organization, there are several factors that impact an individual's likelihood of utilizing them. In fact, although they are available in roughly 78% of organizations, only 2-24% of employees report using them (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, & Kim, 2008). Thus, it appears that FWA may serve as "shelf paper" such that their presence can result in more positive attitudes toward the company (particularly during a job search), yet, employees feel constrained in using them for fear of negative ramifications (Williams, Blair-Loy, & Berdahl, 2013). This has been dubbed the "usability problem" by Susan Eaton (2003), and it results in FWA being perceived as valuable by both employees and organizations but flawed in their implementation.

One explanation for this is that employees face a flexibility bias, such that when they take advantage of FWA, they are stigmatized. This stigmatization results in workplace penalties wherein those seeking flexible work are discredited and devalued

(Cohen & Single, 2001; Wharton, Chivers, & Blair-Loy, 2008). Theory and research in the social sciences can be utilized to provide insight into this stigmatization; in particular, social and gender role theories posit that deep-rooted beliefs and expectations regarding gender roles and appropriate workplace behaviors differentially impact organizational outcomes for men and women, such as hiring and promotion practices (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Spitzmeuller & Matthews, 2016). Much of the research related to discrimination based on FWA usage has focused on women of childbearing age, pregnant women, and working mothers. Compared to men and working fathers, these groups have been consistently disadvantaged when it comes to their status in the workplace. Emerging research suggests, however, that when they seek out flexibility after having children, fathers are also given lower job evaluations (Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013). Thus, regardless of gender, parents seeking flexibility to better manage their work and home lives may be penalized.

Preliminary research has examined a mechanism through which discrimination against flex workers may be perpetuated (Munsch, Ridgeway, & Williams, 2014). More specifically, Munsch and colleagues examined situations in which workers request access to flexible work through the lens of *pluralistic ignorance*. Pluralistic ignorance happens when an individual holds one opinion, but erroneously believes that others hold an opposite opinion (Prentice & Miller, 1996). Consequently, due to this misalignment, one may behave in ways that are congruent with what they *believe* to be a norm, even when incongruent with their personal opinion. This can result in instances wherein a perceived norm is publicly supported but privately rejected, or publicly rejected but privately supported.

Munsch and colleagues found evidence in support of pluralistic ignorance as it relates to the flexibility bias, suggesting that the bias may persist when individuals inaccurately assume that others feel more negatively about flexible work than they do. To further test this finding, they examined whether open use of flexible working arrangements by senior leaders (i.e., those who set the norms to begin with) would reduce flexworker bias, and found evidence that, when senior managers engaged in flexible work, the bias was reduced. Thus, the usability problem may be minimized or mitigated if, and when, senior managers openly discuss and role model norms of acceptable for flexible working arrangements.

In addition, concepts such as family-supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB; further detailed in a subsequent section) have emerged as central to effective work-family integration; yet, relatively little research has focused on understanding the underlying managerial characteristics that lead to FSSB and encouragement of using FWA.

As such, this study aims to expand our understanding of the work-family interface through examining which behaviors and characteristics are predictive of supervisors' family-supportive behaviors. This is a fruitful avenue given that organizational decision-makers (e.g., supervisors, hiring managers, and leaders) have the power to make judgments regarding promotions, job assignments, and allocation of work. Further, given that supervisors and leaders have substantial discretion over the type and level of family support that employees receive, it is fair to deduce that they also have the wherewithal to create the context and culture in which flex workers are either supported or stigmatized (McCarthy, Darcy, & Grady, 2010; Ryan & Kossek, 2008).

For example, Breaugh and Frye (2008) found that employees who report to a family-supportive supervisor were more likely to utilize family-friendly employment practices; moreover, FSSBs are positively related to work-family balance (Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012). Therefore, deepening our understanding of the characteristics of family-supportive individuals could help organizations select and develop leaders who are most likely to support flexible environments. Moreover, understanding these characteristics could help practitioners develop targeted training, coaching, and leadership development initiatives to minimize the flexibility stigma. Doing so could make organizations friendlier to parents and other caregivers, support companies' ability to attract and retain a broader array of professionals and serve to minimize the negative repercussions of high-levels of work-family conflict.

The Importance of Supervisor Support

A large body of research has provided evidence for the positive impact of perceived supervisor support on employee attitudes toward their jobs, such as job satisfaction (Thomas & Ganster, 1995), as well as in minimizing the negative effects of employee's intentions to turnover from their organization (Thompson & Prottas, 2005). In short, supervisors (and their perceived support for their employees) have an important effect on how employees feel, act, and behave in their work roles. More recent research has focused on a nuanced type of supervisor support; that is, *family-specific* supervisor support. Thomas and Ganster (1995) define a family-supportive supervisor as one who empathizes with an employee's desire to seek balance between work and family responsibilities. Moreover, Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, and Hanson (2009) found

that family-specific supervisor support predicts employee attitudes and behaviors above and beyond generalized support.

This research often draws from job-demands-resources models, in which supervisor support is operationalized as a resource that employees can draw on to manage demands stemming from their work and home lives (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). More specifically, when employees have greater perceived family-support from their supervisors, this serves as a job resource which can empower them to make decisions regarding how to best integrate their work and home lives. On the flipside, when employees do not have perceived family-specific support from their supervisors, they may have less control over their choices and thus, suffer from increased stress and strain, intentions to turnover, and decreased job satisfaction (Hammer et al., 2013). Supervisors, then, can be considered the "linking pins" between formal offerings of family-supportive policies (such as FWA) and the informal climate and acceptance of their use.

Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB)

As noted above, Thomas and Ganster (1995) define a family supportive supervisor as one who empathizes with an employee's desire to seek balance between work and family responsibilities. Family-supportive supervisor behaviors (hereafter, FSSBs) are defined as the specific behaviors carried out by supervisors that signal support for their employees (Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009). FSSBs has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that has four subordinate dimensions: emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling behaviors, and creative work-family management. Each will be discussed briefly in turn.

Emotional Support. The emotional support dimension of FSSBs conveys perceptions of feeling cared for and having one's emotional needs met at work. In other words, supportive supervisors exhibit empathy for their employee's competing work and home life demands. For example, supervisors who make their employees feel comfortable about transparently surfacing and discussing work-family balance issues are considered to be offering some level of emotional support in the workplace.

Instrumental Support. The instrumental support dimension of FSSBs is behavioral in nature and is focused on the specific and observable actions that managers take to help their employees manage their work and home lives. For example, offering different options to participate in a work meeting (e.g., in-person, phone, video) based on personal/family needs would illustrate some level of instrumental support from one's supervisor.

Role Modeling Behaviors. Role modeling behaviors involve supervisors exhibiting how to integrate work and family. In turn, creating a climate in which engaging in behaviors aimed at better managing work and home lives are encouraged and modeled. This type of support, in particular, may be critical for changing organizational climate and culture to be more family friendly, as shifts often happen when higher status employees (i.e., those in positions of authority or leadership) demonstrate that it is acceptable to engage in certain behaviors. For example, when the majority of high-status employees (e.g., organizational leaders) work flexibly, bias against flextime workers tends to be attenuated (Munsch, Ridgeway, & Williams, 2014).

Creative Work-Family Management. Lastly, creative work-family management make up a proactive set of innovative leadership behaviors that involve taking action to

create a family-supportive culture at the organizational level. For example, supervisors who challenge outdated assumptions regarding facetime and encourage a shift to results-only work environments (i.e., those characterized by outcomes met versus the process to get there) are demonstrating creative work-family management (Perlow & Kelly, 2014). These leaders may tend to exhibit a stronger focus on innovation and continuous improvement, with a lower emphasis on maintaining the structure and processes of the past. This specific dimension of FSSBs has been shown to have a positive influence for employees whose managers have completed FSSB training; specifically, training has shown significant positive effects on employee's job performance, satisfaction, and engagement through improved perceptions of family-specific supervisor support (Odle-Dusseau, Hammer, Crain, Bodner, 2016).

In the literature, FSSBs have been linked to lower work-family conflict and turnover intentions, and related to higher levels of job satisfaction, well-being (Goh, Ilies, & Wilson, 2015), and work-to-family positive spillover (Hammer, Kossek, Bodner, & Crain, 2013; Odle-Dusseau, Britt, & Greene-Shortridge, 2012). These results have been found over and above the impact of general supervisor support. Moreover, reviews have found that the presence of work-family specific supervisor support leads employees to develop stronger organizational support perceptions. When supervisors receive FSSB training, employees also report improved levels of physical health and job satisfaction – this relationship is particularly evident for employees who have high levels of family-to-work conflict (Odle-Dusseau et al., 2016).

As such, it is clear that promoting, selecting, and developing managers who exhibit FSSBs will have positive benefits for individual employees and organizations as a

whole. Following this logic, it is plausible that FSSBs will also serve to minimize the flexibility bias and thus, promote increased support for the use of FWA.

Individual-level Factors Impacting Family Supportive Behaviors

To better understand how to identify, select, and develop family-supportive managers, it is necessary to first understand the individual characteristics, beliefs, and preferences that lend to the enactment of FSSBs. Straub (2012) developed a multi-level conceptual framework and accompanying research agenda to identify individual- and contextual-level factors that are likely to predict managers' tendencies to engage in FSSBs. For the purposes of this study, several individual-level factors that are hypothesized to play a role in the utilization of FSSBs in Straub (2012) will be discussed and examined. In addition, several of the variables below are derived from a theoretical examination of the existing leadership literature.

Social Identification. Many people spend a significant amount of time and resources focused on their careers, including making career transitions (e.g., taking on new responsibilities, being promoted, and shifting organizations). These career transitions are difficult and are often fraught with challenges and tough choices. While most employees are likely to struggle with balancing personal and professional demands at various points in their career, individuals who have significant responsibilities outside of work (i.e., new parents, those providing elder- or dependent care), in particular, must make difficult choices, determine how to best integrate their work and home lives, and navigate changing identities that impact their motivations, choices, and behavior (Greenberg, Clair, & Ladge, 2016; Morgenroth & Heilman, 2017).

Moreover, working parents face challenges regarding potential workplace discrimination (e.g., differential hiring and promotion processes, unequal opportunities), lack of access to supportive work-family policies, and stereotypes that may impact how they are perceived and treated (Sabat, Lindsey, King, & Jones, 2016). As such, it is likely that an individual's willingness to exhibit FSSBs may depend on how strongly he or she socially identifies with the challenges of balancing work and family life.

More specifically, strong social identification can lead to shared group norms and beliefs, which in turn, may lead individuals to engage in behaviors that are mutually beneficial (Christian, Bagozzi, Abrams, & Rosenthal, 2012). Therefore, it is expected that managers who report having experienced WFC and used FWA themselves will more strongly identify with other employees trying to balance family responsibilities, and thus, will report to exhibiting higher levels of FSSBs. This prediction is also consistent with self-categorization theory, which suggests that when one categorizes themselves as similar to another group, they tend to engage in more supportive behaviors (Tsui, Egan, & Oreilly, 1992). In this study, managers who have experienced work-family conflict and taken advantage of FWA are expected to have social identification with employee work-family demands because they face similar struggles.

Personal Need for Structure. Organizational life is inherently complex and at times, quite ambiguous. I would argue that, in our information-rich and fast-moving environment, this complexity will continue to increase over time. This will result in increasingly blurred boundaries between work and home, and as a result, employees may seek out strategies to reduce information overload, have more decision-making latitude and control over their time, and more effectively manage their environments.

In order to reduce information overload, some individuals choose to structure their worlds into a more simplified, distinct, and predictable form. This can serve as a benefit in that it allows for efficient understanding of one's environment (Fiske, 2010). The concept of "personal need for structure" (PNS) is an individual difference in the need to structure one's environment in a more or less complex way (Neuberg & Newson, 1993).

In an empirical study, Neuberg and Newsom (1993) utilized the personal need for structure scale (PNS; Thompson et al., 1989, 1992) to test individual differences in preferences for structure and simple organization in one's environment. They found that those who have a higher PNS were likely to organize information in less complex ways and were also apt to relying on stereotypes to guide their thinking and decisions. Furthermore, Moskowitz (1993) found that, when processing information in their social context, high PNS individuals tend to structure and sort information to a greater extent than do low PNS individuals.

Flexible working options inherently introduce ambiguity and uncertainty into the working environment as they allow employees to make personal choices regarding how, where, or when they do their work. Following from the above, it is expected that managers who prefer a high level of structure and predictability in their work life may struggle to support workplace flexibility, as it undermines their desire for order in their environments. As such, it is expected that managers with a high PNS will be less likely to endorse utilizing FSSBs, as doing so could add additional complexity and lack of structure into their world. As such, I expect that a strong focus on structure in one's supervisory style will negatively relate to a supervisor's self-reported support of FSSBs.

Managerial Trustworthy Behavior. Trust is an oft-cited concept in organizational life, and research supports that shared trust between individuals and within teams is a critical component in relationship-building, communication, and performance appraisal, among other topics (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Managerial trustworthy behaviors can be defined as the behaviors that managers engage in that signal they can be trusted by their employees and co-workers. When employees trust their manager (i.e., to do what's right, to have their best interests in mind), positive workplace outcomes can occur. For instance, research indicates that employee perceptions of their direct manager's level of trustworthiness predict workplace outcomes such as job satisfaction (Brashear, Boles, Bellenger, & Brooks, 2003) and demonstration of organizational citizenship behaviors (Krosgaard, Brodt, & Whitener, 2002).

