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# Predictors of Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors: Supervisor Job Stress and Work-Family Climate

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Predictors of Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors:  
Supervisor Job Stress and Work-Family Climate

by

Brittany E. Sale

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Science  
in  
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## **Abstract**

Research indicates that supportive supervision, particularly work-family specific supervision, is key to reducing employees' work-family conflict (Allen, 2001; Eby et al., 2005; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). However, little research has examined the factors that contribute to supervisors' willingness or ability to provide this support. This study examined how supervisor job stress and perceptions of work-family climate influenced employee ratings of Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB) using previously-collected data from a mid-western grocery chain. It was hypothesized that supervisor job stressors would impact FSSB, supervisor perception of work-family climate would impact FSSB, and the interaction of stressors and climate would impact FSSB. None of the hypotheses were supported. Potential explanations and directions for future research are discussed.

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## Predictors of Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors:

### Supervisor Job Stress and Work-Family Climate

#### **Introduction**

The nature of today's work increases stress and strain for many employees. The current workforce economy is defined by increasingly service-based work, competitive and fast paced environments, a shift towards a 24-7 economy, and is increasingly focused on lean production (Galinsky & Swanberg, 1998; Tetrick & Quick, 2003). People are increasingly working odd hours, with more than 14% of full time workers and 36% of part time workers working non-standard schedules (Totterdell, 2005). These facets of American work life have increased employee responsibilities, the cognitive demands placed on employees, and the interdependence among employees, resulting in increased stress that can lead to negative health effects and detrimental organizational outcomes (Tetrick & Quick, 2003; Wall & Jackson, 2005).

The nature of the workforce itself has shifted as well. The number of dual-earner couples, working mothers with young children, working single parents, and the amount of family-care responsibilities workers have has increased substantially in the past 30 years (Allen, 2001; Bond et al., 1998; Hammer, Colton, Caubet, & Brockwood, 2002; Kossek & Lambert, 2005, Neal & Hammer, 2007; US Census Bureau, 2001). For example, in 2000, 61% of married women over the age of 15 were participating in the workforce, compared to 41% in 1970 (US Census Bureau, 2001). Additionally, the workload of most married couples approximates three full-time jobs (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). Many single parents are responsible both for domestic labor tasks and providing

income for their family, resulting in an equivalent of two full-time jobs (Bellavia & Frone, 2005; Bianchi & Raley, 2003). The combination of the changing nature of work and the changing nature of the worker has increased the likelihood that employees have significant household responsibilities in addition to substantial work-related responsibilities (Allen, 2001; Bond et al., 1998).

The conflict between these work and family demands result in what researchers call work-family conflict, or “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). Work-family conflict can occur in two directions: work can interfere with family life (work-to-family conflict) or family can interfere with work life (family-to-work conflict) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; LaPierre et al., 2008). While data on the prevalence of work-family conflict are difficult to come by, Bellavia and Frone (2005) examined multiple national surveys and concluded that, somewhere between 25-50% of the U.S. population aged 25 to 54 that works at least half-time and has some immediate family at home experiences, work-to-family conflict. The same authors reported that about 10-14% of the same group experiences family-to-work conflict.

The prevalence of work-family conflict and its negative consequences for both the individual and the organization, as discussed in subsequent paragraphs, highlights the need to understand what can be done to ameliorate its negative effects. This research addresses those concerns by focusing on what impacts key factors that have been linked to reduced work-family conflict, particularly having a supportive supervisor. In order to



provide further background information for this research, the following section reviews the consequences and predictors of work-family conflict

### **Consequences and Predictors of Work-Family Conflict**

As Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) suggest in their meta-analysis of work-family conflict and its consequences, “Work-family conflict has dysfunctional and socially costly effects on individual work life, home life, and general well-being and health” (p. 301). Another meta-analysis confirmed that stressors specific to either the work or family domain are related to satisfaction outside of those domains (Ford et al., 2007), highlighting the importance of researching this phenomenon. For example, problems at home can result in work-related outcomes such as reduced job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2000; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005), an example of family-to-work conflict. Work-to-family conflict can occur when work factors negatively impact life outside of work, such as reduced life satisfaction (Allen et al., 2005; Eby et al. 2004). Overall, work-family conflict can negatively impact the individual, the family, and the organization (Allen et al., 2000; Bellavia & Frone, 2005). The impact on the individual includes both lower general mental health and physical health, (Grzywacz, 2000), greater psychological distress (Bruke & Greenglass, 1999; Grzywacz, 2000), lower life satisfaction (Allen et al., 2000; Perrewé, Hochwarter, & Kiewitz, 1999), increased depressive symptoms (Allen et al., 2000; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003), increased alcohol consumption (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003), increased substance abuse (Frone et al., 2007), poorer overall physical health (Frone et al., 1996; Grzywacz, 2000), multiple chronic health problems

(Grzywacz, 2000), increased depression (Allen et al., 2000; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), and greater hypertension and/or high cholesterol (Landisbergis et al., 2001).

These negative effects on the individual contribute to problems in family life (Allen et al., 2000; Adams & Kacmar, 2000; Carlson & Kacmar, 2000) as well as numerous negative organizational outcomes. Negative organizational outcomes include reduced job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2000; Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007; Grandey, Corderio, Bryanne, & Crouter, 2005), higher turnover and greater turnover intentions (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001), greater care-related absences (Vaananen et al., 2008), lower commitment to organizations and careers (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), and lower work performance and attitudes (Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). The negative effects of work-family conflict highlights the need for research such as this to better understand what can be done to address these issues.

Predictors of work-family conflict include work domain predictors, family domain predictors, and individual differences (Eby et al., 2005). Important work-related predictors include having more conflict, pressure, and stress at work (Byron, 2005; Eby et al., 2005; Fox & Dwyer, 1999), occupation (Dierdorff & Ellington, 2008), schedule or work routine unpredictability or odd hours (Eby et al., 2005; Fox & Dwyer, 1999), and higher demands, work-role requirements, or time commitments to work (Eby et al., 2005; Dierdorff & Ellington, 2008; Parasurman & Simmers, 2001; Yang, Chen, Choi, & Zou, 2000). Family-domain predictors of work-family conflict include having more children living at home (Behson, 2002; Byron, 2005, Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), having spousal or family tension or disagreements (Fox & Dwyer, 1999), being highly involved in

family life or have greater time demands placed on them by family (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999; Parasurman & Simmers, 2001), and having less family support (Eby et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Individual differences that predict work-family conflict include Type A personality (Eby et al., 2005; Carlson, 1999), the personality trait of neuroticism (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), attachment style (Eby et al., 2005; Sumer & Knight, 2001), and to some extent, gender (Byron 2005).

Increased awareness of work-family conflict and how it negatively affects work life has encouraged both researchers and organizations to consider what can be done to reduce work-family conflict or limit its negative effects. Understanding what can be done to reduce work-family conflict and support those strategies is key to addressing this issue, which impacts many workers and organizations. One strategy on the part of organizations has been to adopt formal family supportive policies in order to help employees cope with competing demands (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2005; Casper & Buffardi, 2004; Eby et al., 2005). However, research indicates that the availability of formal workplace supports such as work-life benefits does not necessarily equate to the use of those benefits (Casper & Buffardi, 2004; Behson, 2005). Even when benefits are available, they are often underutilized (Kossek, 2005; Kossek & Distelberg, 2009).

Recent research indicates that more informal supports, such as supportive supervision, are more effective than formal supports in helping employees cope with work-family conflict as well as influencing the extent to which employees make use of formal supports like family-related benefits and policies (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2005; O'Neill et al., 2009). Supportive supervision and what impacts it is the primary focus of

this research. The following section discusses the importance of supportive supervision in the work-family domain.

### **Supportive Supervision and Work-Family Conflict**

As Weer (2006) suggests, understanding supportive supervision in the work-family domain is critical as many workers rely on supervisors to help address work-family needs. Having a supervisor that is supportive of work and family needs has been shown to predict higher job satisfaction, lower work-family conflict, less stress, and less intent to turnover (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002; Behson, 2005; Eby et al., 2005; O'Neill et al., 2009; Shafiro, 2004; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). More recently, researchers have identified specific behaviors supervisors can engage in that support employees work and family lives, called Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB) (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner & Zimmerman, in press; Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009; Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman, & Daniels, 2007). A quasi-experimental intervention aimed at increasing FSSB through supervisor training found that employees who experienced higher work to family conflict prior to the intervention experienced positive changes in job satisfaction, physical health, and turnover intentions after their supervisors had been trained in FSSB (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, & Zimmerman, in press).

As a result of this increased knowledge, numerous researchers have called for encouraging or training supervisors to be more supportive of employees' work and family roles in order to help employees cope with work-family conflict, thus decreasing negative personal and organizational consequences (Maitland, 1998; Milliken, Martins, &

Morgan, 1998; Regan, 1994). However, training supervisors on how to engage in FSSB is only part of the puzzle. Supervisors may have or gain the ability to engage in supportive supervision but may choose not to or feel they are unable to do so, perhaps in part due to the stressors or organizational factors they experience themselves. Supervisors do not manage in a vacuum and are subject to the same or similar organizational stressors and pressures as other employees.

In order to encourage supervisors to be more supportive for the benefit of the employees they supervise, we need to know which factors help or hinder supervisors' willingness or ability to support their employees. Understanding what these factors are is integral to maximizing supportive supervision, which research indicates impacts outcomes important to both the individual employee and the organization for which they work. Indeed, Hammer et al. (2009) called for further research to examine what characteristics of supervisors are associated with FSSB.

The limited research that has been conducted on predictors of supportive supervision has primarily focused only on the demographic characteristics of supervisors or employees such as gender and family characteristics (e.g. Gerstein, Moore, Duffey, and Dainas, 1993; Hopkins, 2002; Parker & Allen, 2002). However, little research has examined how supportive supervision is affected by supervisor job stress and organizational characteristics, such as whether the supervisor perceives that the organization is supportive of work-family issues, although numerous studies indicate that both job stress and organizational characteristics can significantly impact work behavior (e.g. Babin & Boles, 1998; Bakker, Van Emmerik, & Riet, 2008; Eby et al., 2005;

Eisenberger, Stinglamber, Vandenberghe, Schuarski, & Rhoades, 2002; Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Fenlason & Beehr, 1994; Grzywacz et al., 2007; Harris, Artis, Walters, & Jane, 2006; Major et al., 2008; Probst, 2004; Rutledge et al., 2008; Shannock & Eisenberger, 2006; Shirom, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008; Tubre & Collins, 2000).

Additionally, most of the research conducted on organizational factors and supportive supervision only examines the issues from the employee perspective. For example, Foley, Linnehan, Greenhaus, and Weer (2006) surveyed employees and found that the extent to which they felt their organization supported work-family issues was related to the extent to which they felt their supervisors were supportive of work-family issues. However, little research has been conducted to examine how the supervisor's perception of organizational variables affects the extent to which the employees they supervise perceive them as being supportive. Work-family scholars have called for research in this area to be conducted beyond the individual level of analysis and to consider a systems level perspective (Eby et al., 2005; Grzywacz, Carlson, Kacmar, & Wayne, 2007; Hammer, Neal, Newson, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005). Such a perspective allows researchers to gain a better understanding of the interaction among complex systems of work and work-related relationships. Multilevel analysis is a useful tool to identify the means through which organizational performance is affected by workers (Grzywacz et al., 2007).

This research attempted to address both the gap in knowledge and the methodological gap by using multilevel modeling to examine how the supervisor's experience of work stress and perception of organizational support for work-family life

affects whether their employees rate them as engaging in FSSB. Because both job stressors and the extent to which employees, including supervisors, feel the organization is supportive of work-family life affects work behavior (e.g. Allen, 2001; Beehr & Glazer, 2005; Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Hammer et al., 2007), job stressors and perceived work-family organizational climate were tested as predictors of employee ratings of FSSB. Perceived work-family climate was also hypothesized to affect the relationship between job stressors and employee ratings of FSSB. The hypothesized model is shown in Figure 1.

The following section reviews background literature on supportive supervision and family-supportive supervisor behaviors.

### **Supportive Supervision Background**

Research on supervisory support is based on social support theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985; House, 1981). In this theory, social support is generally understood as something that maintains or sustains people by promoting adaptive behavior in the face of stressors or health hazards (House; 1981; House, Landis, & Umberson, 1988). Social support may include emotional concern, instrumental assistance, or information (House; 1981; House, et al., 1988). While the basic process of how social support works has yet to be clarified, the theoretical models for social support propose that social support can (a) act as a buffer, limiting the negative effects of a stressor (House, 1981; Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis, & Barling, 2005), or (b) provide people with stability, positive interactions, and relational rewards, which help individuals avoid negative experiences that could result in stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Kelloway et al., 2005). General social

support has been causally linked with well-being and important health and well-being outcomes (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Heaney & Israel, 2008; House, 1981; Smith, Fernengel, Holcraft, & Gerald, 1994).

Social support can emerge from numerous sources. Work-based social support can come from supervisors, co-workers, or the organization (Hammer et al., in press; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, in press). In a meta-analysis of work-based social support, Viswesvaran, Sanchez, and Fisher (1999) found that social support affected work-related stressor-strain relations by (a) directly reducing strains, (b) mitigating perceived stressors, and (c) moderating the stressor-strain relationship. Research also indicates that work-based social support is important in helping employees cope with the specific stressor of work-family conflict. Supervisor support in particular has been identified as a key contributor to numerous important employee and organizational outcomes, including work-family conflict (Allen, 2001; Eby et al., 2005; Frye & Breugh, 2004; Kossek et al., in press; LaPierre & Allen, 2006; Thompson & Ganster, 1999; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Other important outcomes of supervisor support include reduced stress and reduced turnover intent (Behson, 2005), higher levels of work-family positive spillover (Thompson & Prottas, 2005), and greater job satisfaction (Behson, 2005; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Supervisor support may be even more important for low-wage workers, such as the grocery store workers that participated in this study. Bond and Galinsky (2006) found that for low-wage workers in particular, more supervisor support to manage work, personal, and family life was associated with greater job satisfaction and less negative spillover from work to home.



Researchers generally distinguish between two types of supervisor support: emotional support and instrumental support. Instrumental support is conceptualized as offering tangible assistance, such as guidance or knowledge to complete a task, physical aid, helping provide materials or resources for a job, or helping arrange work schedules (Chou & Robert, 2008; Fenlason & Beehr, 1994). Emotional support refers to the act of caring, such as showing concern, respect, and trust or listening sympathetically (Chou & Robert, 2008; Fenlason & Beehr, 1994).

Additionally, supervisor support can be general or domain-specific. While general supervisor support has been shown to be effective in reducing work-family conflict (e.g. Allen, 2001; Kossek et al., in press) researchers have more recently called for general supervisor support and family-specific supervisor support to be studied separately in order to more clearly discern how domain-specific support affects domain-specific outcomes (e.g. Allen, 2001; Hammer et al., 2007; Hammer et al., 2009, Kossek et al., in press). As a recent meta-analysis indicates, the majority of research on supervisor support and work-family conflict has focused on more general measures of supervisor support instead of identifying specific behaviors supervisors can engage in to support their employees' work-family lives (Kossek et al., in press). The same study also indicated that measures that are specific to the family role have stronger relationships with work-family outcomes than general measures of support, further suggesting the need to use domain-specific measures of supervisor support.

**Family-Specific Supportive Supervision.**

One conceptualization of a family-supportive supervisor is a supervisor who empathizes with the employee's need to seek balance between work and family responsibilities (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Along with the theoretical models for how general social support positively affects those who receive it, researchers hypothesize that the particularly positive impact of family-supportive supervision on work-family outcomes is in part due to the fact that supervisors have the discretion to apply and encourage the use of formal policies and practices (Anderson et al., 2002). Indeed, managers are generally responsible for implementing day-to-day policies of the organization (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Additionally, front-line supervisors often have more interaction with the employee than any other representative of the organization (Major, Turner, Fletcher, & Germano, 2008). This combination of being a representative of the organization, enacting the organizational policies and procedures, and having a high amount of interaction with the employees indicates that supervisors have the discretion and availability to be a primary support giver (Major et al., 2008). For example, Scandura and Lankau (1997) found that many alternative work arrangements are the result of negotiations between individuals and managers making as-needed adjustments. Similarly, Rousseau (2005) proposed that the provision of workplace support is in part the result of individual, idiosyncratic deals, or "i-deals", that employees make with their employers or supervisors to adapt work arrangements in order to better meet personal needs, such as negotiating schedule flexibility (Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2008; Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2008; Rousseau, 2004). Similarly, Poelmans

and Beham (2008) posit that supervisors are in a position to choose whether or not to engage in work-family allowance decisions, or the extent to which they apply policies and procedures to employees. This line of research suggests that supervisors have the ability and discretion to provide support to their employees.

Because of the increased recognition of the importance of family-supportive supervision, researchers have called for the identification of specific behaviors in which work-family supportive supervisors engage (Hammer et al., 2007; Hammer et al., 2009). As previously mentioned, Hammer et al., (2009) developed and validated a scale to measure FSSB (Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors). These behaviors expand upon the traditional understanding of social support and apply it to the work-family supervisor domain. Knowledge of specific supportive behaviors supervisors can engage in is important to help identify positive practices, shift negative practices, and develop training and intervention programs. It is also important in order to provide researchers with a better tool with which to conceptualize and measure specific behaviors that supervisors engage in to support their employees' work and family lives.

**Family-supportive supervisor behaviors.** FSSB are defined as “those enacted behaviors exhibited by supervisors that are supportive of families” (Hammer et al., 2007, p. 182). The four dimensions included in the FSSB measure are emotional support, instrumental support, creative work-family management, and role modeling behaviors.

Similar to previous conceptualizations of emotional support, the emotional support component of FSSB focuses on “perceptions that an individual is being cared for, that their feelings are being considered and that they feel comfortable communicating

with the source of support when needed” (Hammer, et al., 2007, p. 188). An example of work-family emotional support is a supervisor lending an empathetic ear and listening to an employee describe the challenge she faces by working full time and being a single mother.

The instrumental support dimension of FSSB refers to more direct, problem-solving types of support such as assisting in tasks, addressing a scheduling conflict, or making changes in how work is done to accommodate work-family needs (Hammer et al., 2007). An example of this type of support is a supervisor engineering a scheduling swap to accommodate the desire of one employee to attend a family event.

The third dimension of FSSB is creative work-family management, which refers to proactive, innovative, and strategic actions “to restructure work to facilitate employee effectiveness on and off the job” (Hammer et al., 2009, p. 842). A supervisor who engages in these behaviors recognizes the need for and finds ways to redesign work or help an employee cope with work-family challenges in other ways while simultaneously considering the need to focus on organizational outcomes (Hammer et al., 2007; Hammer et al., 2009). An example of this type of behavior would be to organize a scheduling swap so an employee can attend to a family issue but ensures that the person he/she asks to swap would not accrue overtime hours if they swapped, thereby being mindful of budgetary issues.

The last dimension of FSSB is role modeling behaviors. A supervisor engaging in these behaviors models supportive behaviors for their own work-family lives, such as not

answering emails at home or choosing to leave work early one day to attend to a family need (Hammer et al., 2009).

The FSSB measure has been shown to add incremental validity to the prediction of important work-family and job outcomes above and beyond more general measures of supervisor support (Hammer et al., 2009), suggesting it is a good tool for examining family-specific supervisor support. Additionally, an intervention aimed at increasing a group of front-line supervisors' FSSB resulted in a reduction of their employee work-to-family conflict as well as positive outcomes for job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and physical health (Hammer et al., in press).

Although research indicates that family-specific support is important for many work-family outcomes, few researchers have examined what factors may impact whether or not a supervisor chooses to engage in these behaviors. Factors such as job stress and the work-family organizational culture may impact whether or not a supervisor engages in these behaviors. The following section review job stress literature and discusses how supervisor job stress might impact FSSB.

### **Job Stress**

Job stress may be seen as “a process representing an individual’s perceptual, psychological, physical, and behavioral responses that are triggered by workplace factors or stressors” (Darr & Johns, 2008, p. 293). A stressor is “the physical or psychological stimulus to which an individual responds” (Quick, Quick, Nelson, & Hurrell, 1997, p. 3). Consistent exposure to stressors can lead to strain, defined as “the degree of physiological, psychological, and behavioral deviation from the individual’s healthy

functioning” (Quick et al., 1997, p. 3). Job stress is an increasing problem for workers and organizations (Jex & Crossley, 2005). An examination of national surveys revealed that a large proportion of workers feel highly stressed at work (Sauter et al., 1999). Costs associated with job stress are estimated at \$300 billion a year (Cynkar, 2007) and are likely to continue to grow in coming years (Wallace, Edwards, Arnold, Frazier, & Finch, 2009).

Job stress negatively impacts individuals psychologically, physically, and behaviorally, which in turn contributes to negative organizational outcomes (Jex & Crossley, 2005). Increased employee stress can lead to high staff turnover and organizational inefficiency (Commer & Barriball, 2007; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Researchers have reported negative correlations between job-related tension and performance ratings between  $-.21$  and  $-.25$  (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Jamal, 1984; Warr, 2005). In one study, high stress was linked with a reduction of productivity by 4.1% (Burton et al., 2005), while another indicated that 43% of workers reported losing at least one hour a day in productivity due to stress (ComPsych Organizational Survey, 2003). Additionally, emotional exhaustion, a type of strain resulting from workplace stressors, can result in lower levels of commitment and a greater likelihood of employees seeking work elsewhere (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

Work-related stressors emerge from numerous sources. West and West (1984) suggest that stressors emerge (a) from outside the organization, such as traffic to and from work, (b) from within the organization, such as job security, (c) as a result of work-

related duties and responsibilities such as task-related stressors like insufficient time from too many tasks, and/or (d) as part of various work roles. Davidson and Cooper (1983) saw work-related stress as emerging from either (a) stressors inherent to the job, such as the role one plays in the organization or organizational structure, or (b) stressors that are brought in from other environments, such as problems at home. Several researchers argue that the primary causes of work stress are organizational and structural aspects of the work environment (Beehr & Glazer, 2005; McClenahan, Giles, & Mallet, 2007; Karasek, 1979). These organizational or structural aspects are important to study as they may be more amenable to change than individual-level causes of stress.

An increased awareness in the prevalence and consequences of work stress has led to research uncovering specific types of job stressors and how they impact employees. As discussed by Dogherty and Prichard (1985) and Narayanan et al. (1999), researchers should examine specific job stressors rather than overall work stress as they may be more amenable to intervention efforts and change. Job demands and a lack of job control have been identified as significant stressors and have the potential to impact whether a supervisor engages in FSSB. Because of the significant body of research indicating that these variables influence important outcomes, these stressors were selected as potential antecedents to FSSB. The following section reviews the literature on job demands and job control and how they might influence FSSB.

**Job demands and job control.** Two of the most commonly studied work environment stressors are job demands and a lack of job control (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; De Lange, Taris, Kompier, Houtman, & Bongers, 2003; Karasek, 1979; Llorens,

Bakker, Shaufeli, & Salanova, 2006). Job demands are “the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs” (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004, p. 86). Job demands can turn into job stressors when the demands require high effort and the employee does not sufficiently recover (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). Job control, also called decisional latitude or job autonomy, refers to the employee’s ability to exert control at work and the extent to which they have the authority over decisions (Karasek, 1996; Theorell, 2003). Control at the workplace ranges from control over the individual’s own immediate scheduling and tasks to participation in decision-making processes (Liu, Spector, & Jex, 2005; Spector, 1998).

Both job demands and the lack of job control have been identified as significant workplace stressors. In a content analysis of interviews with workers asking about stressful job incidents, Liu, Spector, and Shi (2007) found that both lack of control and workload, defined as having a lot to do or not having enough time to do the work, were two of the seven key job stressors mentioned by employees. Numerous studies indicate that both high levels of work demands and low levels of work autonomy cause a corresponding increase in stress (Abouserie, 1996; Blix, Cruise, Mitchell, & Blix, 1994; Kinman, 1998; McClenahan et al., 2007). High demands can lead to constant overtaxing and eventual exhaustion, resulting in a variety of negative outcomes such as greater work withdrawal (Taris, Schreurs, & Vaniersel, 2001), greater emotional exhaustion (Lee & Ashforth, 1996), greater depersonalization, lower job satisfaction, reduced personal



accomplishment, and increased psychological distress (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007; Dollard, Winefield, Winefield, & Jonge, 2000; McClenahan et al., 2007). The exhaustion that can result from high demands has been linked to negative organizational outcomes such as absenteeism and reduced in-role performance (Bakker et al., 2004). When an employee perceives that the expectations and demands they experience are incompatible with the resources they have, emotional exhaustion and burnout can result (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Fogarty, Singh, Rhoads, & Moore, 2000), making it more difficult to do their jobs effectively. Another reason job demands were selected as a stressor in this research is that those in sales or retail jobs tend to report high levels of work overload (Narayanan, Menon, & Spector, 1999).