Trust is also a two-way street, such that it can be granted by managers but also needs to be felt and experienced by their employees. The definition of trust proposed by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) is "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other part" (p. 712). In this study, it is argued that in order for managers to demonstrate high levels of FSSBs, and thereby support the use of FWA, they must have some level of generalized trust (i.e., "propensity to trust") that others will follow through on their commitments and achieve results, regardless of where or when the work is completed.

Open communication is one form of managerial trustworthy behavior that is important to explore in light of work-family balance issues. From a behavioral

perspective, when managers transparently communicate and keep lines of information open between themselves and their direct reports, trust can be established. It is worth noting that Eisenberg and Witten (1987) describe the potential downsides of uncritically accepting open communication as efficacious, particularly given the political nature of organizations. At the same time, for employees to feel adequately supported and understood, it is important that they feel a sense of comfort discussing specific issues (e.g., work-family issues) with their managers.

Indeed, management communication has been shown to positively affect job performance as it provides a signal the supervisor and organization supports and cares for its employees (Neves & Eisenberger, 2012). This study will focus specifically on the impact of managers' open communication regarding work-family issues in the workplace. Open communication is observed through behaviors such as keeping direct reports well-informed, translating and cascading information down through the organization from supervisor to team, and engaging in consensual decision-making, such that a supervisor solicits his/her team's perspective and includes them in the process. More specifically, it is predicted that managers who are perceived by their direct reports as engaging in more frequent open communication and consensual decision-making behaviors will be more likely to endorse engaging in FSSBs, as these managers are likely to exhibit a more trusting, inclusive leadership style.

Empathy. Empathy can be conceptualized as an individual difference variable that captures a person's capacity to understand and feel concern for others and reflects the ability to take another's perspective (Stotland, 1969; Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus, 1999). In the context of leadership, empathy reflects a person's ability to realize the emotions of

their co-workers and followers, share in those, and engage in behaviors that reflect this understanding (Eisenberg, 2000). Individuals who possess greater empathy tend to recognize and respond to others' emotions in the workplace – for example, if a co-worker is struggling or noticeably having a bad day, an empathetic individual would be likely to attend to this information and act accordingly. In sum, leading with empathy involves the thoughtful consideration of employees' feelings, along with other factors, in the process of making informed decisions (Kellet, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002).

This definition makes it clear that empathy involves bringing some level of emotion and emotional awareness to the workplace, both cognitively (i.e., understanding or comprehending others' emotional states) and affectively (i.e., sharing others' emotional states). Indeed, empathetic individuals are adept at gauging the emotions of others and are more attuned to social cues (Davis, 1983). In the organizational context, manager's expression of empathy has been linked to positive outcomes for their team, such as increased demonstration of helping behaviors (Miller & Eisenberg, 1988), fairness in decision-making (Patient & Skarlicki, 2005), expression of positive affect (Scott, Colquitt, Paddock, & Judge, 2010; Borman et al., 2001), as well as improved job performance (Sadri, Weber, & Gentry, 2011). Moreover, Batson and colleagues (1997) found that inducing feelings of empathy for members of a stigmatized group led to improved attitudes toward the group overall. In the context of the "usability problem" for FWA, then, higher levels of empathy for others may help to alleviate the bias against flexworkers.

Furthermore, empathy and more specifically, perspective-taking behaviors (i.e., the ability to look at issues from the perspective of one's subordinates) are positively

related to transformational leadership behavior (Gregory, Moates, & Gregory, 2011). Specifically, through understanding their direct reports' perspectives, transformational leaders project individualized consideration and create empowering conditions on the job, which lead to several positive workplace outcomes, such as lower burnout, lower stress, and lower turnover (Arnold, 2017). Kossek and colleagues (2018) examined relationships between transformational leaders, FSSBs, and outcomes such as employee health, work-family variables, and job outcomes. They found that when managers reported using a transformational leadership style, their employees were more likely to perceive higher levels of family-specific support. They conceptualize family-specific support as a positive job resource that has the potential to enhance workplace outcomes for employees. Going a step further, in the context of work-family issues, and as a dispositional characteristic, expressed empathy may lead to greater family-specific support behaviors – in particular, empathy may lend to the emotional support component of FSSBs. In this study, it is expected that leaders who are perceived as leading with empathy for others will report to enacting higher levels of FSSBs.

Theory Y Management Style. Management behavior inherently involves assumptions and beliefs regarding others. Will one's team complete their work on time? Does an employee feel intrinsically motivated, or do they need additional external rewards to stay engaged?

McGregor (1960) contends that worker behavior is a consequence of management philosophy and practice, such that a manager's treatment of workers will ultimately turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy, with employees acting in line with how they are treated. McGregor developed two theories of management and worker motivation – Theory X

and Theory Y. Theory X contends that managers must lead by maintaining tight control over others. Those that subscribe to this style believe that, innately, people are not ambitious, have little desire for responsibility, and prefer to be directed. They can be described as having a high degree of control and structure, with an emphasis on tactical execution and a dominance-based leadership style. As such, they tend to closely control and coerce people to achieve results.

Theory X style management is likely to demotivate workers as it creates working conditions in which employees feel controlled and forced to comply, rather than committed to and engaged in their work. An individual with Theory X beliefs may assume that when people are working from home, they are actually napping or doing household chores – they are unlikely to innately trust that employees can be self-directed and motivate themselves to complete work. Managers who describe themselves as aligning to behaviors characteristic of a Theory X style management style, then, are expected to be less inclined to endorse enacting in FSSBs.

Theory Y management, on the other hand, is characterized by the assumption that workers have the capacity to be intrinsically motivated and are driven by the need to be self-fulfilled (Maslow, 1954). This theory of management suggests that organizations should encourage and help workers create their own goals and reach their potential. To do so, management is expected to be participatory and collaborative, as this will help to create an environment in which employees can be self-directed and self-controlled (i.e., autonomous in achieving goals). Further, employees and employers are expected to work together in solving problems and completing tasks to discover what each other's needs and wants truly are (Follett, 1926).

Theory Y managers are likely to exhibit higher levels of empathy and emphasize cooperative behaviors, while having a lesser focus on control and dominance behaviors. This type of management shifts the responsibility of goal attainment to *include* employees, thereby motivating them to align their personal goals with the goals of their managers and the organization as a whole. Furthermore, when employee perceive their managers to exhibit more Theory Y behavior, they are more inclined to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., performing extra-role duties) and to provide greater service quality in healthcare settings (Prottas & Nummelin, 2018).

Thus, from a Theory Y viewpoint, organizations can improve job performance and ensure their employees feel supported and engaged through offering options for flexible work, and not only helping, but supporting and encouraging employee's efforts to seek fulfillment and balance in their work and home lives. This is preliminarily supported with negative correlations between Theory Y orientation and work-family conflict (Kopelman, Prottas & Falk, 2012). As such, in this research, managers who are perceived as emphasizing behaviors characteristic with Theory Y style are predicted to also endorse themselves as engaging in the creative work-family management component of FSSBs.

Hypotheses

HI. Drawing on research related to social identification, the first set of predictions concern managers who socially identify with employees who benefit from family-specific workplace support.

Managers who report having experienced higher levels of work-family conflict (HIa), having personally utilized FWA (HIb), and carrying out the majority of

caregiving responsibilities for their families (HIc) will report enacting increased levels of FSSBs for their subordinates compared to those who have not experienced this or utilized these offerings.

A second prediction concerns managers who report emphasizing behaviors associated with a strong personal need for structure (PNS) in their working style.

HII. Managers' self-report of high PNS will be negatively related to their reported enactment of FSSBs compared to those with lower self-reported PNS.

A third set of predictions concern managers who are perceived by their direct reports as exhibiting empathy and managerial trustworthy behaviors.

Managers whose direct reports rate them as exhibiting higher levels of managerial trustworthy behaviors (HIIIa) and high empathy (HIIIb) will report to utilizing higher levels of FSSBs than managers with lower levels.

Finally, a fourth prediction concerns leaders who are perceived as emphasizing behaviors associated with a Theory Y management style (i.e., exhibiting higher levels of empathy, emphasizing cooperation/collaboration, empowering and supporting employees).

HIV. Managers whose direct reports rate them as leading with a Theory Y management style are expected to report utilizing FSSBs to a greater extent compared to those who exhibit a style more aligned to Theory X management.

Research Question I: What is the relationship between leader's self-reported use of FSSBs and their supervisor's rating of leadership effectiveness?

Research Question II: Is there a leadership style profile in which certain behavioral tendencies more strongly predict a supervisor's reported use of FSSBs compared to other behaviors?

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from a pool of managers who partook in a leadership development program in a large financial institution in the United States from the years of 2013-2018. As part of the program, all managers completed a self-assessment of their management behavior using a tool called the *Leadership Effectiveness Analysis* (LEA; Management Research Group, 1992). For each manager who completed the self-assessment, a combination of observers (i.e., their boss(es), peers, and direct reports) also completed the LEA as part of a 360-degree evaluation for the leader (LEA360).

Data collected from the LEA360 assessments are currently stored in an archival dataset managed by the Primary Investigator's employer (i.e., a small leadership consulting firm located in the Midwest). 113 managers who participated in the leadership development program and who remained employed at the financial institution at the time of this study (i.e., fall 2019) were eligible to voluntarily participate in this research.

Although 113 managers were eligible to participate in this study, due to role changes (e.g., leaving the organization, retiring), work demands, and other restrictions as noted by the partner organization, invitations were only sent to thirty-six managers. Of those, twenty-three individuals participated in this study. Two individuals stopped the study after answering the first couple of questions resulting in missing data. Thus, these participants were excluded from reported demographics and subsequent analysis, resulting in a total of twenty-one individuals with viable data.

The mean age of the twenty-one participants was 47.58 years (SD = 6.65). Regarding sex, 61.9% of the participants identified as female and 38.1% identified as

male. In addition, to get a sense of participants' work and home circumstances, they were asked to indicate their organizational tenure, size of current team (i.e., number of people reporting directly to them), personal experience utilizing flexible working arrangements, and breadth of caregiving responsibilities. 85.7% reported to having a live-in spouse or relationship, 70% have one or more children under eighteen living in the home, 28.6% reported to *presently* having other caregiving responsibilities (e.g., elderly parents), and 100% reported to having utilized flexible working arrangements. They reported an average of 19.23 years (*SD* = 6.59) with their organization, and an average of 3.8 people directly reporting to them in their management role (*SD* = 1.82). Table 1 presents categorical descriptive statistics and Table 4 reports on continuous descriptive variables.

Table 1. *Summary of Participant Demographic Data*

Variable	N	% Reporting
Sex	**21**	
Female	13	61.9
Male	8	38.1
Live-in Spouse or Relationship	**21**	
Yes	18	85.7
No	3	14.3
Children in-Home	**21**	
Yes	14	30.0
No	7	70.0
Utilized Flexible Working Options	**21**	
Yes	21	100.0
No	0	0.0
Type of Flexible Working Options Used*	**21**	
Flextime	16	76.2
Flexplace	21	10.0
Condensed Workweek	5	23.8
Part-time/Reduced Hours	5	23.8
Job Sharing	1	4.8

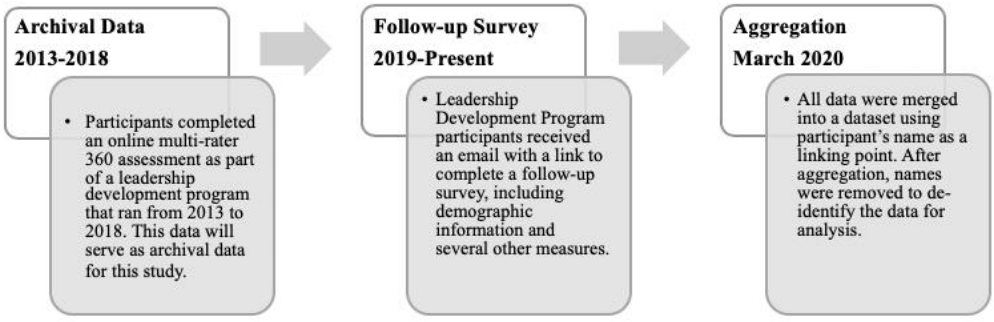
Note. *Totals to more than 100%, as some participants reported to using multiple options

Procedure

In the fall of 2019, I had a unique opportunity to collect additional data from the group of managers who participated in the financial institution's leadership development program between the years of 2013-2018. Given time constraints and urgency within the organization, I had to move quickly to leverage this opportunity and thus, a research study was developed and approved by DePaul's IRB in order to begin collecting additional data from this group to supplement the archival data.

To differentiate when and how various data were collected, data sources will be referred to as: archival data (i.e., the leadership development program data collected from 2013-2018) and follow-up survey data (i.e., the additional survey data which began to be collected in fall of 2019). To summarize, this study included two sets of data, collected for different purposes and at different points in time (i.e., first, for purposes of leadership development, and second, for purposes of this research and ongoing learning). For reference, Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the timeline over which data were collected.