The level of job control or autonomy also has important individual and organizational outcomes. This stressor was selected because as Narayanan, Menon, and Spector (1999) suggest, “work control is a critical facet of the psychosocial work environment” (p. 67). Job control can serve several functions regarding stressors. Researchers have examined the impacts both of (a) having job control and (b) not having sufficient job control. Having job control may be seen as a resource upon which employees can draw when faced with other stressors (e.g. Bakker et al., 2003; Bakker et al., 2004; Spector, 2002; Taris et al., 2001). Several studies indicate that having higher control can reduce the negative impact of other stressors (Bakker et al., 2007; Bakker et al., 2005; Bakker et al., 2003). One meta-analysis indicated that on the organizational level, job control is positively associated with job satisfaction, commitment, involvement, performance, and motivation, and negatively associated with absenteeism, turnover

intention, and actual turnover (Spector, 1986). Dollard et al. (2002) also found higher job control to be linked to higher personal accomplishment and greater job satisfaction. Additionally, having job resources such as job control can encourage personal investment in the work and organization and lead to dedication and extra-role performance, or performance that is supportive of organizational functioning but not directly related to primary work tasks (Bakker et al., 2004; Bakker et al., 2007; Bormon & Motowidlo, 1997).

Because job control is an important resource and has an impact on the stressor-strain relationship at multiple points (Spector & Jex, 1998), having low job control may be perceived as a stressor in and of itself (Narayanan et al., 1999; Spector & Jex, 1998). Liu, Spector, and Shi (2007) found that 21% of Americans reported lack of job control as a source of stress. The lack job control may be even more an important variable to study in lower level clerical or sales jobs, such as in this study of low-level grocery store managers. Narayanan, Menon, and Spector (1999) found that those in clerical and sales position reported low control as a stressor more frequently than those who worked in higher level academic positions. Additionally, lower job control has been linked with numerous negative stress-related outcomes. Taris et al. (2001) found that low decisional latitude was linked with greater strains, which resulted in exhaustion, psychosomatic complaints, and mental health complaints. In that study, strains were also related to withdrawal, which negatively impacted turnover intentions and organizational commitment, confirming that job stress has a negative impact on organizational-level as well as employee-level outcomes. Other individual outcomes of low job control are

increased psychological distress (McClenahan et al, 2007), increased doctor visits (Liu et al., 2005), and increased physical symptoms, emotional stress, and role stress (Spector, 1986). Liu et al (2007) also found that the stressor of job autonomy was linked with both physiological and psychological strain outcomes.

Job stressors such as job demands and the lack of job control have the potential to reduce the supportiveness of supervisors because they have been shown to impact work behavior in important ways. The following section reviews literature on the links between job stress and work behaviors.

**Job stress and general performance.** Several studies indicate that workplace stressors can negatively impact any employee's ability to function effectively at work. In general, stress in the workplace has been linked to counter-productive behaviors (Ryland & Greenfeld, 1991), reduced productivity, and poorer memory performance (Rutledge et al. 2008). In a longitudinal study, Wright and Bonnet (1997) found that emotional exhaustion at time one negatively impacted job performance at time two even after controlling for time one job performance, suggesting a causal relationship between stress and performance. Similarly, role stress, a type of workplace stress emerging in part from excess demands, has numerous negative effects on the employee and his/her ability to do their job (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003). Role stress and workplace ambiguity negatively affect overall work performance and lead to psychological and behavioral workplace withdrawal (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003; Brashear, White-Lepkowska, & Chelariu, 2003). These negative consequences span industries. The stressor of role conflict, for

example, has been shown to negatively affect job performance in both services (Babin & Boles, 1998) and sales settings (Brashear et al., 2003).

Research also indicates that the specific job stressors of high demands and low control can impact workers' ability to do their jobs. Burnout, which has been linked with both high job demands and low job control, has been significantly linked with performance variability and difficulty in maintaining attention (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Van Der Liden, Keijsers, Eling, & Schaijk, 2009). A lack of resources such as decisional latitude has also been linked with disengagement, which can predict lower extra-role performance, or the type of performance outside of the immediate job tasks (Bakker et al., 2004; Xanthopoulou et al., 2008). On the other hand, job resources such as job control have been positively linked to work engagement and organizational commitment, which predicted both business-unit performance and client-rated performance (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Xanthopoulou, Baker, Hueven, Demerouti, & Shaufeli, 2008). Taken together, this research line suggests that workers who are experiencing stressors such as high demands and low control may be less likely to engage in behaviors such as FSSB.

**Job stress and supervisor behavior.** Few studies have examined how stress impacts managerial performance directly, particularly as it relates to supporting their employees. However, research does indicate that managers may be particularly susceptible to stressors that may affect their work behaviors. Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, and Cooper's (2008) meta-analysis found that work-related stressors, such as role overload, had a stronger negative correlation with performance in managers than in non-managers.

In a rare study of stressors and manager performance, Lusch and Jowarski (1991) examined how different personal and organizational inputs affected lower-level retail manager performance, including overall managerial skill, level of motivation, and relation to others in the company. They found a negative relationship between role stress and general manager performance, suggesting that work stressors may be particularly influential on manager behaviors. FSSB are one type of manager performance that may be affected by job stressors.

**Job demands, job control, and FSSB.** There are two main pathways that may explain why job demands and a lack of job control might influence behaviors such as FSSB: a motivational pathway and an ability pathway. The motivational pathway refers to the proposition that in the face of job demands and a lack of job control, supervisors should be less motivated to engage in FSSB. In retail positions in particular, managers typically have a strong focus on bottom-line performance measures such as total daily sales (McCammon & Hammer, 1974; Lusch & Dunne, 1990; Lusch & Harvey, 1983). Researchers suggest that this focus may override the “people” talents of managers and their leadership abilities, one of which would be FSSB (Lusch & Dunne, 1990; Lusch & Harvey, 1983; Lusch & Jaworski, 1991; McCammon & Hammer, 1974).

Similarly, as previously mentioned, recent research suggests that the provision of some types of supervisor support may be a function of individual bargaining between employees and supervisors for the creation of idiosyncratic ideals, or i-deals (Hornung et al., 2008, Hornung et al., 2009; Rousseau, 2005;). I-deals are often used to negotiate flexibility, for example, which may fall into the category of instrumental FSSB (Hornung

et al., 2008; Hornung et al., 2009; Rousseau, 2005). The authors also suggested that the work context can provide opportunity or constrain the ability to negotiate i-deals (Hornung et al., 2008). Thus, contextual factors, such as the demands of the supervisor, may impact the extent to which supervisors are willing to work their employees to negotiate i-deals (Hornung et al., 2008). As Hornung et al. (2008) suggested, "...the fact that workers in contemporary firms commonly face increasing performance pressures in response to market conditions and demands for efficiency can make it difficult for workers to seek flexibility and for employers to grant it" (p. 657). The proposition that job demands and a lack of job control may make supervisor less motivated to engage in FSSB is also supported by the conservation of resources theory.

The conservation of resources theory (COR) posits that people strive to obtain, retain, and protect resources, or things they value (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993). Resources include (a) objects such as transportation and shelter, (b) conditions such as tenure and seniority, (c) energies such as money or insurance, and (d) personal characteristics such as self-esteem. Strain can result when individuals' resources are threatened with loss, when resources are lost, or when individuals fail to gain resources following investment of other resources (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993). For the work domain, these resources may come from (a) the organization, such as job security and career opportunities, (b) interpersonal and social relations such as team climate and supervisor support, (c) the organization of work, such as role clarity and participation in decision making, and (d) factors relating to the tasks themselves, such as autonomy and task significance (Bakker et al., 2004). Among others, resources that supervisors may value include one's job,

control over the work environment, ability to accomplish tasks, and maintaining good standing in the organization.

The COR theory posits that individuals are motivated to avoid resource loss (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993). When valued resources are lost or threatened or inadequate to meet demands, negative outcomes can occur, such as burnout, turnover intention, and health complaints (Taris et al., 2001). Therefore, when resources are threatened, people seek to retain the resources that they do have (Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993). Job stressors such as high job demands trigger stress because they are a threat to one's resources (Hobfoll & Freedy, 2003; Taris et al., 2001). A lack of job control is itself a missing resource. Thus, because people are motivated to retain resources and prevent further loss of resources, supervisors may choose [to](#) focus their energies on what they perceive as the more salient aspects of their jobs at the expense of behaviors like FSSB in order to reduce perceived demands or stressors that could further tax their limited resources (Bakker et al., 2004).

A second related pathway through which job demand and job control may influence FSSB is through ability. Cognitive resources theory posits that people have limited cognitive resource to direct toward any one task (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989). If cognitive resources are used on one task or thinking pattern, fewer remain to dedicate to other tasks. Research indicates that job stressors can cause mental and cognitive fatigue, thereby draining available cognitive resources (Bakker et al., 2004; Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989). Thus, if overly high demands are consistent and the person lacks sufficient time or resources to recover, supervisors are left with fewer cognitive resources with which to accomplish tasks (Bakker et al., 2004; Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989; Veldhuizen, Gaillard,

& deVries, 2003). Similarly, Shirom (2003) suggested that individuals suffering from work-related burnout may have decreased coping ability, which reduces their level of motivation to perform. Burnout has been significantly linked with performance variability and difficulty in maintaining attention (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Burne, 2003; Van Der Liden, Keijsers, Eling, & Schaijk, 2009). Literature in workplace safety supports this proposition. Research indicates that when workers are distracted by stressors such as job insecurity, perceived secondary job components such as safety behaviors suffer (Probst, 2004; Probst & Brubaker, 2001; Storseth, 2007).

The stressor of low job control may similarly negative impact FSSB. As previously mentioned, job control is important to performance as it can serve as a resource to buffer the negative effects of strain and exhaustion caused by stressors such as job demands (Lui et al. 2005, Spector, 2002). Research suggests that when workers have little control over their situation, their resources focus on coping responses (Tuten & Neidermeyer, 2004). According to cognitive resource theory, when resources are focused on coping responses, workers have fewer resources to dedicate to job performance. In support of this theory, Artis, Walters, and Licata (2006) found that retail employees were less likely to employ a positive attitude with customers when their resources were low.

Thus, because a lack of job control and high job demands threaten resources, making supervisor less motivated to focus on behaviors like FSSB, as well as create a cognitive drain on resources and make it more difficult to focus on providing FSSB, the following is hypothesized:



*Hypothesis 1a:* Supervisors who report experiencing greater job demands will be rated by their employees as engaging in fewer overall FSSB.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Supervisors who report experiencing lower job control will be rated by their employees as engaging in fewer overall FSSB.

Other factors may also influence the extent to which supervisors engage in FSSB.

The following sections will explore how a supervisor's perception of the organization's work-family climate can impact employee ratings of FSSB as well as how the climate may moderate the relationship between job stress and FSSB.

### **Organizational Culture and Climate**

Organizational climate and culture are two similar conceptualizations of the underlying values and beliefs of an organization. Organizational culture has been defined as “the deep structure of organizations, which is rooted in values, beliefs, and assumptions held by organizational members” (Denison, 1996, p. 624). Organization climate is a similar concept but tends to focus more on an organizational member's perception of observable practices and procedures (Denison, 1996.) One definition of organizational climate is “the relatively enduring quality of the total environment that is (a) experienced by occupants, (b) influences their behavior, and (c) can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics (or attributes) of the environment (Taguri & Litwin, 1968, p. 25). Climate is often conceptualized as features that represent, or psychological representations, of the underlying culture (Denison, 1996).

Organizations usually have an organization-wide culture or climate as well as numerous sub-cultures or climates. Sub cultures or climates can emerge as a result of (a)

geographic proximity, such as a branch office of a larger corporation or a workgroup within a branch developing their own culture due to members being proximally located, (b) position within an organization, such as a mid-level management culture or entry-level employee culture, or (c) issues faced throughout the organization, such as work-family culture or climate or safety culture or climate (Jex & Britt, 2008). Research indicates that both organization-wide cultures and climates and sub-cultures or climates influence organizational effectiveness and employee attitudes and behavior (Denison, 1996; Jex & Britt, 2008; Tryce & Bryer, 1993). Both climate and culture have been applied to specific domains. In the work-family literature, researchers have conceptualized it as either work-family culture, which is one sub-culture, or specific work-family climates (Allen, 2001; Kossek, Colquitt, & Noe, 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Both Work-family culture and various measures of work-family climate have been linked to important work-family outcomes (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999).

**Work-family culture or climate.** Work-family culture can be defined as “the shared assumptions, beliefs, and values regarding the extent to which an organization supports and values the integration of employees’ work and family lives” and is understood in this context as a sub-culture (Thompson et al., 1999, p. 394). Many researchers draw on Thompson et al.’s (1999) conception of work-family culture. The authors identified three dimensions of work-family culture: (a) managerial support for work-family balance and sensitivity to employees’ family responsibilities, (b) organizational time demands or expectations that employees prioritize work above

family, and (c) perceived negative career consequences associated with utilizing work-family benefits or devoting time to family responsibilities. Similarly, Allen (2001) conceptualized work-family culture as family-supportive organizational perceptions, defined as employees' global perception of whether their organization's work environment is supportive of their family needs. Some authors also address specific climate within the work-family sub-culture. For example, Kossek, Colquitt, and Noe (2001) examined more specific aspects of the organizational climate regarding work-family issues: climate regarding sharing family concerns and climate regarding making family sacrifices. A positive climate regarding sharing family concerns encourages employees to share concerns about one role while working in the other role (Kossek et al., 2001). Work climate regarding making family sacrifices is similar to Thompson et al.'s (1999) dimension regarding whether employees feel they should prioritize work over family. A positive climate regarding making family sacrifices would indicate a lower expectation that family should be sacrificed for work. The advantage of examining specific work-family climates is that it differentiates between different aspects of the larger work-family culture. For example, it is possible for an organization to have both a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, where employees are expected to prioritize work over family, and a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns, where it is acceptable or encouraged to talk with colleagues about the challenges of work and family conflicts (Kossek et al., 2001).

Various measures of work-family culture or climate have been linked to numerous work-family and organizational outcomes, including a decrease in various

forms of work-family conflict (Anderson et al., 2002; Behson, 2002; LaPierre et al., 2008), increased work performance and well-being (Kossek et al., 2001), decreased self-reported distress (Mauno et al., 2005), greater affective commitment (Thompson et al., 2004), higher job satisfaction (Thompson & Prottas, 2006), increased safety behaviors and motivation (Cullen & Hammer, 2005), and lower turnover intentions (Thompson et al., 1999; Thompson & Prottas, 2006). Additionally, both Allen (2001) and LaPierre et al. (2008) found that the relationship between family supportive policies and programs and work-family conflict was mediated by family supportive organizational perceptions, or whether people in the organization felt the organization was supportive of family issues, suggesting that work-family climate or culture plays an important role in encouraging employees to make use of family-supportive policies. The following section discusses how work-family climate may impact FSSB in particular.

**Work-family climate and FSSB.** Generally, organizational culture or climate contributes to its workers' attitudes, values, and behaviors (Shein, 1990). Work-family climate can motivate supervisors to engage in FSSB in two main ways: by delineating reward expectancies and by encouraging supervisors to engage in certain behaviors due to social exchange (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Gaertner & Nollen, 1989).

Reward expectancies refer to the workers' perception of what behaviors are valued and rewarded within their organization (Gaertner & Nollen, 1989; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2006).

An organization's culture or climate facilitates employees' expectations that certain behaviors will result in certain rewards or recognition (Lynch, Eisenberger & Armeli,

1999; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Because the organization's culture or climate describes what the organization values and what the organization values is more likely to be rewarded or perceived as important, a supervisor's actions may be strongly influenced by organizational culture or climate. If the supervisor perceives his/her organization as supportive of employees' work-family lives, the supervisor may perceive acting to support their employees' work-family struggles as part of their primary job role and therefore be more motivated to engage in those behaviors. Research indicates that supportive work-family cultures also produce norms that encourage respect for personal and family time and may encourage managers to be sensitive to employees to experience challenges in balancing work and family lives (Foley et al., 2006; Major et al., 2008). Similarly, Powell and Greenhaus (2006) review of decision-making theory suggests that situational cues may influence individuals' decisions. The supervisor's perception of organizational climate regarding work-family issues may provide cues to indicate how they should behave when faced with a situation where they have to choose between engaging or not engaging in family-supportive supervisor behaviors. Poelmans and Beham (2008) also conceptualize work-family culture as an antecedent to managerial work-family allowance decisions.

Similarly, Hornung et al. (2009) found that structural conditions of the environment such as job type and the number of employees supervised influenced the extent to which supervisors negotiated i-deals with their employees. If structural aspects of the environment can influence i-deals, it is also feasible that the perception of the supportiveness of the environment might influence willingness to engage in i-deals

negotiations. Rousseau (2005) also noted that to some degree, idiosyncratic arrangements are always context-specific and a function of the environment.

The other mechanism through which organizational climate or support may influence whether supervisors engage in FSSB is via social exchange. Social exchange theory posits that a person who receives resources from one relationship may offer them to a different person in another relationship (Blau, 1964; Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway, & Ferris, 2006; Molm, Peterson & Takahashi, 2001). This tendency to pass on resources is based on the norm of reciprocity, where workers trade efforts and dedication for rewards such as pay, benefits, esteem, approval, and caring (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986). This occurs as a result of a trickle-down effect of social exchange, such that when managers are treated well, they feel a felt obligation to treat their employees well, who in turn experience a felt obligation to treat their customers well (Bell & Mengue, 2002; Masterson, 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). For example, Masterson (2001) found that employees in the service industry who were treated well also treated their customers well.

Research supports that a supervisors' exchange with their employees is influenced by their exchanges with their own boss or the organization itself (Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1976; Erdogan & Enders, 2007). When leaders have high quality relationships with their supervisors or their organization, they are more likely to provide tangible and intangible support to their employees (Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Gouldner, 1960; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Tepper & Taylor, 2003). Shannock and Eisenberger (2006) found that if

supervisors perceived their organization as supportive of them, those supervisors' employees perceived them as being more supportive. Additionally, Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch and Rhoades (2001) found that felt obligation mediated the relationship between general perceived organizational support and both in-role and extra-role performance. Similarly, Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) found that managers who felt their organizations were more supportive also demonstrated more extra-role behaviors and were more likely to orient new employees to their jobs, help others when their workload increases, and assist others in their duties. In the work-family domain, Major et al. (2008) recently found indirect support that work-family culture may foster supportive leadership, which in turn may foster coworker support. They argued that, "taken together, these results suggest that work-family culture exerts a distal influence on supervisor and coworkers who then exert a proximal influence on work interference with family" (Major et al., 2008, p. 892). The studies reviewed above suggest that the more supportive supervisors perceive that their organizations' culture or climate is supportive of work and family needs, the more likely they would be to act in accordance with those values with their employees and engage in FSSB.

Researchers who have examined the relationship between supervisors' perception of organizational support or climate and how they support their employees have called for closer examination of the dyadic relationship between a supervisor's level of support or perception of climate and the resources they provide to their employees (Erdogen & Enders, 2007; Shannock & Eisenberger, 2006). Additionally, researchers have called for deeper examination of specific supportive acts supervisors provide and how they might

be influenced by the supervisor's perception of organizational culture (Foley et al., 2006). This proposed research answers both of those calls by examining work-family specific climate and work-family specific supervisor behaviors. It should be noted that while climate or culture measures are generally combined within a workgroup to arrive at a shared perception, in this study I was particularly interested in how the supervisors themselves perceive the culture and thus measured each supervisor's individual perception of work-family climate.

Only one known study has examined work-family domain specific climate or culture on family-supportive supervision. Foley et al. (2006) found that supervisors in family-supportive organizations provided more family support to their employees than those in less supportive organizations, and that work-family culture was more strongly related to supportive supervision than previously researched antecedents such as race or gender similarity. It should also be noted that researchers debate the direction of the relationship between organizational features like organizational culture and supervisory behavior. Researchers argue both that organizational culture causes supervisors to behave a certain way (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 1986; Erdogan & Enders, 2007) and that supervisory behavior changes others' perceptions of culture (e.g. Hammer et al., 2007). However, the research that examines those relationships is typically measured from the employee perspective and debates whether the employee perception of supervisor support influences the employee perception of work-family climate or vice-versa. The current study however, examined how supervisor perceptions of climates related to their employees' ratings of their family supportive supervisor behavior. For the two climates



measured here, a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices indicates that workers are not expected to sacrifice family for work, and a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns indicates that it is acceptable to discuss family concerns at work.

*Hypothesis 2a:* Supervisors who perceive their organization as having a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices will be rated by their employees as engaging in greater overall FSSB.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Supervisors who perceive their organization as having a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns will be rated by their employees as engaging in more overall FSSB.

**Work-family climate as a moderator of job stress and FSSB.** Because the supervisor's perception of work-family climate can influence the supervisor's motivation to engage in FSSB, it has the potential to moderate the relationship between job stressors and FSSB. As previously mentioned, supervisor job stressors should negatively impact FSSB because when under duress from factors such as job demands and a lack of job control, more resources are dedicated to coping responses than job performance (Artis, Walters, & Licata, 2006; Tuten & Neidermeyer, 2004). Also, as previously discussed, for supervisors who perceive their work climate as being supportive of work and family, family-supportive behaviors may be perceived as a more normative aspect of their jobs than supervisors in a lower family-supportive culture. If FSSB are perceived by supervisors as being more highly valued, they are more likely to be retained in the face of job stressors because they are higher on the priority list and therefore (a) less likely to be impacted by cognitive drain and (b) less likely to be impacted by motivation to focus on

main job tasks instead of FSSB. Thus, supervisors who are experiencing job stressors should be more motivated to engage in FSSB in a family-supportive climate than those who experience job stressors and are not in a family-supportive climate. In this case, positive work-family climates are proposed to have a neutralizing effect on the negative relationship between supervisor job stressors and employee FSSB. Safety research demonstrated a similar concept. Probst (2004) showed that safety climate moderated the relationship between the stressor of job insecurity and safety outcomes such that the adverse effect of job insecurity on safety outcomes were attenuated when the safety climate was high, but not when the safety climate is low. Thus,

*Hypothesis 3a:* The supervisor's perception of workplace climate will moderate the relationship between job demands and employee reports of FSSB such that job demands will have a weaker negative effect on FSSB when supervisors perceive a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices.

*Hypothesis 3b:* The supervisor's perception of workplace climate will moderate the relationship between job control and employee reports of FSSB such that low job control will have a weaker negative effect on FSSB when supervisors perceive a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns.

*Hypothesis 3c:* The supervisor's perception of workplace climate will moderate the relationship between job demands and employee reports of overall FSSB such that job demands will have a weaker negative effect on FSSB when supervisors perceive a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices.

*Hypothesis 3d:* The supervisor's perception of workplace climate will moderate the relationship between job control and employee reports of overall FSSB such that low job control will have a weaker negative effect on FSSB when supervisors perceive a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns.

In summary, employee ratings of FSSB are hypothesized to be affected by (a) job stressors (job demands and job control), (b) work-family climate (climate regarding making family sacrifices and climate regarding sharing family concerns), and (c) the interaction between job stressors and work-family climate (see Figure 1).

## Method

### Participants

This study utilized previously-collected data from the first wave of a larger study, part of the national Work, Family, and Health Network, by Dr. Leslie Hammer and Dr. Ellen Kossek. Data were collected in 12 stores of a grocery store chain in the Midwestern U.S. Three stores within each “banner,” or name of the store chain under the same corporate structure, were randomly selected by the corporate office to be included in the study. The first wave of data were collected in September through October of 2006. Each store had 30-90 employees and 5-20 managers. Data from 61 supervisors and 272 matched employees were used for this study. The supervisors who participated reported managing a minimum of 1 employee and a maximum of 130 employees. In this data set, the number of employees for each supervisor who completed the survey ranged from 1 to 15, with an average of 4.46 employees per supervisor. Twenty supervisors in the data set (32.8%) had only one matching employee in the data set, and another nine supervisors (14.8%) had two matching employees.

**Demographics.** Thirty-one (50.8%) of supervisors were male and 30 (49.2%) were female. Their ages ranged from 20-60, with an average age of 43.74 (SD = 9.68). The vast majority (98.4%) of supervisors reported their race as white, with one supervisor identifying as American Indian or Alaskan Native and one as “other.” Forty-four (72.1%) supervisor were married, with 6 (9.8%) reporting being divorced or separated, 3 (4.9%) reporting living as married, and 8 (13.1%) reported never being married. Supervisors reported having a mean of .67 (SD = .86) children living at home, ranging from 0 to 4. Supervisors worked an average of 44.22 (SD = 7.23) hours per week and had worked for

the company between 0-13 years, with an average of 13.20 years ( $SD = 9.57$ ).

Supervisors had been in a management position between 1-30 years, with an average of 10.23 years ( $SD = 7.77$ ). Twenty-nine (47.5%) supervisors worked at a store under one of the banners, 22 (36.1%) worked under the second banner and 8 (13.1%) worked under the third.