Figure 1. Data Collection Timeline



Eligible managers who participated in the leadership development program and completed the online multi-rater assessment from 2013-2018 were invited to participate in the follow-up survey through email. The initial recruitment email for the survey was sent by a senior-level Human Resources leader with strong tenure (i.e., over twenty years) in the financial institution; this approach was selected to promote trust with potential participants and support the legitimacy of the survey request. This email template can be viewed in Appendix A. The primary investigator was copied on the email, and all eligible leaders were blind copied to protect their identities and ensure that, should someone decide not to participate, their eligibility would remain confidential.

Next, the primary researcher sent a follow-up email (again, blind copying all recipients of the email), which included a brief description of the study and a Qualtrics link to take the follow-up survey (see Appendix B for the email template). The email also included language specifying that the survey was for research purposes only and data would be de-identified once collected; specifically, the clause read: "this project is directed at identifying effective workplace practices, not identifying individuals. As such, after you complete this survey, your name will be removed, and your data will be de-identified before analysis and reporting. This research will be used strictly for research and learning purposes and your individual responses will not be shared with anyone at the organization."

In addition, to improve response rates and allow potential participants a chance to complete the study, three follow-up emails (at two, three-week increments) were sent to participants who had not completed the survey (see Appendix C). Participants who either

(a) declined to participate or (b) already completed the survey were removed from the email and were not sent a follow-up email.

Once participants decided to participate, they clicked the Qualtrics link in the email which took them to a webpage where they read a general information sheet (see Appendix D). Clicking the "next" button at the bottom of the Qualtrics page indicated their consent to participate in the survey. Participants then filled out a series of measures including demographic information (e.g., age, parental status, number of children), questions regarding experienced work-family conflict, and a measure of FSSB. See Appendix E for a full list of questions from the follow-up survey.

Measures

As noted earlier, this study contains multiple sources of data collected at different points in time; as such, Table 1 depicts each construct that was measured, their associated variables, as well as insight into where the data came from. Next, each measure is described in detail and included in appropriate appendices.

Table 2. Constructs, Variables, and Data Sources

Construct	**Operationalization**	**Time of Data Collection**	**Type of Data**
Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSBs)	Modified FSSB Scale (Hammer et al., 2013)	Follow-up Survey	Participant Self-Report
Social Identification	Experience of work-life conflict (7-point scale, where *1 = very little conflict*, and *7 = a great deal of conflict*); use of FWA; caregiver responsibility	Follow-up Survey	Participant Self-Report

Personal Need for Structure	LEA Behaviors: Conservative; Innovative; Structuring	Archival Multi-Rater 360	Participant Self-Report
Managerial Trustworthy Behavior	LEA Behaviors: Communication; Consensual	Archival Multi-Rater 360	Direct Report Ratings
Empathy	LEA Behavior: Empathy	Archival Multi-Rater 360	Direct Report Ratings
Theory Y Management Style	LEA Behaviors: Empathy; Cooperation; Control; Dominance	Archival Multi-Rater 360	Direct Report Ratings
Leadership Effectiveness	Measured by Scaled Items on LEA 360 Tool	Archival Multi-Rater 360	Supervisor Ratings

Leadership Effectiveness Analysis 360. As part of the leadership development program, each participant completed self-ratings using the *Leadership Effectiveness Analysis* (LEA; Management Research Group, 1992), while supervisors, peers, and direct reports completed the observer version of the same questionnaire.

The LEA provided information to individuals concerning perceptions of their own management and leadership practices and behavior. These perceptions were compared with those of significant stakeholders (boss, peers, direct reports) and the expectations of the organization. Feedback was then provided to each individual on 22 behavioral dimensions of leadership (e.g., innovative, empathy, structuring). For the purposes of this study, a subset of nine LEA behaviors were selected to test hypotheses. These nine LEA behaviors were the focus of this study because they are expected to relate to supervisors' likelihood of exhibiting FSSBs. In addition, only self-report ratings and direct report ratings were used to test hypotheses because of the dyadic nature of the concepts being studied (i.e., family-specific support expressed by participants for their direct reports).

Table 2 depicts the nine LEA behaviors that were used to operationalize constructs being studied. Each is referenced and further described in subsequent areas of the measures section. Sample questions for each behavior are included in Appendix F.

Table 3. Relevant LEA360 Behaviors and Their Definitions

LEA360 Behavior	**Definition**	**Data Source Used**
Conservative	Studying problems in light of past practices to ensure predictability, reinforce the status quo, and minimize risk	Participant Self-Report
Innovative	Feeling comfortable in fast changing environments and being willing to take risks and consider new and untested approaches	Participant Self-Report
Structuring	Adopting a systematic and organized approach; preferring to work in a precise, methodical manner; utilizing and developing guidelines and procedures to achieve results	Participant Self-Report
Communication	Maintaining an open flow of communication through clearly and consistently communicating needs, expectations, and thoughts	Direct Report Ratings
Consensual	Seeking out the ideas and opinions of others and integrating them into one's decision-making	Direct Report Ratings
Empathy	Demonstrating an active concern for people and their needs by forming close and supportive relationships with others	Direct Report Ratings
Cooperation	Being willing to temporarily put their own needs aside to aid others, compromise, and engage in behaviors for the betterment of the team or the organization	Direct Report Ratings
Control	Staying very close to the work of those around them, setting strict deadlines, and closely monitoring progress; perhaps even micromanaging or	Direct Report Ratings

	struggling to let go of tactical aspects of the work	
Dominance	Asserting ones' leadership through a more aggressive, forceful, or competitive approach to work	Direct Report Ratings

The LEA employs a unique normative/semi-ipsative format for item responses – the self-report survey asks managers to respond to 87 questions, whereas the observer survey format asks observers of a manager to respond to 97 questions. Each question consists of a stem and three alternative response options. When completing the tool, the respondent first chooses the option which seems most characteristic of them and rates it as either a 5 or a 4. Then the respondent selects the option that is next most characteristic of them and rates it as either a 3 or a 2. The respondent is instructed to leave the third option blank, and this option receives a score of 0 by default. This format reveals not only the order of the respondent's preference among the three sets offered in each question, but also the strength of their preference for each set. Over the course of the questionnaire, each set is compared to each of the other sets being measured. See Appendix G for a sample LEA question.

The scale characteristics of the LEA360 questionnaire were evaluated in a sample of 485,846 individuals completing assessments on co-workers between January 2009 and July 2018 (MRG Technical Manual, 2019). This included 67,927 bosses, 217,685 peers, and 200,234 direct reports. Each scale demonstrated adequate variability, as evidenced by large standard deviations. Coefficients of variation ranged from .25 to .55 (M = .40). Scale intercorrelations were again quite low, with a mean absolute correlation of .17 (SD = .13).

In all LEA feedback reports, raw scores are normed and presented as percentile ranks. In the LEA360, averaged responses for peers and direct reports are also provided separately. If more than one boss responds, these responses are also averaged. For example, on the LEA360, for the behavior of "innovative," participants receive four separate percentile scores – a self-report score, boss score, peer score, and direct report score. For this study, averages were utilized to combine multiple behaviors into a single construct. All constructs were operationalized using data from a single rater group (e.g., direct report or self-scores) to ensure differences in perception were not diluted or washed out. Data collected from these assessments are currently stored in an archival dataset managed by the Primary Investigator's employer (i.e., a small leadership consulting firm located in the Midwest).

Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB). FSSBs were measured using a multi-dimensional scale consisting of sixteen items that assess emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling, and creative work-family management behaviors. This measure is an adapted version of the scale created by Hammer and colleagues (2013). Respondents were asked to select the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements, such as "I believe flexible working options are valuable" and "In the event of a conflict, I am understanding when employees have to put their family first." All items were responded to on a 5-point scale, where *1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree*. All items are included in Appendix E, under item 4: "family supportive supervisor behaviors". Hammer et al. (2013) report reliability for the overall scale at $\alpha = .94$ and reliability estimates for the subscales as αs = .90, 73, .86 and .86, respectively, for the emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling behavioral, and creative work-

family management scales. For this study, all items were combined, with some being reversely scored, and averaged to assess the extent to which the respondent self-reports utilizing FSSBs. Higher scores indicate stronger reported endorsement of FSSBs.

Social Identification. To assess the extent to which participants socially identified with the need to have family-specific support from one's boss, proxy measures were used, such that leaders who reported to experiencing work-life conflict, holding the majority of family caregiving responsibilities, and utilizing FWA themselves were considered more likely to identify with, and provide support for others through exhibiting FSSBs.

Utilization of FWA was measured by asking participants one yes or no question, "have you utilized flexible working options in your career?" This question was asked as part of the follow-up survey (see Appendix E, question 11). In addition, if respondents answered "yes," they were asked to indicate the type(s) of FWA they have utilized (e.g., flextime, flexplace, part-time work.) (see Appendix E, question 12). Since 100% of participants reporting to utilizing FWA, this variable was ultimately not used to create the social identification proxy.

Experience of WFC was measured in the follow-up survey by asking participants to respond to one question: "To what extent have you experienced conflict between your work and personal lives?" on a 7-point scale, where *1 = very little conflict*, and *7 = a great deal of conflict* (see Appendix E, question 13). Higher scores indicate experiencing a greater deal of WFC, and thus, stronger social identification with others needing family-specific support.

Percentage of caregiving responsibilities was measured using two sliding scale questions, where participants selected the percentage of caregiving responsibilities they take care of (on a scale of 0-100%), as well as the percentage of caregiving responsibilities held by their partner (on a scale of 0-100%) (see Appendix E, questions 7 and 10, respectively for the survey items). Participants who reported having >50% of caregiving responsibilities were considered to "hold the majority" of caregiving responsibilities in their household. Higher percentage of caregiving responsibilities (i.e., from 0-100%) indicates stronger social identification with others needing family-specific support.

To create the social identification variable, participant responses to the WFC scale were combined with their percentage of caregiving responsibilities to lead to an overall sum, where higher scores indicated greater social identification (i.e., more conflict, more caregiving responsibilities).

Personal Need for Structure. PNS was assessed through participants' self-report scores on three LEA360 behaviors: "conservative," "innovative," and "structuring." Behavior definitions and sample items can be viewed in Table 2 and Appendix F. Specifically, a stronger PNS is indicated by higher scores on conservative and structuring and lower scores on innovative. A stronger focus on conservative behaviors is defined as "studying problems in light of past practices to ensure predictability, reinforce the status quo, and minimize risk." A higher focus on innovative behaviors is described as "feeling comfortable in fast changing environments and being willing to take risks and consider new and untested approaches." Finally, a higher emphasis on structuring behaviors is defined as "adopting a systematic and organized approach; preferring to work in a

precise, methodical manner; utilizing and developing guidelines and procedures to achieve results" (Management Research Group, 1992).

Managerial Trustworthy Behaviors. Managerial trustworthy behaviors were assessed by direct reports' ratings of participants on two LEA360 dimensions: "communication" and "consensual." Behavior definitions and sample items can be viewed in Table 2 and Appendix F. Specifically, a supervisory style characterized by higher levels of managerial trust was indicated by higher direct report scores on both communication and consensual. A higher focus on communication can be described as "maintaining an open flow of communication through clearly and consistently communicating needs, expectations, and thoughts." A higher score on consensual is characterized by "seeking out the ideas and opinions of others and integrating them into one's decision-making" (Management Research Group, 1992).

Empathy. Supervisor's expression of empathy was assessed via direct reports' ratings of the "empathy" dimension on the LEA36. A higher percentile score on empathy is indicative of a more empathetic leadership style. The empathy facet of the LEA is defined as "demonstrating an active concern for people and their needs by forming close and supportive relationships with others" (Management Research Group, 1992). Leaders who are rated by others as higher on the empathy domain tend to be attuned to others' needs and often exhibit a caring and supportive leadership style. A sample item from the empathy facet of the LEA360 can be viewed in Appendix F.

Theory Y Management Style. Theory Y management style was assessed by a combination of direct reports' ratings on several LEA360 factors, including "empathy," "cooperation," "dominance," and "control" (the latter reversed scored). Specifically, a

Theory Y style is indicated by higher percentile scores on both empathy and cooperation, and lower percentile scores on both dominance and control. Empathy was described in the prior section. Higher cooperation is defined as "leaders being willing to temporarily put their own needs aside to aid others, compromise, and engage in behaviors for the betterment of the team or the organization." Higher control is characterized by leaders who stay very close to the work of those around them, setting strict deadlines, and closely monitoring progress; perhaps even micromanaging or struggling to let go of tactical aspects of the work. Finally, a higher score on the dominant facet is indicative of an assertive leadership style and characterized by leaders who take an aggressive, forceful, and competitive approach to their work (Management Research Group, 1992). Behavior definitions and sample items can be viewed in Table 2 and Appendix F.

Leadership Effectiveness. As part of the LEA360 process, respondents (i.e., supervisors, peers, direct reports) answered several one-item questions regarding the target leader's effectiveness and performance across several domains (e.g., capacity for achieving results). According to research by Fleenor, McCauley, and Brutus (1996), supervisor ratings are the most preferred source for ratings of overall performance because bosses are ultimately in the position to make promotion and salary decisions which represent the leader's success or effectiveness. Accordingly, supervisor's ratings of participants' leadership effectiveness were used to test research question one. Specifically, two questions, rated on a 7-point scale, were utilized: "to what extent does this supervisor deliver results?" (where 1 = to a very little extent and 7 = to a very great extent) and "what is this supervisor's overall effectiveness as a leader/manager?" (where 1 = not at all effective and 7 = high effective/role model).