Regarding employees, 191 (70.5%) were female and 80 (29.5%) were male. Their ages ranged from 18 to 76, with an average age of 36.87 ( $SD = 17.75$ ). The majority of employees reported their race as white (249 employees, 92.6%), with 8 (3.0%) indicating they were Black or African American, 2 (.07%) indicating they were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 2 (.07%) reporting they were native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 8 (3.0%) indicating "other." Regarding relationship status, 131 (.07%) indicated they were married, 26 (9.7%) were divorced, 10 (3.7%) were widowed, 15 (5.6%) were living as married, and 87 (32.3%) had never married. Employees reported having an average of 1.6 ( $SD = 1.79$ ) children living at home. Employees reported working an average of 31.33 hours per week ( $SD = 8.65$ ) and an average of 4.58 days per week ( $SD = .87$ ). One hundred forty-five employees (54.1%) reported working part time and 123 (45.9%) reported working full time. Employees had worked for their current company for an average of 6.96 years ( $SD = 6.01$ ). Regarding banner, 70 (25.7%) of employees worked in a store under the first banner, 107 (39.3%) worked in a store under the second banner, and 95 (34.9%) worked in a store under the third banner.

## **Procedure**

For all employees and supervisors, survey data were collected via face-to-face interviews, resulting in very little missing data. Interviews lasted between 35 and 50 minutes on average. The entire survey consisted of 196 questions, which was administered in face-to-face interviews, typically in manager's offices or break rooms to provide participants with the maximum amount of privacy. Informed consent was conducted by being orally read to the participants. Two copies of the consent forms were signed by the researcher and the survey participant, one of which was returned to the participant and the other of which was stored by researchers according to human subjects guidelines. The signed consent forms were stored separately from the participant surveys to ensure anonymity. Participants were told they could stop the survey at any point or skip any questions they were not comfortable answering. All interviews were conducted during paid company time. Each participant received a \$25 gift card for their participation.

## **Measures**

A subset of measures from the larger survey was used for this study. A copy of all measures used is listed in Appendix A. With the exception of FSSB and relevant employee control variables (see below), all variables were measured at the supervisor level (Level 2).

**Family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB).** FSSB were measured at the employee level (Level 1) using a 14-item scale developed and validated by Hammer et al. (2009). On this scale, participants indicated their level of agreement with statements

about their supervisor's FSSB on a Likert-type five point scale, with higher scores indicating greater FSSB. The scale consists of four dimensions: emotional support, instrumental support, role-modeling behaviors, and work-life creative management. The emotional support dimension measures the extent to which the employee feels their supervisor asks about and assists with their work and family lives (5 items, coefficient alpha = .91). A sample item is, "My supervisor makes me comfortable talking to him/her about my conflicts between work and nonwork." Instrumental support involves the extent to which supervisors support employees' work-family lives by helping with more technical aspects of the job, such as arranging schedules (4 items, alpha .76) One item on this subscale reads, "I can rely on my supervisors to make sure my work responsibilities are handled when I have unanticipated non-work demands." Work-life creative management measures how effectively managers work with employees to come up with creative solutions to work and non-work problems (6 items, alpha .84). A sample item from this subscale is, "My supervisor is able to find ways to meet both the needs of associates and the business." Role-modeling is the extent to which the supervisor models good work and non-work balance (2 items, alpha .87). A sample item reads, "My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance." Reliability for the for the overall FSSB scale with this data set was .85.

**Job stressors.** The job strain portion of the Job Content Questionnaire (Karasek, 1979, 1985) was used at the supervisor level to measure the stressors of supervisor job control and supervisor job demands. The Job Content Questionnaire (Karasek et al., 1985) was originally used to assess work-related factors that contribute to cardiovascular

disease and is widely used in research on job demands, decision latitude, skill use, and job dissatisfaction (Spielberger et al., 2003). The scale consists of two dimensions: Five items on psychological job demands, and nine items on job control. For both scales, supervisors were asked to respond to questions about job demands and job control on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”). The psychological demands subscale measures psychological stressors such as time pressure and workload. Higher scores on this scale indicate lower psychological demands. A sample item from the job demands subscale reads, “I have enough time to get the job done.” This subscale had an alpha of .61 for data from the present study. However, reliability analysis indicated that removing the item “I am free from conflicting demands others make” would raise the alpha from .61 to .69. Thus, the item was deleted and the shorter version of the scale was used.

The job control subscale consisted of nine items measuring discretion authority and skill discretion. A sample item reads, “My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.” A higher score on this scale indicated higher job control. A sample item from this scale reads “I have an opportunity to develop my own special abilities.” With the data collected in this study, this subscale has an alpha of .76. Higher scores on this scale indicates higher job control.

**Work-family climate.** Two separate measures of work-family climate developed by Kossek et al. (2001) were used to assess supervisor’s perception of work-family climate: One about work climate regarding making family sacrifices and the other about work climate regarding sharing family concerns. On both scales, supervisors were asked



to rate their agreement with statements about their work climate on a scale of 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”). A negative climate regarding making family sacrifices indicates that workers are expected to prioritize work at the expense of family. This measure consists of three items. A sample item asks participants to rate their agreement with the statement, “In my company, it is generally accepted that people must take time away from their family to get their work done.” The reliability coefficient for this scale with the data set is .74.

Three items measured the supervisor’s perception of the organizational work climate regarding sharing family concerns, which indicates the extent to which it is acceptable to talk about family concerns at work. A sample item asks participants to indicate their agreement with the statement, “In my company, it is generally accepted that people might share concerns about their family.” Higher scores on this scale indicate a more positive climate regarding sharing family concerns. The coefficient alpha for this scale with this data set is .73.

**Control variables.** Several potential control variables were considered for this study based on theoretical background. However, in order to maintain as much power as possible in the multilevel model, each control variable was pre-tested for inclusion. Each control variable and the theoretical background behind its potential inclusion are discussed below.

The control variables that were considered at Level 1 of the analysis (employee level) were the number of hours employees works per week, employee marital status, the number of children the employee has living at home, age, whether the employee had

eldercare responsibilities, the gender of the employee, the employees' gender similarity with their supervisor, and employee race. The number of hours an employee works a week was considered as a control variable because the number of hours an employee works influences the amount of time they interact with a supervisor, which in turn could influence the extent to which they have a chance to experience and/or assess their supervisors FSSB. The number of hours the employee worked was measured as a continuous variable by asking employees to answer the open-ended question, "On average, in this job, how many hours do you actually work per week?"

The number of children the employee has, marital status, age, elder care responsibilities, gender, genders similarity with supervisor, and race were included as potential controls because they have been linked to either work-family conflict or supervisor support ratings (Eby et al., 2005; Foley et al., 2006) and therefore could influence whether they see their supervisor as being family-supportive. Marital status was assessed by asking respondents to indicate their relationship status from the answer options "married," "divorced or separated," "widowed," "living as married," and "never married." The number of children employee had living at home was measured as a continuous variable by asking participants an open-ended question about how many children they had living at home (including stepchildren). Age was assessed on a continuous scale by asking employees how old they were. Whether they provided elder care was assessed by asking participants to respond "yes" or "no" to a question asking, "Are you providing care for elderly parents?" Race was assessed by a question asking participants "What is your race?" and allowing them to mark all that applied for the

following categories, “White,” “Black or African American,” “American Indian or Alaskan Native,” “Asian,” “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander,” or “other.” Each race was given a dummy code. Gender was considered a dichotomous variable where participants were asked to indicate if they were male or female.

Additionally, because gender similarity between supervisors and employees has been linked with ratings of supervisor behavior (Foley et al., 2006), a variable indicating gender similarity was created. Following the technique of Foley et al. (2006), a categorical variable with four values was created: one to indicate a female supervisor matched with a female employee, another to indicate a female supervisor matched with a male employee, another to indicate a male supervisor matched with a male employee, and another matching a male supervisor with a female employee. Because the vast majority of supervisors and employees were White, a similar variable for racial similarity was not created.

Several Level 2 (supervisor level) variables were also considered as potential controls: store banner, or name of store existing under the same corporate structure, individual store, gender, race, marital status, age, number of children living at home, and number of hours worked per week. Whether the supervisor had eldercare responsibilities was not measured at this level in a way that could be assessed in this study. Individual store and banner were included as potential controls at this level of analysis because a store or banner may have its own individual culture (Denison, 1996; Jex & Britt, 2008). It is possible that each store, or each banner, had (a) its own climate regarding work-family issues or (b) provided supervisors with different levels of job demands and control,

potentially interfering with the hypothesized effects. For example, all the stores in one banner may have a climate that is more supportive of work-family issues than stores in the other banners. Both variables were coded as categorical, with a number assigned to each of the banner stores (1-3) and each of the individual stores (1-12). These variables were not included as a third level in the multilevel model because there were not enough stores or banners to conduct that analysis.

Supervisor gender, race, marital status, age, number of hours worked per week and number of children were considered as potential control variables because research indicates that these variables influence work-family outcomes such as work-family conflict or the extent to which employees may rate a supervisor as being supportive of work-family issues (Eby et al., 2005; Foley et al., 2006). Race was assessed with a series of six dichotomous questions asking if participants were (“Yes”) or were not (“No”) members of the following racial groups: (1) white, (2) black or African American, (3) American Indian or Alaskan Native, (4) Asian, (5) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and (6) Hispanic or Latino/Latina. The remaining supervisor control variables were measured in the same way they were measured for employees.

## Results

### Preliminary Analyses and Control Testing

In order to compare FSSB ratings with other variables, I aggregated the Level 1 (employee FSSB scores) data by the Level 2 grouping variable (supervisor), creating an average FSSB score for each supervisor based on each of their employees' ratings. Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and internal consistency estimates for supervisor-level variables and pooled employee FSSB ratings are shown in Table 1. Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and internal consistency estimates for employee-level variables are shown in Table 2. Results indicated no multicollinearity issues between (a) job demands and job control or (b) climate regarding making family sacrifices and climate regarding sharing family concerns (see Table 1). There was one significant correlation between climate regarding making family sacrifices and job demands such that as supervisors reported fewer job demands, they also reported a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices (see Table 1). The preliminary analysis also indicated significant correlations with supervisor age and pooled employee FSSB ratings such that higher supervisor age was linked to higher FSSB ratings (see Table 1). Additionally, the number of hours a supervisor worked per week was significantly associated with pooled employee FSSB ratings such that a greater number of hours worked was linked with greater pooled employee FSSB ratings (see Table 1). Similarly, the greater number of hours an employee worked, the greater their ratings of their supervisor's FSSB (see Table 2). Preliminary analyses of the data confirmed that the data met regression assumptions and that no statistical outliers existed.

Because each parameter to be estimated in a multilevel model reduces the statistical power (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007), control variables were pre-tested for inclusion in the models to test the hypotheses. For the employee level (Level 1), employee relationship status, number of children, age, gender, gender similarity, race, elder care responsibilities and hours worked per week were tested to see if they influenced employee ratings of FSSB. After dummy coding categorical variables with more than two categories, a standard multiple regression analysis with employee FSSB scores as the dependent variable showed that the combination of variables did not significantly predict FSSB scores and none of the beta weights were significant,  $F(8, 263) = .77, p > .05$ ,  $R^2 = .02$ , see Table 3). Thus, none of the proposed employee level control variables were included in further analyses.

Several preliminary analyses were conducted on the supervisor level in order to assess whether store or banner influenced how supervisors rated their perceptions of work climate regarding making family sacrifices or work climate regarding sharing family concerns. Several univariate ANOVAs were conducted to examine if the banner the supervisor's store was under influenced work-family climate scores or supervisor perceptions of job demands or job control. Results indicated that banner did not influence supervisor ratings of climate regarding making family sacrifices,  $F(2, 263) = .324, p > .05$ , but banner was significantly related to work-climate regarding sharing family concerns,  $F(2, 263) = 3.54, p < .05$ . Thus, banner was included as a Level 2 control variable. Neither supervisor ratings of their job control nor job demands were significantly predicted by banner,  $F(2, 263) = 2.36, p > .05$  and  $F(2, 263) = 3.01, p > .05$ ,

respectively. Because banner was significantly related to one of the work climate measures, it was included as a control variable in subsequent analyses.

Several simple regressions were conducted to assess the effect of store on supervisors' ratings of climate regarding making family sacrifices, climate regarding sharing family concerns, job demands, and job control. Job demands were not significantly predicted by store,  $t(59) = 1.86, p > .05$ , but was marginally significant at  $p = .054$ . Job control was not significantly predicted by store,  $t(59) = -.70, p > .05$ . Neither climate regarding making family sacrifices nor climate regarding sharing family concerns was predicted by store,  $t(59) = -.41, p > .05$  and  $t(59) = -.80, p > .05$ , respectively. Because supervisor ratings job demands were marginally significantly related to store, store was included as a control variable at the supervisor level (Level 2).

A multilevel model was tested to examine whether the supervisor level control variables of supervisor gender, race, marital status, age, number of hours worked per week, elder care responsibilities, and number of children influenced employee ratings of FSSB. In the model, supervisor ID served as the grouping variable, employee ratings of FSSB was the outcome variable, and all the controls were entered simultaneously as fixed level 2 predictors. The maximum likelihood estimation technique was used, and the covariance type was unstructured. None of the control variables were significantly related to FSSB scores (see Table 4). Therefore, no supervisor level controls other than store and banner, were included in the MLM hypothesis testing.

## **Hypothesis Testing**

Multilevel modeling (MLM) was used to examine the primary hypotheses. The advantage of MLM is that it allows intercepts and slopes at a lower level to vary between higher level units, meaning that we can understand relationships at different levels and examine cross-level relationships (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). In this case, an employee's rating of their supervisor's FSSB was allowed to vary based on who their supervisor was. The fact that some supervisors supervised more employees than others, creating unequal groups, is typically not a serious concern in MLM (Snijders & Bosker, 1999).

For the multilevel analyses, the supervisor's perception of their job demands, job control, the climate regarding making family sacrifices, and the climate regarding sharing family concerns were all Level 2 (supervisor level) variables, along with the Level 2 control variables of store and banner. Supervisor ID was used as the Level 2 grouping variable. The outcome variable, FSSB, is the Level 1 (employee level). There were no Level 1 predictors in the analyses.

All predictor variables were grand-mean centered to account for multicollinearity issues that emerge when creating interaction terms (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). For all models, the unstructured covariance type was selected the maximum likelihood estimation technique was selected, which provides the best overall power in multilevel modeling (Kreft & De Leeuw, 1998). Four main multilevel models were conducted. See Table 5 for a summary of each model.



In the first model, only the Level 1 predictor of FSSB and the Level 2 supervisor ID were included, also known as the intercepts-only model, in order to assess the intraclass correlation (ICC). The ICC is an estimate of the dependence of measures (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). In this case, the intraclass correlation was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences in FSSB ratings across supervisor, confirming the need to use a multilevel model. The intraclass correlation in this study was .14, indicating medium differences in FSSB scores by supervisor. As an intraclass correlation as low as .01 can significantly inflate the chance of making a type I error (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007), multilevel modeling was retained as the appropriate method to examine the hypotheses.

The second model assessed the impact of supervisor job control and job demands on their employee ratings of FSSB scores (see Table 5). This model evaluated the first set of hypotheses, which predicted that supervisor ratings of both their job demands and level of job control would be significantly related to their employees' ratings of their FSSB. The control variables of store and banner as well as supervisor job control and job demands were added as fixed Level 2 variables. These variables were considered fixed because Level 2 variables cannot randomly vary unless there is a third level to the model (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007). Results indicated that neither job demands,  $t(25.55) = -.24, p > .05$ , nor job control,  $t(38.77) = .52, p > .05$ , were related to employee ratings of FSSB (see Table 6). Thus, neither hypothesis 1a nor 1b were supported.

The third model assessed the second set of hypotheses, which predicted that both measures of work-family climate would be related to FSSB (See Table 5). Both store and

banner were maintained as control variables, and both climate regarding making family sacrifices and climate regarding sharing family concerns were included as fixed Level 2 predictors. Job demands and job control stressor variables were not included because the intent of this model was to assess only the main effects of the supervisor's perception of work-family climate on employee ratings of FSSB. Results indicated that neither work climate regarding making family sacrifices,  $t(28.08) = -.74, p > .05$  nor climate regarding sharing family concerns,  $t(29.56) = .43, p > .05$ , were significantly related to FSSB scores (see Table 6), therefore not supporting the second set of hypotheses.

The fourth model assessed the moderator hypotheses (see Table 5). In order to test the proposed moderating effects of work-family climate, the following four interaction terms were created from the grand-mean centered predictor variables: job demands\*climate regarding making family sacrifices (H3a), job demands\*climate regarding making family sacrifices (H3b), job control\*climate regarding making family sacrifices (H3c), and job control\*climate regarding sharing family concerns (H3d). This model included all predictor variables and the four interaction terms at Level 2, in addition to the Level 2 control variables store and banner. The interaction terms were added to the model after the main effects per recommendations by Tabachnick and Fidel (2007). Results indicated that the interaction between job demands and work climate regarding sharing family concerns was not significant,  $t(15.19) = .21, p > .05$  (hypothesis 3b), the interaction between job control and climate regarding sharing family concerns was not significant,  $t(25.35) = .38, p > .05$  (hypothesis 3c), and the interaction between job control and climate regarding making family sacrifices was not significant,  $t(33.69) =$

.38,  $p > .05$  (hypothesis 3d) (see Table 6). A significant interaction was found between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices,  $t(18.36) = -2.49, p < .05$  (hypothesis 2a). A graph of this interaction was created using one standard deviation above and below the means to represent high demands, low demands, a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices, and a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices (see Figure 2). A simple slope analysis indicated that for when supervisors indicated a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices, climate did not moderate the relationship between job demands and FSSB,  $F(161) = .498, p > .05$ . However, a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices did significantly moderate the relationship between job demands and FSSB,  $F(111) = 8.29, p > .01$ , such that when supervisors reported a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, they received higher FSSB scores when they also had high job demands compared to when they had low job demands. These results are contrary to the hypothesis, which predicted that supervisors who reported a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices would receive higher FSSB ratings if they also had lower job demands. In order to confirm this finding, another multilevel model was conducted using only the control variables, job demands, work climate regarding making family sacrifices, and the interaction term. This model preserves the most power to assess the finding. In this model, the interaction term was not significant,  $t(25.76) = -1.89, p > .05$ . This lack of significant findings in the more powerful model indicates a possible suppression effect. Suppression occurs when the inclusion of a variable increases the predictive validity of another variable in a regression equation (MacKinnon, Krull, & Lockwood, 2000). Thus, the significant interaction result

found in the larger model may be an artifact of the inclusion of other variables rather than a result of the variables themselves (MacKinnon et al., 2000).

### **Supplementary Analyses**

Exploratory analyses were conducted to assess whether the same predictor variables and interactions had a significant impact on the four sub dimensions of FSSB of instrumental support, emotional support, work-family creative management, and role modeling behaviors. The same three models assessing (1) the effect of job demands and job control simultaneously, (2) the effect of both work-family climate measures simultaneously, and (3) job demands, job control, both work-family climate measures, and their interactions were conducted using each of the four sub dimensions of employee-rated FSSB.

None of the main effects or interactions were significant when the emotional support dimension of employee FSSB ratings was tested (see Table 7).

For employee ratings of instrumental support FSSB, no main effects and only one interaction was significant (see Table 8). A significant interaction was found between job demands and climate regarding making family sacrifices (see Table 8). A follow-up multilevel model was conducted using only the control variables, job demands, work climate regarding making family sacrifices, and the interaction between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices in order to assess whether the interaction remained significant when running a simpler, more powerful model. The results confirmed the significant interaction,  $t(28.77) = -2.59, p < .05$ . A graph of this interaction using one standard deviation above and below the mean to represent high and

low levels of demands and positive and negative climates regarding making family sacrifices is shown in Figure 3. Simple slope analysis indicated that a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices did not moderate the relationship between job demands and instrumental support FSSB scores,  $F(161) = 1.27, p > .05$ . However, a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices did moderate the relationship between job demands and FSSB scores,  $F(111) = 8.34, p < .05$ ) such that among supervisors who reported a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, those who also reported high demands received higher instrumental FSSB scores than those who had lower demands.

For employee reports of work-family creative management FSSB, no main effects and only one interaction was significant, indicating a significant interaction between job demands and climate regarding making family sacrifices (see Table 9). A follow up multilevel model including only the control variables, job demands, work climate regarding making family sacrifices, and the interaction between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices was conducted to examine whether this interaction remained when running a simpler model including only the variables of interest and relevant controls. The interaction remained significant in the smaller model,  $t(23.34) = -2.49, p < .05$ . A graph of this interaction using one standard deviation above and below the mean to represent high and low levels of demands and negative and positive climate regarding work-climate regarding making family sacrifices is in Figure 4.

A follow up analysis analysis indicated that a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices did not moderate the relationship between job demands and work-family FSSB scores,  $F(161) = 1.32, p > .05$ ), but that a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices did moderate the relationship between job demands and work-family FSSB scores,  $F(111) = 12.38, p < .05$ . The results indicate that for supervisors who perceived a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, those who also reported high demands received higher work-family FSSB scores than those who reported low demands.

For employee reports of role modeling FSSB, the main effect of job demands was significant,  $t(33.28) = -2.24, p < .05$ , but only in the full model that included all other variables, not in the simpler model including only job stressor variables  $t(30.72) = -1.58, p > .05$ . One interaction was significant, indicating a significant interaction between job control and a climate regarding making family sacrifices (see Table 10). Follow up analysis using only the control variables, job control, climate regarding making family sacrifices, and the interaction between job control and climate regarding making family sacrifices confirmed the significant interaction,  $t(58.01) = 2.40, p < .05$ . A graph of this interaction using one standard deviation above and below the mean to represent high and low levels of demands and work-climate regarding making family sacrifices is shown in Figure 5. The graph indicates that employee ratings of role modeling FSSB scores depend on level of control and climate regarding making family sacrifices such that supervisors who reported having higher control received higher role-modeling FSSB ratings when they also perceived a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices compared to

supervisors who perceived a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices. The opposite was true for supervisors who reported having lower job control.

## **Discussion**

This research attempted to fill an important gap in the literature by helping to identify work related factors that influence the extent to which supervisors can or are willing to support their employees in balancing their work and family lives. Because work-family conflict influences so many important outcomes for employees as well as for organizations, organizations need to be aware of what they can do to foster supportive supervision. This research also addressed scholar's call for studying work-family issues from a multilevel perspective (Eby et al., 2005, Grzywacz et al., 2007; Hammer, Neal, Newson, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005).

### **Review of Hypotheses Results**

None of the study hypotheses were supported. Results indicated that neither supervisor job demands nor the lack of job control significantly influenced how employees rated those supervisors' FSSB. Additionally, neither the supervisors' perception of work climate regarding making family sacrifices nor climate regarding sharing family concerns impacted employee ratings of FSSB. Furthermore, contrary to the hypotheses, tests of the moderating effects of work-family climate revealed that neither supervisor perception of climate regarding sharing family concerns or climate regarding making family sacrifices moderated the relationship between supervisor job demands and employee reports of overall FSSB nor the relationship between supervisor job control and employee reports of overall FSSB.

Analysis did reveal a significant interaction in the full model between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices. Results indicated that



when supervisors reported a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, they received higher FSSB scores when they reported having high demands compared to when they had low demands. There were no significant differences in high and low demands when a positive climate for making family sacrifices was examined as a moderator (see Figure 2). These results are contrary to the hypothesis, which proposed that supervisors who report a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices would receive higher FSSB scores even when demand were high. However, this result should be interpreted with caution because the interaction was no longer significant when a more parsimonious model including only the variables of interest and control variables was tested, suggesting that one or more of the other variables in the full model that were not being tested was acting as a suppressor variable. This may indicate that the significant finding was an artifact of the variables included rather than a true effect (MacKinnon et al., 2000).

### **Review of Supplementary Analyses Results**

Although no specific hypotheses were made about the impact of the study predictors on the four sub-dimensions of employee ratings of FSSB, there were several significant findings. In the full multilevel model that included all study variables, supervisor job demands had a significant main effect on employee ratings of role modeling FSSB (see Table 10). However, because supervisor reports of job demands were not significantly related to employee ratings of role modeling FSSB in the more parsimonious model (see Table 10), this is most likely due to a suppression effect.

A similar pattern of the unexpected interaction results between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices was found for both employee ratings of instrumental support (see Figure 3) and employee ratings of work-family creative management (see Figure 4). Similar to results of overall FSSB, climate regarding making family sacrifices moderated the relationship between supervisor job demands and those employee sub-dimensions of FSSB such that when supervisors reported a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, supervisors who also reported higher job demands received higher FSSB scores on those sub dimensions than supervisors who reported low demands. However, when supervisors reported a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices, there were no significant differences on FSSB sub-scores by level of job demands.

There is little guidance in the literature to explain this potential finding, but one possible explanation is that in a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, where one is expected to sacrifice family for the sake of work, supervisors who engage in instrumental or work-family creative management FSSB are indeed experiencing higher demands as a result of the effort it takes to be family supportive in a non-supportive environment, thus reporting higher demands. In this case, the supervisors may report higher job demands and receive higher FSSB ratings from their employees because the act of providing FSSB *causes* higher demands when the supervisor thinks the climate does not support work-family issues. However, the job demands measure used in this study was a more general measure pertaining to demands about the amount of work,

speed and intensity of work, and time to get work done, not specifically addressing whether the supervisors perceived the provision of FSSB as a demand.