Demographics and Other Variables. All participants were asked to provide common demographic information such as age and gender. In addition, participants were asked to share their organizational tenure, number of direct reports, number of children, and relationship status (see Appendix E, items 2, 3, 6, 9, and 10).

Results

The data for this study are unique in that they were collected at two points in time using a sample of managers and their colleagues working in a large Midwestern organization. The first set of data were initially collected for developmental purposes by the organization (i.e., to help the study participants learn about their leadership style, strengths and areas of opportunity as part of a leadership development program). Then, for the purposes of this research, additional follow-up data were collected when I acted on an opportunity to explore my area of interest with organizational data.

As a result of the distinctive sample and data collection method, the final sample size ended up being notably small ($N = 21$). Attempts to gather additional data from other eligible participants were unsuccessful. After discussion, it was determined to move forward with the opportunity to identify trends in this unique data and isolate further opportunities to encourage exploration, despite the limitations of the small sample size. This will be further addressed in the limitations section; however, it is important to address here, as it impacts the data analysis strategy selected. Originally, the study data were expected to be analyzed using a series of multiple regressions models. Given the sample size noted, results are discussed using scatterplots and then running correlations to test all hypotheses. Trends are further described in the discussion section along with recommendations for future research.

Prior to testing hypotheses, preliminary analyses examined descriptive statistics, including overall means, standard deviations, and frequencies for all main study variables. Further, items that required reversed coding were recoded, and items corresponding to the same scale were grouped together and their item ratings were averaged to result in overall scale scores for each participant prior to analysis. Lastly, an alpha level of .05 was used for all correlations.

Sample size, standard deviations, and correlations of all main study measures and continuous variables are displayed in Table 4. The Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior Scale also demonstrated low internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach's $\alpha < .70$; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Further examination indicated that removing item 4 (i.e., "in this organization, it is generally okay to talk about one's family at work") would bring the internal consistency to a more traditional level (i.e., $\alpha > .70$); as such, item four was removed when calculating the overall scale score. Moreover, although the FSSB scale is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional scale made up of four dimensions, analysis did not support utilizing the dimensions on their own; that is, internal consistency for each dimension was less than .70 (i.e., $\alpha < .70$); as such, all analyses were completed using the overall FSSB scale with item 4 removed.

In addition, Figures 2-7 depict histograms for each measure that is included in study hypotheses. The FSSB variable (depicted in Figure 2) is range-restricted, though otherwise normally distributed ($M = 4.33$; $SD = .28$). The restriction of range in this main study variable is important to note, as it will attenuate existing relationships with FSSBs and other core study variables.