Another significant interaction was found for role modeling FSSB between job control and work climate regarding making family sacrifices such that if a supervisor reported a negative climate regarding making family sacrifices, the relationship between job control and FSSB was positive, which is generally in line with study hypotheses. However, it is difficult to explain why supervisors who reported both a positive climate regarding making family sacrifices and lower job control would receive higher role modeling ratings from their employees than supervisors who reported having higher job control. Perhaps supervisors who had high control chose to use their greater autonomy on other types of support or other supervisory tasks, or had so much control over their work roles that they did not interact as much with employees. On the other hand, supervisors with low control may still be able to provide FSSB in an environment where you are not expected to prioritize work above family.

Another possible explanation for all of the unexpected interaction results relates to how FSSB was measured. In this study, the measure of whether or not a supervisor is supportive was employee ratings of supervisor behavior, not actual FSSB. Perhaps employees who see that their boss experiences many demands and/or little control over their work are more likely to notice any FSSB they see because it is more salient or obvious when it is difficult to do, thus resulting in higher FSSB ratings. Additionally it is possible that a three-way interaction is occurring with another job factor or supervisor individual difference factors that impact why a supervisor in a negative climate regarding

making family sacrifices would perceive their job demands as higher or lower, and that interaction contributes to the tentative unexpected findings in this study.

### **Explanation of Results: Hypotheses**

**Explanation of findings from the supervisor perspective.** There may be several explanations for the lack of findings of supervisor job demands and job control on employee ratings of FSSB. First, there may have been insufficient variability in FSSB scores to detect differences. On a 1-5 scale, employees reported an average FSSB score of 3.5 with a standard deviation of .64. Additionally, there may be factors not accounted for in this study that impact how a supervisor rates his or her job demands and job control. Karasek (1979) suggested that individual differences may play a role in one's rating of their job demands or job control. A variety of personality traits have been proposed and/or examined that could influence supervisors ratings of stressors, such as locus of control (Parker, 1991), self-efficacy (Schaubroeck, Jones & Xie, 2001; Xanthapoulou et al., 2008), proactive personality (Parker & Sprigg, 1999), Type A personality (Lang & Markowitz, 1986), alienation and perfectionism (Lang & Markowitz, 1986), locus of control (Meier, Semmer, Elfering, & Jacobshagen, 2008) and political skill (Perrewé et al., 2005). Similarly, Bakker, Van Emmerik, and Riet (2008) found that the impact of resources and exhaustion on performance was mediated by the individual's level of cynicism, suggesting cynicism may impact the effects of job stressors on supervisor behavior. Additionally, any number of those traits might moderate the relationship between job stressors and FSSB, limiting the ability of the model to find the hypothesized effects should they actually be there.

An alternative explanation for the lack of expected results between supervisor job stressors and employee ratings of FSSB is that in some cases, stressors actually lead to greater performance. For example, Halbesleben and Bowler (2004) found that emotional exhaustion led to greater in-role performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) aimed at other individuals. Certain types of FSSB may be considered OCBs, defined as “extra-role discretionary behavior intended to help others in the organization” (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997, p. 100). If some supervisors in this data set were encouraged to engage in FSSB when experiencing job stress and others were discouraged, the effects of job stress on employee ratings of FSSB would be difficult to detect. Further research should examine potential moderators or mediators that could better explain the job stressor-FSSB relationship.

Moreover, other types of work stressors or a combination of work stressors not examined in this study may have a stronger impact on employee reports of FSSB than those examined here. Role stress, for example, is another workplace stressor that has been linked to performance (Bettencourt & Brown, 2003). Also, Beehr et al. (2000) found moderate support that chronic, occupation-specific stressors were most strongly related to strains than more generic stressor scales. They argued that occupation-specific stressors are more salient to the immediate work environment than more general measures of stress. Additionally, Wallace et al., (2009) found that stressors differentially impact performance based on whether they are perceived as (a) manageable and under the persons control, therefore an opportunity for individual growth if overcome (challenge stressors), or (b) unmanageable and controlling, hindering the opportunity for growth

(hindrance stressors). The authors found that challenge stressors were positively related to role-based performance and hindrance stressors were negatively related to role-based performance. Thus, the measure of stressors in this study may have been too general to (a) represent factors that most strongly influence strain or (b) distinguish between stressors that are harmful rather than helpful. Additionally, the stressors studied here did not specifically address the stress that engaging in FSSB might place on supervisors. Because it is a relatively new area of research, researchers may want to conduct qualitative analysis with supervisors to help assess what stressors they perceive as barriers to engaging in FSSB. Further studies should also examine the varying impact of multiple stressors on FSSB.

There are also several possible explanations as to why the second set of hypotheses was not supported. These hypotheses posited that supervisor perceptions of work climate regarding making family sacrifices and work climate regarding sharing family concerns would influence FSSB scores. First, the dimensions of climate that were examined in this study may not be the dimensions of climate that are most impactful on employee ratings of FSSB. In this study, two specific measures of work-family climate were examined. It is possible that another specific dimension of climate or a more general measure of work-family culture may be more influential on whether a supervisor engages in FSSB, and therefore whether employees are likely to rate them as engaging in FSSB, than those in this study. For example, research indicates that a more global measure of family-supportiveness of an organization, called Family Supportive Organizational Perceptions (FSOP), is a valid measure of work-family culture that is related to

numerous important work-family outcomes (Allen, 2001). Because this is a more general measure of an organization's work-family culture, it may more accurately assess the extent to which supervisors feel their organization expects them to or would reward them for engaging in FSSB, therefore impacting whether or not their employees see them as being supportive. Alternatively, a different specific type of work-family climate may be more impactful than the specific types studied here. Additionally, a limitation of the climate measures that were used in this study is that each of the measures had somewhat low reliability coefficients with this data. Further research should examine the impact of both more general work-family culture or climate measures and other specific work-family climate measures.

The lack of significant relationships between work-family climate and employee ratings of FSSB could also be due to the interaction of climate perceptions and certain traits or due to the fact that the relationship is actually in the opposite direction of what had been hypothesized. For example, trait activation theory posits that situations provide a stimulus or lack of stimulus on traits, which affects performance and behavior (Haaland & Christiansen, 2002; Hochwarter et al., 2006; Tett & Guterman, 2000). Work-family climate could be seen as one of these situational influences. Proponents of trait activation theory argue that when situations offer relevant cues requiring competence for effective performance, traits can drive performance (Hochwarter et al., 2006). Hochwarter et al. (2006) argued that situational influences activate individual differences, not only in personality but in differences in abilities such as social skill. FSSB could be considered a social skill or performance in this case. This line of research suggests that the situational

influence of perceived climate may instigate different individual traits or skills of the supervisor, which may impact FSSB, or employee ratings of FSSB, in unexpected ways. Thus, for supervisors with a certain personality trait or level of social skill, perceiving a positive climate regarding sharing family concerns may encourage them to engage more FSSB, while for supervisors with a different personality trait or level of social skill, the same positive climate may encourage them to engage in fewer FSSB. Similarly, traits could interact with the job stressors supervisors experience and influence FSSB in different ways. Further research should investigate how personality traits may moderate the relationship between work-family culture or climate and FSSB as well as how personality traits moderate the relationship between job stressors and FSSB.

Alternatively, it is possible that other climate or culture variables not measured here had a competing effect or a stronger effect on employee ratings of FSSB. For example, Erdogan and Enders (2006) found longitudinal support indicating that supervisor's level of perceived organizational support (POS) predicted whether or not their employees found them to be supportive. Thus, higher levels of general supervisor POS could influence both the perception of stressors and influence the extent to which supervisors might be inclined to engage in FSSB for their employees above and beyond or in a different way than perceived organizational support around work family issues such as the climate measures examined in this study. Additionally, Foley et al. (2006) found that the time and leave benefits offered by the organization influenced whether employees rated their supervisors as being family-supportive, suggesting that other organizational factors may influence FSSB ratings. Additionally, individual difference



factors in supervisors may have diluted any of the proposed relationships. For example, Berry (1999) found that supervisors who had a higher identification with their family roles, had more experience personally with work-family conflict, and had used more family supportive policies received higher ratings in work-family supervision.

**Explanation of findings: Employee-level variables.** Another consideration is that this study examined employee perceptions of FSSB, not objective data on actual supervisor FSSB. As such, there may be factors about the employee or factors about the employee-supervisor interaction that influence whether or not they see their supervisor as supportive, regardless of the stressors or perceptions of climate experienced by the supervisor.

Although several employee level variables such as age, gender, and marital status were included in this study, there may be other characteristics of the employee that could influence their ratings of FSSB. For example, Foley et al. (2006) found that employees' perception of work-family culture was related to whether they rated their supervisors as being supportive of work-family issues. In the current study, only the supervisor level of work-family culture was included. Additionally, Sundin et al. (2006) found that employees not having a college education and having low interpersonal trust were related to ratings of less supervisor support. In an intervention intended to increase FSSB, Hammer et al. (in press) found that employees were most likely to rate their supervisors as engaging in FSSB post-intervention if the employee was experiencing high levels of work-family conflict. Other studies have found that the racial and gender similarity of the employee may impact whether or not they seek support (Foley et al, 2006), suggesting

there may be other factors of the employee that influence whether they seek or perceive receiving support. In a meta-analysis, Michel and Hargis (2008) found that reports of work social support, which includes supportive supervision, was significantly correlated with work involvement scores, which refers to “the level of psychological and cognitive preoccupation with, engagement in, and immersion in one’s work role” (Michel & Hargis, 2008, p. 511). Thus, the extent to which an employee values their work role may also influence how they rate the supportiveness of their supervisors.

Another line of research suggests that whether or not an employee perceives his or her supervisor as supportive may depend on whether the employee actively seeks this support (Powell & Greenhaus, 2006). Research on work-family decision making suggests that when employees are faced with conflicting demands between work and family, they may choose to garner social support from numerous sources, including family members and supervisors (Powell & Greenhaus, 2006). Thus, an employee struggling with competing demands may not choose to ask a supervisor for support and instead seek support elsewhere. A supervisor who does not know of a need for support may be less likely to offer it, especially considering Hornung et al.’s (2008) research that i-deals occur more frequently when employees are proactive in securing them. As such, employees that do not seek supervisor assistance may be less likely to rate their supervisors as engaging in FSSB.

Similarly, research on i-deals is based on the idea that supervisors actively engage employees in negotiation to work out deals with their employees (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009; Rousseau, 2005). Because i-deals are individualized by definition, supervisors

make conscious efforts to negotiate these deals and are “important negotiating partners for employees in the authorization of i-deals on behalf of the employer” (Hornung et al., 2009, p. 739). Although the negotiation of i-deals may be more strongly related certain aspects of FSSB such as instrumental support and work-family creative management and less related to emotional support and role-modeling behaviors, it provides an important perspective of the supervisor as an active agent in work-family decision making, and the employee seeking that support, that was not directly addressed in this study.

**Explanation of findings: Supervisor-employee interactions.** The interactions between the employee and supervisor also may influence the extent to which the supervisor provides FSSB and/or the employee rates the supervisor as being supportive. Recent research by LaPierre (2010) suggests there may be characteristics of the employee that influence whether or not a supervisor is willing to provide varying types of support, such as whether they demonstrate organizational citizenship behaviors targeted at their supervisor or whether they are good performers, suggesting there is an interactive component of offering support.

Similarly, Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) posits that supervisors and employees engage in reciprocal relationship exchanges (Ashanasy & O’Conner, 1997). The theory suggests that employees with high LMX relationships with their supervisors receive higher levels of support (Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001) and receive greater growth opportunities (Bauer, Erdogan, Liden, & Wayne 2006; Graen & Scandura, 1987). Thus, supervisors have different relationships with each supervisor based on the exchange quality. A positive, high exchange between supervisors and employee might

facilitate more frequent interactions and therefore greater opportunity to ask for and/or provide work-family related support and/or influence whether a supervisor will rate this support accurately. An employee who feels they have a low-value exchange relationship with their supervisor might be tempted to rate them lower in any sense. Additionally, whether employees and supervisors share the same values around work-family issues might influence the provision or rating of support. For example, Thompson et al. (2006) found that employees were more likely to report their supervisors as being family-supportive if they also perceived that their supervisors shared similar values about work-family issues. Thus, if an employee perceives that a supervisor values work family issues but the employee feels that these issues should not be addressed at work, he or she may rate their supervisor lower on FSSB to express this distaste or rate them more neutrally because they do not value those behaviors. Conversely, supervisors who believe an employee has different values about work-family issues and perceives that employees do not want this type of support may be less likely to engage in family-supportive behaviors with those particular employees, who may indeed notice this lack of support and report accordingly.