Figure 2. *Simple Histogram of Family Supportive Supervisor Behavior Mean*

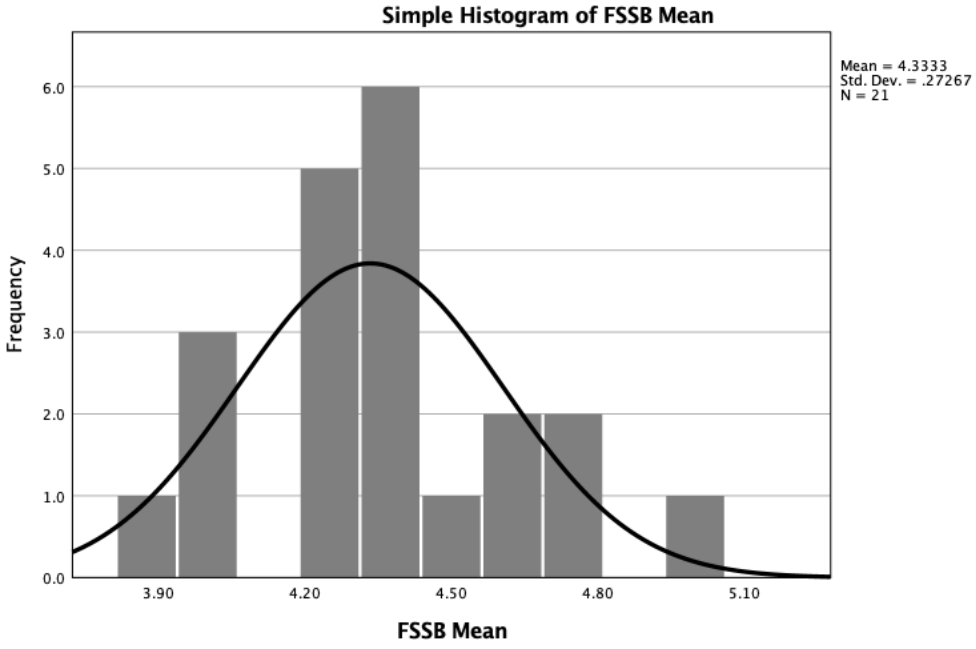


Figure 3. *Simple Histogram of Personal Need for Structure Mean*

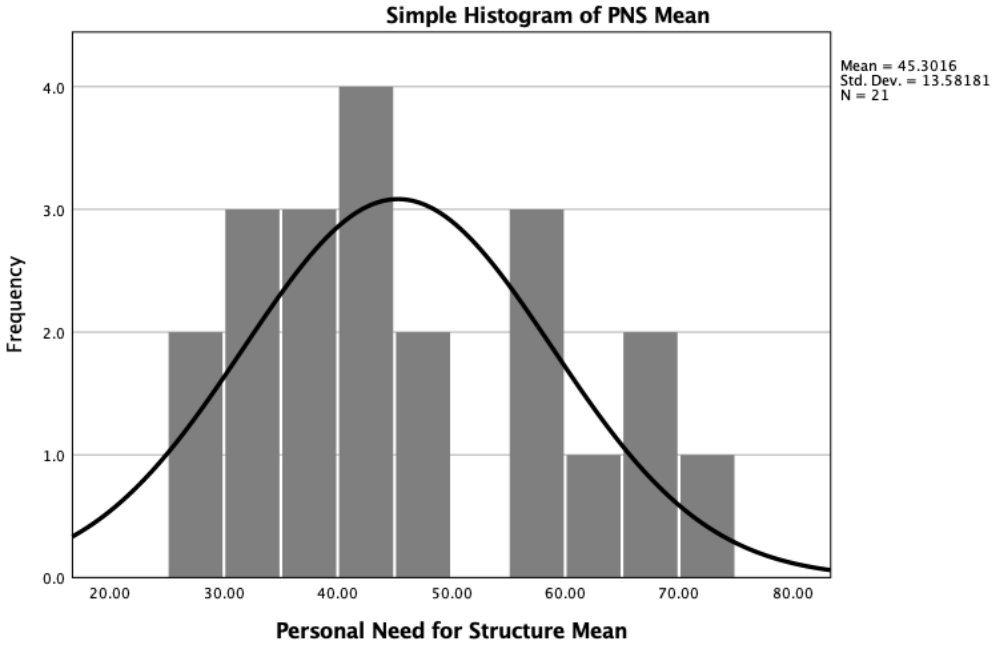


Figure 4. *Simple Histogram of Social Identification Mean*

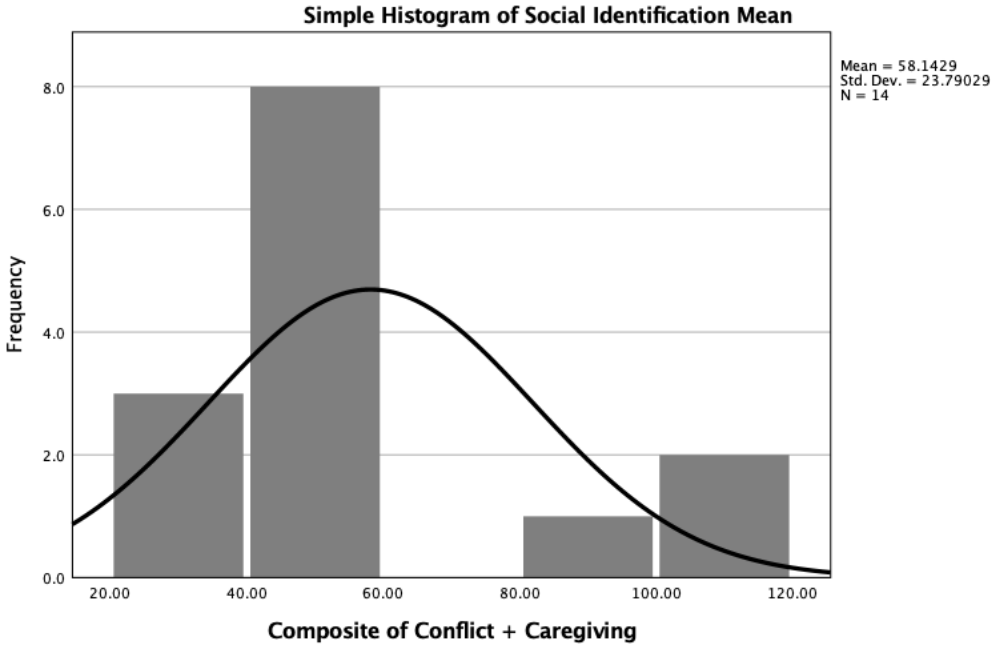


Figure 5. *Simple Histogram of Theory Y Style Mean*

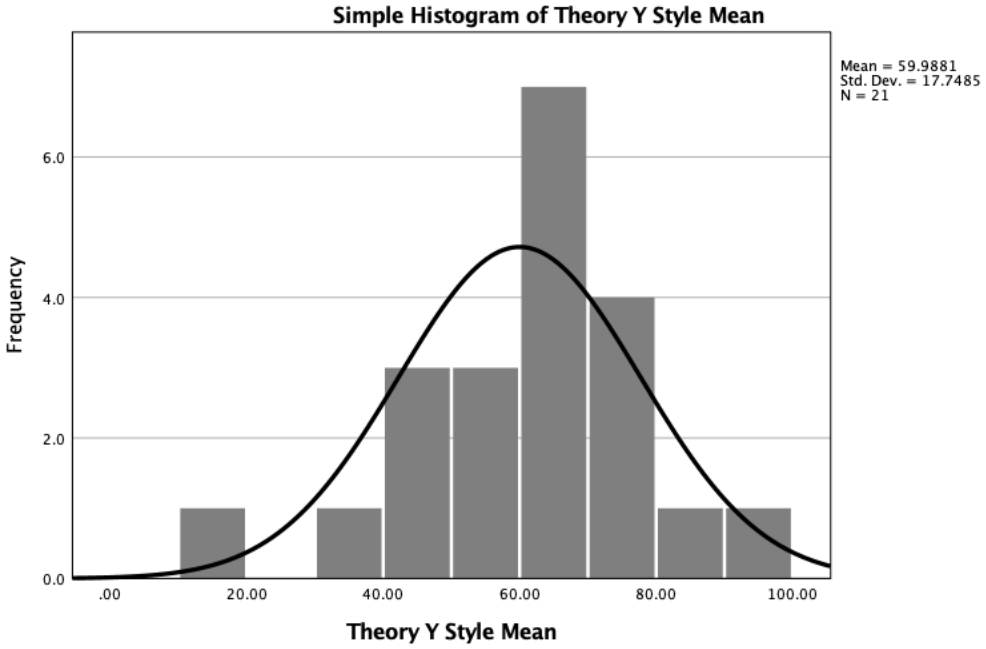


Figure 6. *Simple Histogram of Managerial Trustworthy Behaviors Mean*

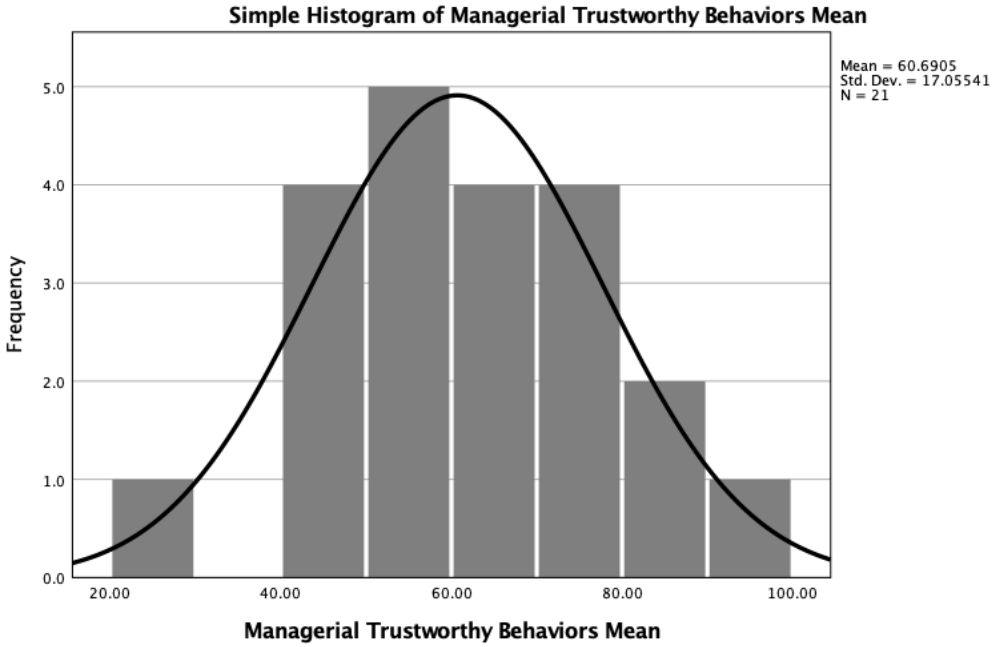


Figure 7. *Simple Histogram of Leader Effectiveness Mean*

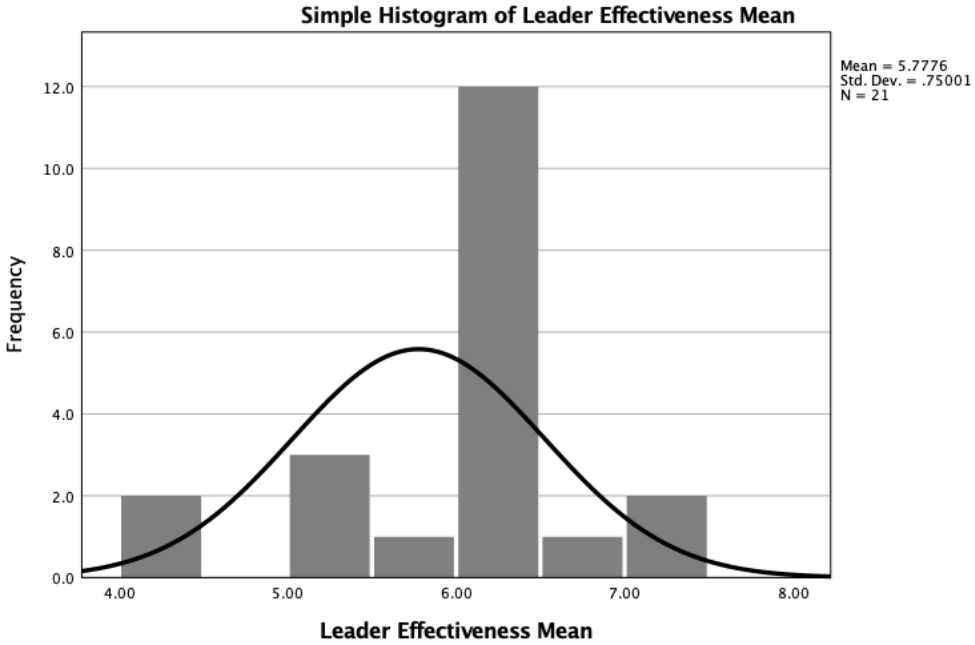


Table 4. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Major Study Variables*

Variable Name	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*
1. Age	19	47.58	6.65	–														
2. Org tenure	21	19.23	6.59	.23	–													
3. # children	21	1.29	1.03	.56*	.67**	–												
4. # of direct reports	20	3.80	1.82	.11	.04	.02	–											
5. P % caregiving	14	54.00	22.90	-.09	.12	-.04	.06	–										
6. S % caregiving	15	52.00	23.80	-.30	.10	.41	.33	.19	–									
7. WL conflict	21	3.57	1.86	-.46*	-.05	.36	.25	.48	.16	_								
8. WL enrichment	21	4.52	1.44	.40	.49*	-.44*	-.02	-.71**	.06	-.50	–							
9. PNS	21	45.30	13.58	-.37	.05	-.05	-.06	.05	.10	-.20	-.24	–						
10. Trust Behaviors	21	6.69	17.06	-.05	.44*	.02	-.21	.06	.04	-.03	.11	.20	–					
11. Theory Y Style	21	59.99	17.75	.31	.04	-.02	.15	-.32	-.31	.11	-.08	-.02	.31	–				
12. Enacted FSSBs	21	4.33	.27	.37	.17	-.14	.40	-.16	.34	.21	.39	-.59**	-.15	.10	–	(.71)		
13. Empathy	21	7.14	24.91	.36	.20	-.13	-.01	-.31	-.19	.12	.08	-.05	.40	.88**	.17	–		
14. Leader Effectiveness	21	5.78	.75	-.42	-.20	.46*	-.32	.02	.13	.22	-.10	-.01	.17	-.46	.03	-.36	–	
15. Social Identification	14	58.14	23.79	-.12	.10	-.02	.06	.99**	.20	.53	-.72**	.08	.06	-.31	-.16	-.30	.06	–

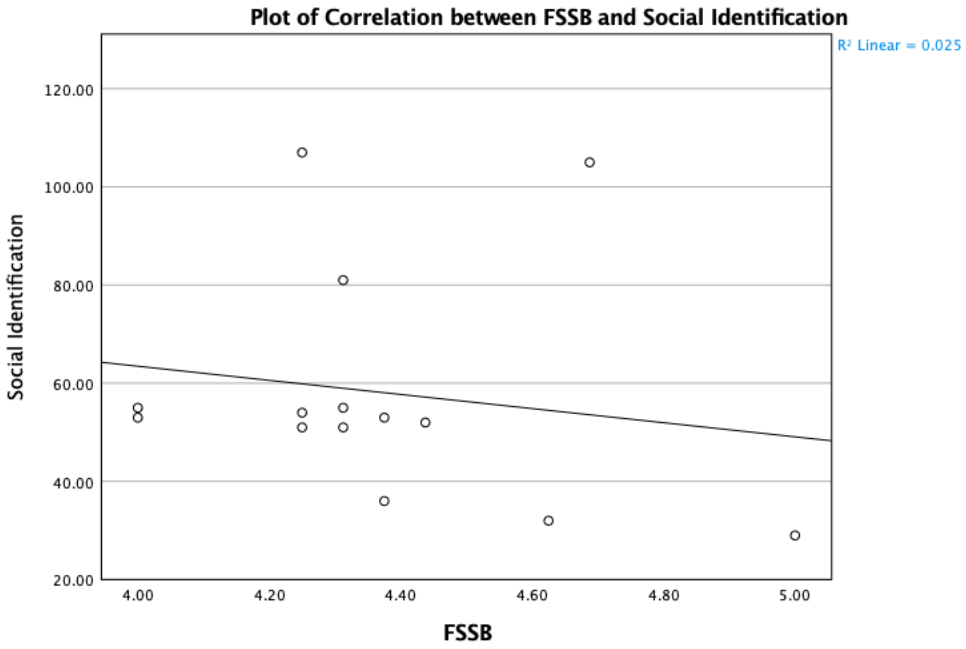
Note. N varies from 14 to 21 due to missing values. * = $p < .01$. ** = $p < .001$.

Hypothesis I

Hypothesis I made predictions about participant's social identification with employees who may benefit from family-specific workplace support. Specifically, managers who report having experienced higher levels of work-family conflict, having personally utilized FWA, and carrying out the majority of caregiving responsibilities for their families were expected to enact increased levels of family-specific support for their subordinates compared to those who have not experienced conflict or utilized these offerings.

In the sample collected, 100% (N = 21) of participants reporting to utilizing FWA in their careers, with many reporting to utilizing more than one type of FWA. See Table 1 for a full breakdown of types of FWA used. This was a surprising finding and required reframing of the social identification variable. Specifically, a composite variable was created for social identification in which each participant response for their level of work-family conflict (7-point scale, where *1 = very little conflict*, and *7 = a great deal of conflict)* was summed with the percentage of caregiving responsibilities (i.e., 0-100%) carried out for their family. Overall, higher summed values indicated stronger social identification with those using FWA (i.e., experiencing greater conflict and having more caregiving responsibilities) and lower values indicating that participants would be less inclined to socially identify with those using FWA (i.e., experiencing less conflict and having fewer caregiving responsibilities).

Figure 8. *Scatterplot of Correlation Between FSSB and Social Identification*

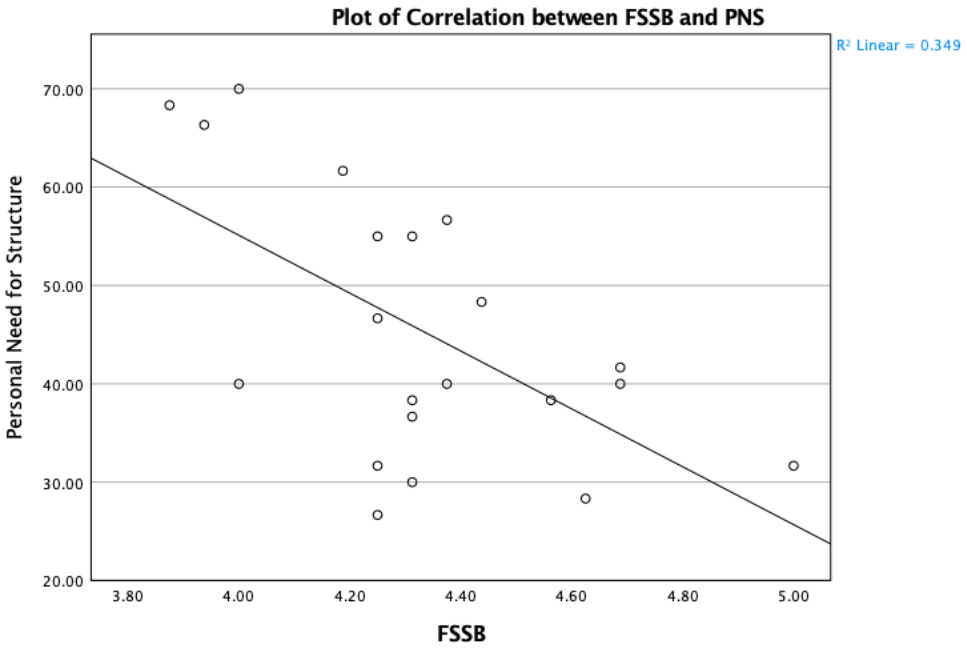


See Figure 8 for the plotted relationship between FSSB and Social Identification. The plot, as well as the Pearson correlation were examined to assess the directionality and statistical significance of the relationship between social identification and FSSBs. Examination of Figure 8 indicates a general negative relationship between FSSB and social identification, such that as social identification decreases, enactment of FSSBs increases. This is trending in the opposite direction as what was predicted for Hypothesis I. This is interpreted with caution given the existence of two outliers depicted in the plot. The correlation corroborates this, indicating a negative, though not statistically significant relationship between social identification and enactment of FSSBs (r = -.15, p > .05). Overall, the results do not support hypothesis I, and in fact, are trending in the opposite direction compared to the prediction.

Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II states that manager's reported enactment of FSSBs is negatively related to their self-reported personal need for structure, such that managers who have higher need for structure will be less inclined to endorse use of FSSBs. Figure 9 depicts the scatterplot for the relationship between FSSB and PNS. The plot, as well as the Pearson correlation were examined to assess the directionality and statistical significance of the relationship between PNS and FSSBs.

Figure 9. *Scatterplot of Correlation Between FSSB and PNS*



Examination of Figure 9 indicates a negative relationship between FSSB and PNS, such that as PNS decreases, enactment of FSSBs increases. The correlation corroborates this, indicating a negative and moderately strong statistically significant relationship between PNS and enactment of FSSBs (r = -.59, $p < .05$). Overall, the results support hypothesis II.

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III states that manager's reported enactment of FSSBs is positively related to their direct report's ratings of their managerial trustworthy behaviors (IIIa) and empathy (IIIb), such that managers who project greater trust and empathy with their direct reports (as perceived by the direct reports) will be more inclined to exhibit FSSBs. Figure 10 depicts the scatterplot for the relationship between FSSB and managerial trustworthy behaviors, and Figure 11 illustrates the relationship between FSSB and empathy. The plots, as well as the Pearson correlations were examined to assess the directionality and statistical significance of the relationships.

Figure 10. *Scatterplot of Correlation Between FSSB and Managerial Trustworthy Behaviors*

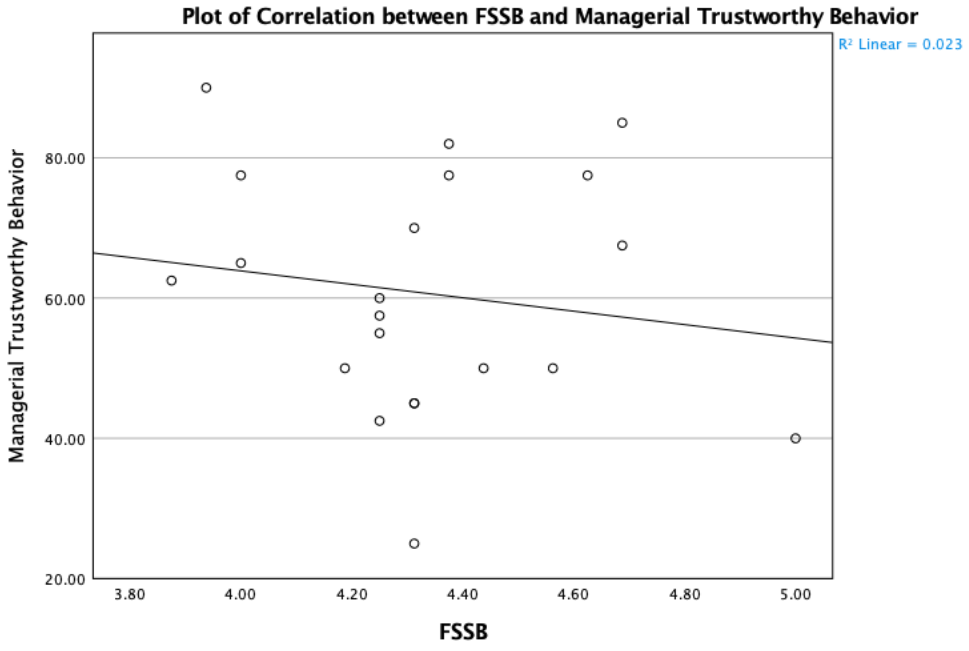
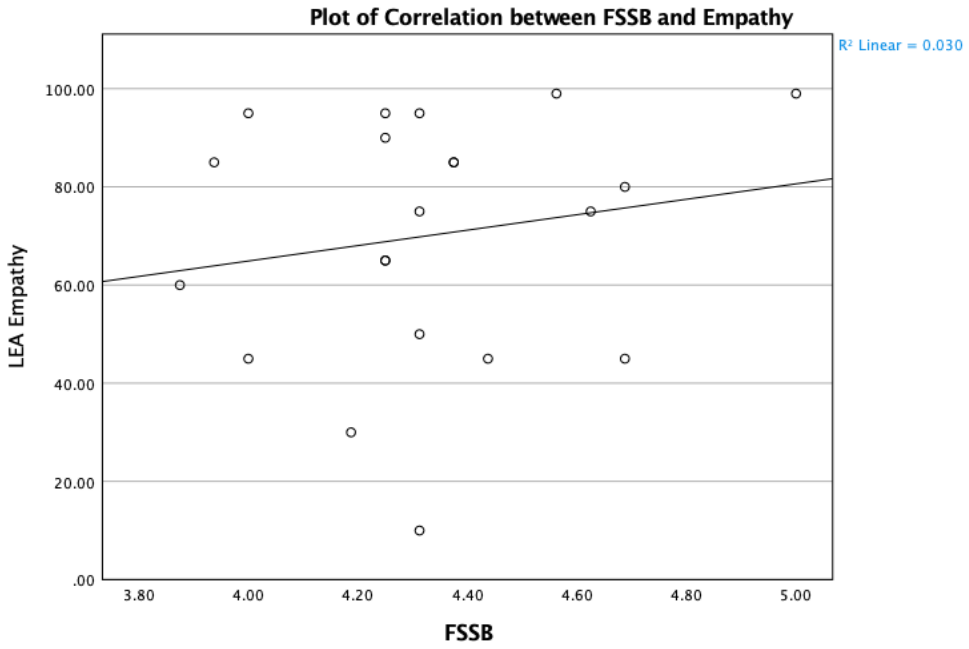


Figure 11. *Scatterplot of Correlation Between FSSB and Empathy*



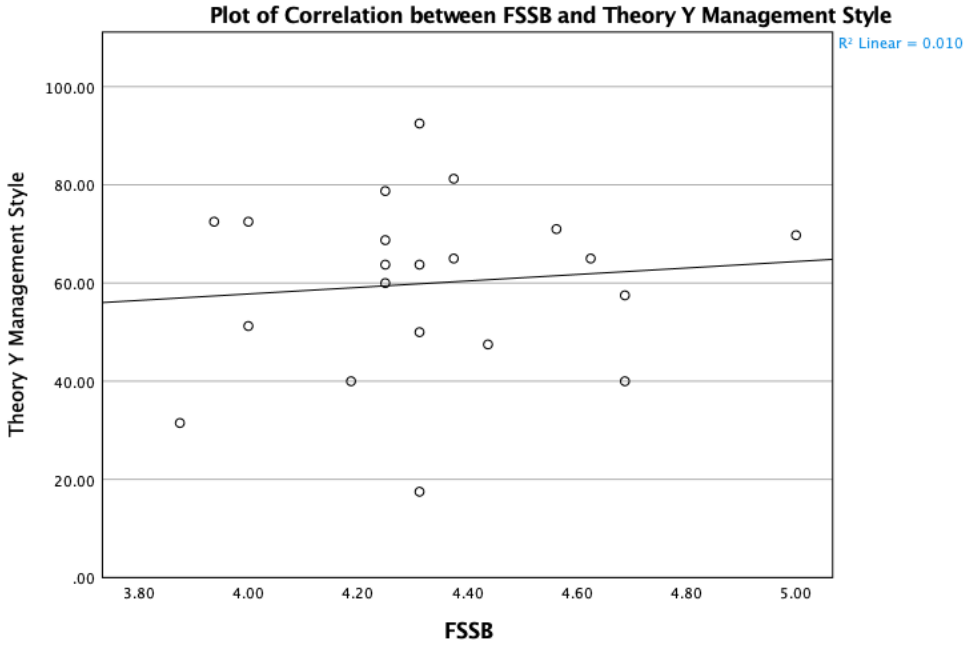
Examination of Figure 10 indicates a trending negative relationship between FSSB and managerial trustworthy behaviors, such that as managerial trustworthy behavior decreases, enactment of FSSBs increases. However, there are several outliers in the plot, indicating that the relationship should be interpreted with caution. The correlation corroborates the trending negative relationship though it is weak and not significant (r = -.15, $p > .05$). Overall, the results do not support hypothesis IIIa.

Examination of Figure 11 indicates a trending positive relationship between FSSB and empathy, such that as enactment of FSSBs increases, empathy increases. There are several outliers in the plot, indicating that the relationship should be interpreted with caution. The correlation corroborates the trending positive relationship though it is weak and not statistically significant (r = .17 , $p > .05$). Overall, the results, while trending in the right direction, do not support hypothesis IIIb.

Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV states that manager's reported enactment of FSSBs is positively related to theory Y management style such that managers whose style is more consistent with theory Y will be inclined to exhibit greater FSSBs. Figure 12 depicts the scatterplot for the relationship between FSSB and theory Y management style. The plots, as well as the Pearson correlation were examined to assess the directionality and statistical significance of the relationship.

Figure 12. *Scatterplot of Correlation Between FSSB and Theory Y Management Style*



Examination of Figure 12 indicates a slight positive relationship between FSSB and theory Y management style, such that as enactment of FSSBs increases, theory Y management style increases. However, there are several outliers in the plot, indicating that the relationship should be interpreted with caution. The correlation corroborates the

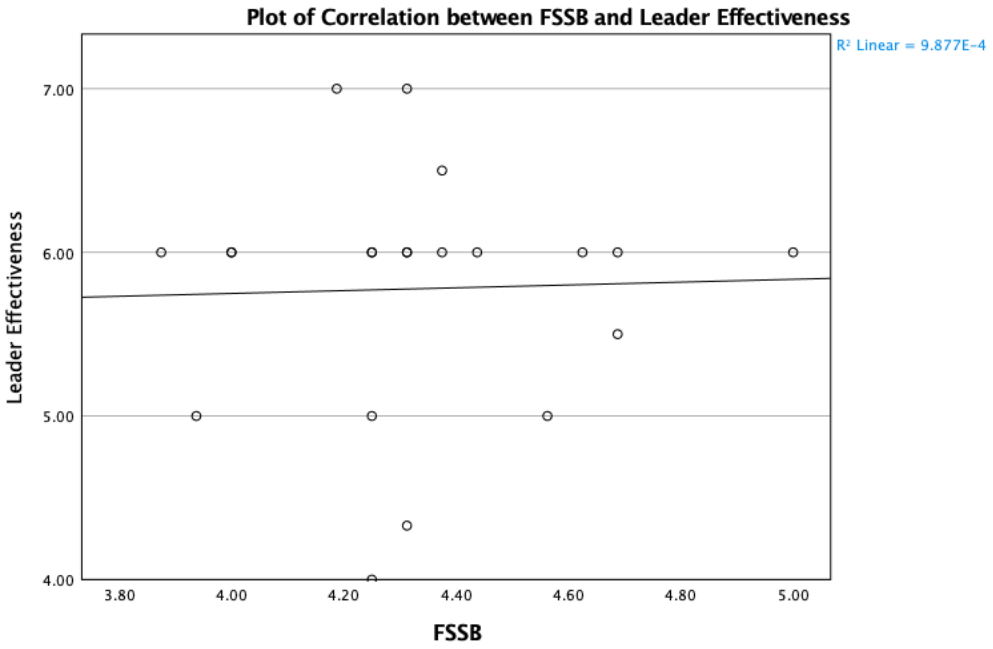
trending negative relationship though the relationship is weak and not statistically significant ($r = .10$, $p > .05$). Overall, the results do not support hypothesis IV.

Research Question I

Although a manager's direct reports' ratings of their behaviors are important and as observed in early analysis have relation to family-supportive supervisor behaviors and family-supportive climate, a manager's boss' perceptions are also critical to understand as a person's boss, not their direct reports, is most often responsible for making job-related decisions. Thus, in order to explore boss' perceptions, this research asked the question: what is the relationship between a leader's self-reported use of FSSBs and their supervisor's rating of their leadership effectiveness?

To explore this question, the correlation between enacted FSSBs and boss' ratings of leader effectiveness was examined. The correlation was nearing zero and not significant, $r = .03$, $p > .05$. This suggests that there is little to no relationship between boss' ratings of a leader's effectiveness and the leader's enactment of FSSBs. The scatterplot (in Figure 13) corroborates this as there does not appear to be a trending visual relationship between FSSBs and leader effectiveness ratings.

Figure 13. *Scatterplot for Correlation between FSSB and Leader Effectiveness*



Research Question II

The literature and theory on leadership often looks beyond specific behaviors to assess a person's overall leadership style. For instance, Anderson and Sun (2017) proposed looking beyond the dominant charismatic/transformational and transactional leadership style frameworks to explore new styles, such as pragmatic leadership and authentic leadership. While this research does not plan to build upon this review, it will explore if there are certain behavioral or stylistic tendencies that are more strongly predictive of a supervisor's use of FSSBs.

It was originally proposed that, in order to explore this question, the data would be separated into two groups – that is, those reporting to enacting more FSSBs and those reporting to enacting fewer FSSBs. However, in the data collected, there is minimal variation in the scale scores for this measure (M = 4.33, SD = .27). This, combined with a

low sample size, severely limits the power available to detect a significant difference between groups. As such, a different analysis strategy was utilized.

Specifically, to explore this research question, a series of Pearson correlations were run using the full range of direct report's behavioral data captured in the online 360 assessment. That is, Pearson correlations were run using all twenty-two leadership behaviors on the LEA360 and the mean FSSB score for each participant. Direct report perceptions of their boss, rather than self, peer, or boss ratings, were utilized as we were most interested in a direct report's perception and experience of their direct supervisor's style. That is, direct reports experience a leader's style in how they set expectations, express empathy and understanding, and make decisions regarding how to delegate work, provide feedback, and build the team. Thus, while peer and boss ratings are important in their own right, it follows that direct report's will be in the best position to understand and thereby, evaluate their boss' style in a 360 assessment.

Table 5 shows sample size, means, standard deviations, and correlations for the significant relationships that emerged in this exploratory analysis. All correlations for the 22 leadership behaviors and FSSBs are located in Appendix H and means, standard deviations, and ranges for each behavior can be found in Appendix I. Two behaviors emerged as significantly correlated with enactment of FSSBs. Specifically, enactment of FSSBs was significantly negatively correlated with direct report ratings of their boss' strategic focus ($r = -.47$, $p < .05$) and significantly positively correlated with direct reports ratings of their boss' outgoing nature ($r = .46$, $p < .05$).

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Statistically Significant Relationships for Research Question II

Variable		*n*	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3
1	FSSBs	21	4.33	0.27	–		
2	Strategic	21	61.67	23.58	-.47*	–	
3	Outgoing	21	62.38	20.10	.46*	-.40	–

Note. * = $p < .05$

Discussion

The current research examined the leadership behaviors and characteristics that predict enactment of family-supportive supervisor behaviors with the goals of advancing academic and applied insight into how organizations can provide support for a broader array of employees. The results of this study provide insight into areas to further explore and examine in order to better understand how managers can be trained and developed to build family-supportive climates.

Straub (2012) provided a multilevel conceptual framework for understanding the antecedents and consequences of family-supportive supervisor behavior. Specifically, although the literature supports positive outcomes for employees who work for family-supportive supervisors, the author notes a dearth of attention focused on understanding the behaviors and managerial characteristics that trigger FSSBs. This research provides insight into several individual-level predictors of managers' inclination to enact FSSBs, including social identification, personal preferences, and practiced leadership behaviors.

A supervisor's personal need for structure (i.e., PNS), for example, emerged as positively related to their tendency to enact family-supportive supervisor behaviors, such that higher PNS was related to a lesser likelihood of enacting FSSBs. The specific management behaviors underlying PNS include a stronger emphasis on maintaining the status quo, sticking with the "basics," and creating order and consistency in one's environment. Newsom (1993) found that individuals' differences in PNS tend to result in different behaviors, such that those with a stronger PNS may organize social and nonsocial information in less complex ways. Utilizing flexible working arrangements and engaging in behavior that supports creative work-family management behaviors

inherently increases the complexity that a manager has to track and navigate. As such, it makes intuitive sense that managers who support flexible, family-friendly workplaces may need to be more innovative, future-focused, and willing to test out and adopt new policies and ways of working. Thus, better understanding and bringing awareness to the importance of these behaviors may be a fruitful avenue for encouraging greater enactment of FSSBs.

In addition, managers whose direct reports rated them as more outgoing were more inclined to endorse FSSBs. The "outgoing" dimension on the LEA360 is characterized by one's emphasis on establishing interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Those who are rated higher on this behavior by their colleagues tend to be socially skilled, approachable, and take initiative to reach out to people and get to know them on a personal level. Thus, this research provides evidence that managers who take the time to understand their employees on a deeper level and develop more informal relationships will be more likely to express family-specific support. This is consistent with research indicating that employees who work for more transformational leaders perceive higher levels of family-supportiveness (Kossek et al., 2013; Wang & Walubwa, 2007). Outgoing behaviors may relate to the individualized consideration element of transformational leadership, which research suggests will foster positive emotions and inspire commitment from employees (Braun & Peus, 2018). Training and leadership development efforts, then, could help managers build interpersonal skills and offer strategies and recommendations for how to get to know employees on an individual level through proactively having conservations, keeping a pulse on employee needs and goals, and understanding how they manage their work and personal lives. Although this

research is preliminary and only offers insight into trending relationships, these efforts may support managers' capacity to offer family-specific support as well.

Further, managers whose direct reports rated them as less strategic and more focused on day-to-day operations and actions were more inclined to endorse enacting FSSBs. Lower scores on the "strategic" dimension of the 360-tool used in this research are characterized by emphasizing action and intuition over contemplation and objective analysis. Interestingly, while being strategic is often labeled as a critical management skill (Carter & Greer, 2013), in this research, managers described as less strategic were more inclined to endorse providing family-specific support. This may be due to the often-emergent nature of family-support needs (e.g., waking up to a sick child, snow days, ill family member) and the need for supervisors to provide flexibility during these unplanned instances. As such, training and development efforts focused on this behavior may help leaders determine how to strike a balance between offering actionable and tactical support and engaging in longer term planning and analysis.

A manager's reported enactment of FSSBs was not significantly related to their supervisor's evaluation of their leadership effectiveness. This suggests that while receiving family-specific support may be highly valuable for employees and even supervisors themselves, it may not be considered in overall evaluations of performance. To the latter point, recent evidence indicates that when employees experience a lack of family-specific support from their supervisors, it can trigger negative employee and colleague responses, which may result in supervisors feeling ostracized. The ostracism can then negatively influence a supervisor's subjective well-being (Walsh, Matthews, Toumbeva, Kabat-Farr, Philbrick, & Pavisic, 2019). This dynamic is interesting in that

while a lack of FSSBs may not ultimately impact a manager's performance evaluation, it certainly can impact other important workplace outcomes. As such, to drive adoption of family-supportive supervision styles, organizations may need to incorporate these behaviors into reward and incentive systems (e.g., promotions, bonuses) to build accountability for these behaviors and signal their importance and value. Tying family-specific support mechanisms to an organization's overall strategy may be another viable approach, as this would signal support from top management and executives.

Social identification did not emerge as having a significant impact on enactment of family-specific supervisor support behaviors. That is, this study did not provide evidence for the hypothesis that managers who had experienced work-family conflict and taken on the bulk of caregiving responsibilities for their families would be more likely to exhibit FSSBs. There are likely several explanations for this finding. First, this sample is unique in that all participants reported to utilizing flexible working arrangements in their careers and there was generally strong understanding of what FWA are and how they are utilized. As such, there was limited variability in the population's understanding of FWA and their value and the operationalization of the social identification variable was impacted. Two elements of social identification – experience of work-family conflict and caregiving duties – also showed less variability, which generally limits the insight that can be generated using this dataset. Further research should explore how socially identifying with employees who experience work-family challenges influences supervisors' likelihood of engaging in family-supportive supervisor behaviors.

Lastly, direct report perceptions of managerial trust and Theory Y style were not found to be related to enactment of FSSBs. There are likely many reasons why significant

relationships were not observed here. Trust, in particular, is not a well-defined construct and, as a result, can be difficult to measure. This study utilized several proxies for assessing trust (i.e., behaviors related to open communication and employee voice), and it is possible that this was problematic from a measurement perspective. For instance, some research on trust (Ellis & Shockley-Zalabak, 2001) focuses on integrity and predictability as managerial behaviors that engender trust. Leveraging the Managerial Trustworthy Behaviors scale (MTB; Hubbell & Chory-Assad, 2005) for future research may be a better approach from a measurement perspective.

Strengths and Limitations

This study's strengths lie in the fact that data were collected from currently working, relatively experienced leaders at two different points in time. Collecting organizational data, rather than using an undergraduate student subject pool or collecting through online means, typically allows for better insight into how theoretical concepts play out within the complexities of organizational life. The institution itself is a large, complex, and matrixed organization that has a rather conservative culture, such that change happens very slowly and must be approved at multiple leadership levels. The organization is also structured hierarchically such that there are many layers of leadership and employees tend to have long organizational tenure, often choosing to remain with the organization in order to move into successively higher leadership roles. Collecting data from one organization only is another strength of this study, as it allows for direct application of the study's findings to this given context. Moreover, the demographics of the sample itself proved to be valuable, as the majority of participants have children, have

utilized FWA in their careers, and are in leadership roles managing teams of people. This indicates that the findings may be more generalizable to other organizational contexts.

At the same time, this data collection approach proved challenging due to having to work against a tight deadline, several organizational constraints, and soliciting participation from incredibly busy professionals. This led to one of the study's primary limitations, which is a small sample size. A larger sample size would have provided the statistical power needed to detect small effects and significant relationships among study variables. A larger sample size would have also provided greater flexibility to run more powerful analyses, such as multiple regression.

Lastly, utilizing self-report data for the FSSBs measure served as a limitation, as collecting data from direct reports on their manager's enactment of family-supportive supervisor styles would have allowed for verifiability of FSSBs (i.e., determining whether supervisors indeed lead with a family-supportive approach versus espousing the behaviors). That said, leveraging the multi-rater assessment data served to offset this limitation, as data included multiple behavioral ratings from various sources. For future studies, it will be important to leverage supervisor-subordinate dyads and measure self-reported use of FSSBs, as well as a subordinates' experience of FSSBs. It will be interesting and useful to examine if there is alignment here and identify gaps between how supervisors report to behaving *versus* how their subordinates experience their leadership style.

Conclusion and Future Directions

Overall, this study provided helpful insight that will advance understanding of the management characteristics and behaviors that precede enactment of family-supportive

supervisor behaviors. This has implications for researchers and practitioners looking to study and develop organizational interventions that will promote the development of family-friendly organizational cultures. This research and future studies may be particularly relevant in our current context as we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has swiftly upended the professional and personal lives of employees across the United States and the world, which has resulted in massive disruption, furloughs, and lay-offs across many industries (Tozzi, 2020). Furthermore, for those who have remained employed, many have found themselves working remotely for the first time, while also managing increasing and changing caregiving and family responsibilities (e.g., e-learning for young children; lack of access to eldercare options). The pandemic has exposed the reliance working parents and caregivers have on schools, daycare and childcare services, and other social institutions which provide incredibly valuable and important services. These resources provide caregivers with critical social and instrumental support. Without them, caregivers have had to quickly adapt and shift to manage responsibilities individually, without any extra support due to social distancing guidelines and health threats related to COVID. For those working out of their homes, boundaries (i.e., between work and home) have increasingly blurred and in some ways, become nearly non-existent (Fisher et al., 2020). It has been, without a doubt, the largest work-from-home experiment we have experienced, and for many, it has completely uprooted the structures and routines traditionally utilized to manage personal and professional demands.

This has resulted in a considerable amount of stress on working Americans and their families. For instance, the American Psychological Association conducted a Harris

Poll surveying 3,013 adults age 18+ who reside in the United States and summarized their findings in a report entitled Stress in America™ 2020. This research has found that Americans, and particularly working parents, are reporting higher levels of stress in 2020 compared to recent years. In fact, 70% reported that work is a significant source of stress in their lives, which is higher than the proportion of adults who cited this as a stressor in the 2019 survey (64%) (APA, 2020). And, 74% and 71%, respectively, indicated that disrupted routines and managing distance/online learning for their children result in significant stress as well.

One can anticipate that, with this increased stress and rapid change, the conflicts between work and family have increased as well. In fact, given the way boundaries have blurred (i.e., for many, work *is* home and home *is* work), the very concept of work-family conflict is likely to evolve and change as well. For instance, recent research indicates that employees were more likely to experience negative transitions from pre- to during-COVID when they had high work-family segmentation preferences (i.e., preferred to keep the two domains separated with clear boundaries) and if they had less compassionate supervisors. These negative transitions were then associated with lower job satisfaction, higher intentions to turnover, and lower job performance (Vaziri, Casper, Wayne, & Matthews, 2020).

Thus, understanding how supervisors can positively support and guide their employees to balance these multiple, blurring life domains may prove more important than ever. Some speculate that a “new normal” will include much higher levels of flexible work and more remote jobs. In fact, though many employees have experienced increased stress through the pandemic, some employees have found enrichment and value

in their changing pace of work life. For example, anecdotally, some employees report to experiencing a "slower pace" of life – not characterized by frequent travel, long commutes, or stressful office environments. Thus, we should anticipate that, when the threat of COVID-19 begins to lessen, many employees may seek to retain some of the newer elements of their lifestyle; thus, again changing the work-family nexus. It will be imperative, then, for organizations, leadership, and academics to continue exploring how to make this "new normal" work. Central to this will be better understanding how to effectively leverage flexible working arrangements, and training supervisors to engage in FSSBs in remote contexts. While speculative, I would argue that FSSB may be even more critical in a post-pandemic world as leaders will need to continually adapt and personally explore their individual employee's needs and preferences.

Additionally, the very definition of family-supportive supervisor behavior may need to evolve to include behaviors that are critical for demonstrating support for employees in remote, virtual contexts. For example, future research could explore how the different dimensions of FSSBs (e.g., creative work-family management, emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling) are experienced in a remote context where face-to-face interaction is limited or non-existent. For instance, given the importance of compassionate leadership through COVID (Fisher et al., 2020), it may be interesting to explore how employees experience compassion through virtual communication modes, and in turn, how supervisors can engage in behaviors that convey more compassion for their teams and colleagues.

Lastly, future research can explore how the enactment of FSSBs are influenced by other antecedents and organizational variables, such as organizational climate and

culture, top management openness to flexible working cultures, and organizational structure. One could speculate that organizations with flatter, more nimble and fast-moving cultures (e.g., start-ups; agile organizations) may be more inclined to have flexible cultures where family-specific support is encouraged and valued; whereas, larger, more bureaucratic and slower moving organizations may require more intentional, strategic change initiatives to adopt flexible working cultures and ultimately thrive in the post-pandemic world.. In addition, it will be beneficial to explore how FSSBs can be integrated into strategic human resource management systems such that they can be incentivized, rewarded, and recognized. Doing so will ensure that employees and supervisors across levels understand and value the impact FSSBs can have on employee well-being, satisfaction, retention, and performance.

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Appendix A. Recruitment Email to Participants from Internal Stakeholder

Hi all,

I hope all is well. I am asking for your participation in an upcoming research collaboration with Stefanie Mockler – a consultant at Vantage Leadership Consulting and doctoral candidate at DePaul University.

Stefanie is passionate about helping HR practitioners, leaders, and organizations create workspaces that lead to positive outcomes for employees and the companies themselves. As such, she would like to partner with us to more deeply understand how different leadership styles, backgrounds, and behaviors impact the creation of work environments.

You have been selected as a research participant given your completion of the Leadership Effectiveness Analysis 360 survey in the past several years. This data is a rich source of insight but will need to be supplemented with some additional information which Stefanie hopes to collect through sending you a brief online survey.

You will receive a follow-up email directly from Stefanie with additional detail regarding the research as well as a link to complete the survey.

This project is directed at identifying effective practices NOT identifying individuals. As such, all names will be removed, and participant data will be de-identified before analysis and reporting and will be used strictly for research and learning purposes. Individual responses will not be shared with me or anyone at the organization.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to take part, your data will not be linked to you (i.e., not linked to your name; analyzed in aggregate form).

While Stefanie can answer any questions you may have, please let me know if you have concerns.

Thanks,
**Internal Stakeholder – Name Removed for Privacy*

Appendix B. Follow-up Recruitment Email to Participants from Principal Investigator

Hi <insert participant name>,

I hope all is well. In follow up to **Internal Stakeholder – Name Removed for Privacy* email, I am asking for your participation in a research study.

As a reminder: you have been selected as a research participant given your completion of the Leadership Effectiveness Analysis 360 survey in the past several years. This data is a rich source of insight but will need to be supplemented with some additional information which I hope to gather through a brief (10-15 minute) survey.

Your participation in this study is important as findings can inform broader insight into effective workplace practices and may help with developing leadership training and coaching resources for new and seasoned leaders.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary, and should you choose to participate, you will have the option of skipping questions you wish not to answer.

You will receive additional detail on the first page of the survey link, as well. Click here to begin: <*insert Qualtrics link*>

If possible, we ask that you complete this by <*insert date that is 1.5 weeks from data email is sent*>.

This project is directed at identifying effective workplace practices NOT identifying individuals. As such, after you complete this survey, your name will be removed and your data will be de-identified before analysis and reporting. This research will be used strictly for research and learning purposes and your individual responses will not be shared with anyone at the organization.

Please let me know what questions you have; and thanks in advance for your time – I recognize how valuable each minute is and greatly appreciate your consideration to participate.

Thank you,
Stefanie

Appendix C. Reminder Email to Participants

Hi <insert participant name>,

I hope all is well. I am reaching out with a brief reminder email inviting your participation in a research study.

If you wish to participate, you may click on the survey link here: <insert Qualtrics link>

If possible, we ask that you complete this survey by <insert relevant data that is 1.5 weeks out from reminder email being sent>

As a reminder: you have been selected as a research participant given your completion of the Leadership Effectiveness Analysis 360 survey in the past several years. This data is a rich source of insight but will need to be supplemented with some additional information which I hope to gather through a brief (10-15 minute) survey.

Your participation in this study is important as findings can inform broader insight into effective workplace practices and may help with developing leadership training and coaching resources for new and seasoned leaders.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary, and should you choose to participate, you will have the option of skipping questions you wish not to answer.

This project is directed at identifying effective workplace practices NOT identifying individuals. As such, after you complete this survey, your name will be removed and your data will be de-identified before analysis and reporting. This research will be used strictly for research and learning purposes and your individual responses will not be shared with anyone at the organization.

Please let me know what questions you have; and thanks in advance for your time – I recognize how valuable each minute is and greatly appreciate your consideration to participate.

Thank you,
Stefanie

Appendix D. Information Sheet

Building Flexible Workplaces: The Link Between Leadership Styles and Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors

Principal Investigator: Stefanie Mockler, M.A. – Graduate Student in the Department of Psychology/College of Science and Health

Institution: DePaul University, USA

Faculty Advisor: Alice Stuhlmacher, Ph.D., Psychology Department Chair

We are conducting a research study because we are trying to learn more about how to create work environments that support employees with diverse skills, backgrounds and work styles.

We are asking you to be in the research because you are employed at the [redacted] and you participated in a leadership development program where you completed an online 360 assessment for development purposes in the last 5 years.

All interactions will be conducted via email with the Primary Investigator.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to fill out a brief online survey (i.e., roughly 10 minutes). The survey will include questions about your agreement with several statements related to work-family integration, conflict, and organizational culture. We will also collect some personal information about you such as whether you have children and your relationship status. If there is a question you do not want to answer, you may skip it by endorsing – "NA – I do not wish to answer."

As part of this research, we will also ask for your agreement to use your archival 360 data. All data will be de-identified (i.e., removing names) once the collection is complete. The study should take about 10 minutes to complete.

Research data collected from you will be collected in an identifiable way and then be de-identified later.

That is, when you first complete the survey, it will be linked to you with your name., and for a brief period of time, it is possible to link this information to you. However, once the survey data collection is complete (i.e., roughly 1 month after we ask for your participation), we will remove your name from all data. Specifically, we will you're your name to match your new data with existing 360 data; then, we will immediately remove your name from the data and delete the identifiable dataset. As such, this will effectively remove your name from the dataset. All data will be analyzed and used in this de-identified form. We have also put some protections in place, such as storing the

information in a secured computer under password protection and with encrypted files in order to provide additional protection. The data will be kept for an undetermined period of time in the de-identified way, since there should be no risk to you should someone gain access to the data.

Your participation is voluntary, which means you can choose not to participate. There will be no negative consequences if you decide not to participate or change your mind later after you begin the study.

Your decision whether or not to be in the research will not affect anything related to your job or role at the Federal Reserve; in fact, no information will be shared indicating who chose to participate.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study or you want to get additional information or provide input about this research, please contact the primary investigator, Stefanie Mockler at 219-508-6353 or by email at smockler@depaul.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Susan Loess-Perez, DePaul University's Director of Research Compliance, in the Office of Research Services at 312-362-7593 or by email at sloesspe@depaul.edu. You may also contact DePaul's Office of Research Services if:

· Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.

· You cannot reach the research team.

· You want to talk to someone besides the research team.

You may print this information for your records.

By completing the survey, you are indicating your agreement to be in the research. Please click the "next" button below to continue.

Appendix E. Follow-Up Survey Questions

1. Please provide your first and last name.

2. How many years have you worked with the [redacted]? (sliding scale from 0-100)

3. How many direct reports do you have? (sliding scale from 0-100)

Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB)

4. On a scale of 1-5 (1= strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree), to what extent do you agree with the following statements (*scale adapted from Hammer et al., 2013*)
    a. I believe flexible working options are valuable.
    b. I understand how flexible work options work.
    c. Employees who work regular hours in the office get more done than those who work irregular office hours.
    d. Traditional workers (e.g., in-office, regular hours) are more reliable than non-traditional workers (e.g., those who work from home; use flexible working options).
    e. It's important for managers and their employees to talk openly about conflict between work and non-work.
    f. I acknowledge that others have obligations as a family member.
    g. I organize the work on my team to jointly benefit the employee and the company.
    h. Middle managers and executives in this organization are sympathetic toward employees' childcare responsibilities.
    i. In the event of a conflict, I am understanding when employees have to put their family first.
    j. In this organization employees are encouraged to strike a balance between their work and family lives.
    k. Middle managers and executives in this organization are sympathetic toward employees' elder care responsibilities.
    l. This organization is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for family reasons.
    m. In this organization it is generally okay to talk about one's family at work.
    n. In this organization employees can easily balance their work and family lives.
    o. This organization encourages employees to set limits on where work stops, and home life begins.
    p. In this organization it is very hard to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters.

5. What is your age? (numerical response)

6. How many children (including stepchildren or adopted children) do you have living in the home? For this question, please only include children under the age of 18.

7. Do you have other dependents (e.g., elderly parents) that you're responsible for?
    a. Yes/No
    b. If yes, please describe who you provide care for.

8. What percentage of caregiving responsibilities do you cover for your family? (sliding scale from 0-100)

9. Do you have a live-in spouse or relationship? (yes, no)

10. If yes, does your partner work as well? (yes, no)

11. What percentage of caregiving responsibilities does your spouse or partner cover for the family? (sliding scale from 0-100)

12. Have you utilized flexible working options in your career?
    a. Yes
    b. No

13. If yes, which flexible working options have you utilized? Please check all that apply.
    a. Flextime (e.g., working non-traditional hours)
    b. Flexplace (e.g., working from locations other than the office)
    c. Condensed work week
    d. Other, please specify:

14. To what extent have you experienced conflict between your work and personal lives? (1-7 scale where 1 = very little conflict and 7 = a great deal of conflict).

15. To what extent have you experienced role enhancement (i.e., positive spillover between your work and family roles) between your work and personal lives? (1-7 scale where 1 = very little enhancement and 7 = a great deal of enhancement).

Appendix F. Utilized LEA360 Behaviors and Sample Items

Brief descriptions of each of the nine LEA behaviors utilized in this research are provided below, along with some sample items from the self and observer surveys. For detailed information on the theoretical underpinnings and developmental implications of each of these sets, see Mahoney (1993).

Behavior	*Definition*	*Sample Item (Rater)*
Conservative	Studying problems in light of past practices to ensure predictability, reinforce the status quo and minimize risk.	Others are likely to notice that I respect the lessons of the past. (Self)
Innovative	Feeling comfortable in fast changing environments; being willing to take risks and to consider new and untested approaches.	This person is an innovative thinker. (Observer)
Structuring	Adopting a systematic and organized approach; preferring to work in a precise, methodical manner; developing and utilizing guidelines and procedures.	When working on an important assignment, he/she emphasizes structured, systematic approaches. (Observer)
Communication	Stating clearly what you want and expect from others; clearly expressing your thoughts and ideas; maintaining a precise and constant flow of information.	
Control	Adopting an approach in which you take nothing for granted, set deadlines for certain actions and are persistent in monitoring the progress of activities to ensure that they are completed on schedule.	This person makes sure things get done on time. (Observer)
Dominant	Pushing vigorously to achieve results through an approach which is forceful, assertive and competitive.	I believe in being highly competitive. (Self)
Cooperation	Accommodating the needs and interests of others by being willing to defer performance on your own objectives in order to assist colleagues with theirs.	
Consensual	Valuing the ideas and opinions of others and collecting their input	

	as part of your decision-making process.	
Empathy	Demonstrating an active concern for people and their needs by forming close and supportive relationships with others.	People are likely to be impressed by his/her genuine interest in them. (Observer)

Appendix G. Sample LEA360 Question

Under the MOST column, you would circle:

- 5 if the statement is especially characteristic of you, OR
- 4 if the statement is the most like you of the three choices but you do not feel strongly about it.

Under the NEXT column, you would circle:

- 3 if the statement is a reasonably accurate description of your approach, OR
- 2 if the statement is simply the better of the two less appealing choices.

	MOST		NEXT	
In supervising people, I am				
a. tactful	(5)	4	3	2
b. demanding	5	4	3	2
c. easy to please	5	4	3	(2)

Appendix H. All LEA360 Behavior Correlations for Research QII

	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1	Conservative	--																						
2	Innovative	-.44*	--																					
3	Technical	0.08	0.14	--																				
4	Self	-0.26	0.35	0.11	--																			
5	Strategic	0.36	0.2	0.19	-0.18	--																		
6	Persuasive	-.55*	.60**	-0.04	0.17	0.15	--																	
7	Outgoing	-0.41	0.05	-0.19	-0.25	-0.4	0.28	--																
8	Excitement	-.70**	0.22	-0.24	0.19	-0.33	0.42	0.43	--															
9	Restraint	.48**	-0.16	0.32	-0.32	0.36	-0.19	0.07	-.60**	--														
10	Structuring	.50*	-0.31	-0.04	-0.31	0.25	-.57**	-.53**	-.46**	-0.02	--													
11	Tactical	-0.38	-0.03	0.01	0.36	-0.06	0.18	-0.26	0.37	-.44**	0.13	--												
12	Communication	-0.11	0.11	0.18	-0.25	.45*	0.21	-0.2	-0.06	0.03	0.17	0.14	--											
13	Delegation	-0.07	-0.23	-.55*	-0.33	0.09	0.1	0.28	0.25	0.01	-0.02	-0.13	0.15	--										
14	Control	0.25	-0.3	-0.02	0.06	-0.15	-.51**	-.63**	-0.4	-0.35	.52**	0.21	-0.02	-0.42	--									
15	Feedback	-.60**	0.23	-0.31	.48*	-.50*	0.25	-0.06	.47**	-.81**	-0.16	0.3	0.02	-0.04	0.28	--								
16	MgmtFocus	-.50*	0.36	-0.24	.48*	-0.09	.56**	-0.08	0.36	-.70**	-0.26	0.34	0.15	-0.02	0.17	.66**	--							
17	Dominant	-0.38	0.23	-0.09	.61**	-0.34	0.26	-0.26	0.17	-.74**	-0.11	0.38	-0.09	-0.35	.51**	.74**	.84**	--						
18	Production	-0.18	-0.04	-0.13	0.32	-0.2	-0.11	-0.29	0.06	-.56**	0.07	0.21	-0.13	-0.41	.68**	.50**	.57**	.71**	--					
19	Cooperation	.65**	-0.43	0.35	-0.36	0.23	-.52**	0.04	-0.42	.73**	0.25	-0.35	-0.03	0.07	-0.23	-.70**	-.87**	-.81**	-.567**	--				
20	Consensual	0.19	-.46**	0.13	-.52*	0.08	-0.37	0.2	-0.05	0.33	0.14	-0.29	0.31	0.36	-0.18	-0.27	-.61**	-.65**	-0.35	.62**	--			
21	Authority	.61**	-.58**	-0.01	-0.34	-0.26	-.63**	0.03	-0.36	0.34	0.28	-0.41	-.55**	-0.03	0.18	-0.4	-.61**	-0.34	-0.08	.56**	0.3	--		
22	Empathy	0.21	-0.13	0.11	-.48*	0.08	-0.09	.53**	-0.01	.60**	-0.23	-.60**	-0.09	0.25	-.60**	.53**	-.71**	-.82**	0.57**	.66**	.69**	0.34	--	
23	FSSB	-0.05	-0.12	-0.16	-0.08	-.47*	0.2	.46**	0.09	-0.01	-0.23	0.04	-0.3	-0.08	-0.11	0.01	-0.02	0.08	-0.15	-0.1	0.04	0.27	0.17	--

Note. *$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix I. Sample Size, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Range for all 22 Leadership Behaviors

Variable		*n*	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
1	Conservative	21	56.67	24.72	15.00	95.00
2	Innovative	21	47.38	19.85	10.00	90.00
3	Technical	21	46.67	20.64	15.00	80.00
4	Self	21	51.90	18.81	20.00	80.00
5	Strategic	21	61.67	23.58	15.00	90.00
6	Persuasive	21	54.76	19.46	15.00	90.00
7	Outgoing	21	62.38	20.10	25.00	90.00
8	Excitement	21	56.90	21.18	20.00	90.00
9	Restraint	21	62.38	26.15	10.00	95.00
10	Structuring	21	41.67	18.33	5.00	75.00
11	Tactical	21	61.19	18.70	30.00	95.00
12	Communication	21	54.29	20.08	10.00	85.00
13	Delegation	21	61.19	18.23	30.00	90.00
14	Control	21	51.43	24.65	10.00	95.00
15	Feedback	21	51.90	24.57	10.00	95.00
16	Management Focus	21	52.62	23.54	15.00	95.00
17	Dominant	21	41.43	23.62	15.00	95.00
18	Production	21	47.62	22.17	5.00	95.00
19	Cooperation	21	64.52	22.58	10.00	95.00
20	Consensual	21	67.10	22.10	10.00	99.00
21	Authority	21	56.19	23.97	20.00	95.00
22	Empathy	21	70.14	24.91	10.00	99.00