Additionally, some research suggests that the interaction between employee and supervisor can influence the extent to which FSSB is offered or perceived. Powell and Greenhaus (2006) found that the decision to garner support from certain sources such as a supervisor was a function of the supportiveness cues they received from that source of support. Thus, if a supervisor is perceived as supportive, the employee may be more likely to seek assistance from that supervisor, who therefore may be more likely to grant

it, which could influence the extent to which an employee sees their supervisor as supportive. This perspective suggests there may be a reciprocal feedback loop of asking for and receiving support that was not examined in this research. Further research should examine the interaction between supervisor and employee and employee characteristics and how they impact motivation to engage in FSSB.

### **Limitations**

Aside from the low FSSB variability issue discussed earlier, there were several methodological limitations to this study. First, this study was cross-sectional. As with any cross-sectional design, directionality cannot be inferred from the data. Further research should examine the relationship between work-family climate, FSSB, and job stressors longitudinally.

On a more general level, I hypothesized the pathways from job stressors and climate to FSSB, namely a motivational pathway and an ability pathway, but I did not actually test these potentially mediating influences. The arguments earlier in this paper propose that one of the pathways from job stress to family-supportive supervisor behaviors is by virtue of the job stress limiting resources and lessening employee motivation to engage in extra-role behaviors. Similarly, I argued that work-family culture would increase the motivation to engage in FSSB. As previously discussed, motivation is often considered a direct antecedent of performance (Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007; Shirom, 2003). Halbesleben and Bowler (2003), for example, found that motivation mediated the relationship between emotional exhaustion and job performance. Thus, in this study, the job stressors may be too distal to clearly predict FSSB. A more complete

model might examine the relationships between (a) job stressors or work-family climates and motivation to engage in FSSB and (b) motivation to engage in FSSB and actual FSSB ratings. This perspective would be reflective of the perspective that supervisors are active agents in the decision to engage in FSSB rather than passively influenced by work-context variables, such as in i-deals research. Additionally, other factors not considered in this study might be mediating or influencing these processes. For example, social exchange processes, such as LMX, could mediate the relationships between work-family or other organizational climates and demands, or between work-family climates and whether a supervisor offers FSSB, for example.

### **Practical Implications**

While the study hypotheses were not supported, the theoretical background suggests that supervisors are increasingly important in helping support employees. If researchers understand what impacts whether or not a supervisor can be supportive, we can provide practical recommendations to organizations for practice. Thus, organizations should consider the resources they are providing to their supervisors and address whether the supervisor is given sufficient time and resources to effectively support their employees. This may mean giving supervisory skills, particularly in the work-family arena, a greater emphasis as part of the supervisor's job role. Trainings may be conducted to increase this supportiveness. Organizations should continue to educate and train their supervisors on the importance of providing support for the benefit of both the employees, supervisors, and organization. Further research into this area (see below) may provide more practical information for supervisors and organizations.

## **Research Implications and Future Research**

Little research exists on the antecedents or predictors of family-supportive supervision. Although the results were not as hypothesized, research should continue in this area. Based on the potential explanation of findings above, I see several intertwined areas for future research.

First, researchers should examine how and which work stressors influence whether or not a supervisor is supportive of work-family issues. Although the work stressors of job demands and a lack of job control and two work-climate measures were examined in the current study, there may be other stressors or other work-related variables that might influence the extent to which a supervisor is supportive. Second, researchers should examine individual differences such as personality and how that may influence the extent to which a supervisor provides support. Third, researchers should examine how non-work variables, such as the supervisor's level of work-family conflict or home stressors, may influence their supportiveness at work. Fourth, further research should be conducted examining how the interaction between employees and supervisors influences supportiveness, as well as how employee characteristics might moderate the extent to which support is offered or perceived. Several theories could guide this particular line of research, including LMX theory and research on i-deals (Ashanasy & O'Conner, 1997; Rousseau, 2005). Fifth, researchers should consider multiple methods of measuring supervisor supportiveness, such as a combination of self-report, employee-report, and supervisor report.

On a broader level, I believe this research highlights the need for more comprehensive, multi-level research on what influences family-supportive supervision. While the results here indicate that the specific work stressors and environments studied did not influence supervision, the provision of family-related support is most likely a complex phenomenon influenced by employee-level variables, supervisor-level variables, organization-level variables, and perhaps even larger industry-level or cultural-level variables. Additionally, these variables likely interact with one another. In order to fully understand these phenomena, future research should account for as many of these variables as possible, taking into account both proximal and distal variables as well as potential moderators. For example, a comprehensive study might simultaneously examine (1) organizational-level factors such as financial resources, reward structures, scheduling structures, and various types of organizational culture, (2) supervisor level, supervisor-organization or supervisor-supervisor interactions such as the supervisor's perceived support from their supervisor, LMX, POS, job satisfaction, level of family conflict, and their motivation or ability to engage in those behaviors, and (3) employee variables or employee-supervisor interactions such as levels of work-family conflict, career orientation, LMX, and POS. Such research could contribute to both the theoretical understanding of family-specific support as well as enable an examination of where organizations or supervisors should focus their efforts to maximize family-supportive supervision. Because family-supportive supervisors have such a strong influence on employee work-family outcomes and therefore organizational outcomes, it is integral to



continue this line of research to better understand what organizations can do to better support their supervisors and their employees.

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**Table 1***Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Internal Consistency Estimates of Supervisor-Level Study Variables<sup>†</sup>*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Store	N/A	N/A												
2. Banner	N/A	N/A	.07	-										
3. Age	43.73	9.68	.19	-.14	-									
4. # Hours per Week	44.21	7.32	.10	-.18	.02	-								
5. Relationship Status	N/A	N/A	.03	.05	.60**	.00	-							
6. Gender	N/A	N/A	-.08	-.12	-.08	-.01	.11	-						
7. # of Children at Home	0.80	1.01	-.01	-.09	-.12	.06	-.32*	.04	-					
8. Job Control	3.25	0.38	-.12	.30*	-.03	.32*	-.12	.14	.14	(.76)				
9. Job Demands	1.99	0.50	.24	-.16	.02	-.11	.15	.29*	.23	.09	(.69)			
10. Climate Regarding Making Family Sacrifices	2.81	0.85	-.01	.08	-.14	-.05	.13	-.05	-.53	-.23	.34**	(.74)		
11. Climate regarding Sharing Family Concerns	3.55	0.61	-.12	-.32	-.25	.15	.28*	.00	.02	.12	-.02	-.04	(.73)	
12. Pooled Employee FSSB Ratings	3.45	0.70	.11	-.03	.41**	-.05	.37**	.04	.14	.03	.23	.00	.07	(.91)

\*Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level\*\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .001$  level

<sup>†</sup> Because race was measured using a series of dichotomous questions asking whether or not the supervisor was a member of a particular racial group and one supervisor indicated they were part of more than one group, responses could not be aggregated into a single measure of race and was therefore not included in this correlation table.

Note: Internal consistency estimates (i.e. coefficient alpha) are in parenthesis on the diagonal.

**Table 2**

*Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Internal Consistency Estimates of Employee-Level Study Variables*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	36.87	17.75	-								
2. # Hours per Week	31.33	8.64	.11	-							
3. Relationship Status	N/A	N/A	.52**	-.19**	-						
4. Gender	N/A	N/A	.15*	-.34	-.18*	-					
5. Gender Similarity	N/A	N/A	-.14*	-.19**	.18**	.27**	-				
6. # of Children at Home	.71	1.07	.07	.08	-.38**	.11	-.09	-			
7. Race	N/A	N/A	-.03	.10	.07	.08	.02	.04	-		
8. Elder Care	N/A	N/A	.09	.01	-.09	.12	-.00	.03	.17	-	
9. FSSB Ratings	3.50	0.64	-.02	-.12*	.09	-.02	-.06	-.06	.00	-.02	(.91)

\*Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level

\*\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .001$  level

Note: Internal consistency estimates (i.e. coefficient alpha) are in parenthesis on the diagonal.

**Table 3**

*Standard Multiple Regression Results Predicting Employee FSSB  
from Employee Control Variables*

Control Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Gender	-.01	.12	.00
Gender similarity <sup>†</sup>			
Female supervisor, male employee	.04	.15	.02
Female supervisor, female employee	.04	.11	.03
Age	.00	.00	.08
Race <sup>††</sup>			
White	.13	.25	.05
Black	-.06	.36	-.01
American Indian or Alaskan Native	.26	.56	.03
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	.36	.57	.04
Number of children at home	-.02	.03	-.06
Relationship status <sup>††</sup>			
Divorced	-.12	.18	-.05
Widowed	-.58	.28	-.07
Living as married	-.12	.21	-.04
Never married	-.13	.13	-.10
Hours worked per week	-.01	.01	-.12
Elder care responsibilities	-.03	.12	-.02

<sup>†</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other gender similarity combinations  
<sup>††</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other races  
<sup>†††</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other relationship statuses  
\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level

**Table 4**

*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Model Predicting Level 2 (Supervisor) Control Variables From Employee FSSB Scores*

Control Variable	EST	SE
Intercept	4.79	.68
Gender	-.03	.12
Gender similarity <sup>†</sup>		
Male supervisor, female employee	.09	.13
Female supervisor, male employee	.07	.12
Age	.00	.01
Race (white or non-white) <sup>††</sup>	-.77	0.48
Number of children at home	-.02	0.10
Relationship status <sup>†††</sup>		
Married	-.42	.22
Divorced	-.32	.23
Living as married	.30	.28
Hours worked per week	.00	.01

<sup>†</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other gender similarity combinations

<sup>††</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other dichotomous questions about race

<sup>†††</sup> There were insufficient data to analyze other relationship statuses

\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level

**Table 5***Multilevel Models Tested*

Model	Level 1 (employee) variables	Level 2 (supervisor) variables	Hypothesis Tested
1	FSSB	(Supervisor ID)	(none)
2	FSSB	Store (control) Banner (control) Job demands Job control	H1a H1b
3	FSSB	Store (control) Banner (control) Work climate regarding making family sacrifices Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	H2a H2b
4	FSSB	Store (control) Banner (control) Job demands Job control Work climate regarding making family sacrifices (Climate 1) Work climate regarding sharing family concerns (Climate 2) Job demands * Climate 1 Job demands * Climate 2 Job control * Climate 1 Job control * Climate 2	H3a H3b H3c H3d

**Table 6**

*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Models Predicting Employee Overall FSSB Scores*

Variable	EST	SE
<b>Model 2: Job stressors</b>		
Intercept	3.17	.59
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.02	.08
Job demands	-0.03	.12
Job control	0.08	.14
<b>Model 3: Climate measures</b>		
Intercept	3.34	.47
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.02	.08
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.05	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.04	.10
<b>Model 4: Job stressors, climate measures, and interactions</b>		
Intercept	3.32	.23
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.02	.79
Job demands	-0.17	.12
Job control	-0.04	.17
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.05	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.06	.10
Job demands * Sacrifices	-0.26*	.15
Job demands * Concerns	0.11	.17
Job control * Sacrifices	0.26	.15
Job control * Concerns	0.08	.21

\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level

**Table 7**

*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Models Predicting Employee Emotional Support FSSB*

Variable	EST	SE
<b>Model 2: Job stressors</b>		
Intercept	3.49	.73
Store (control)	-0.01	.01
Banner (control)	0.01	.10
Job demands	0.08	.15
Job control	-0.34	.19
<b>Model 3: Climate measures</b>		
Intercept	3.56	.55
Store (control)	-0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.03	.10
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.08	.08
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.04	.11
<b>Model 4: Job stressors, climate measures, and interactions</b>		
Intercept	3.40	.27
Store (control)	-0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.04	.10
Job demands	-0.09	.14
Job control	-0.09	.20
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.11	.08
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.10	.12
Job demands * Sacrifices	-0.22	.14
Job demands * Concerns	0.21	.21
Job control * Sacrifices	0.21	.18
Job control * Concerns	0.33	.25

*\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level*

**Table 8**

*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Models Predicting Employee Instrumental Support FSSB*

Variable	EST	SE
<b>Model 2: Job stressors</b>		
Intercept	3.27	.61
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.02	.08
Job demands	-0.03	.12
Job control	0.10	.15
<b>Model 3: Climate measures</b>		
Intercept	3.68	.47
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.01	.08
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.61	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.01	.10
<b>Model 4: Job stressors, climate measures, and interactions</b>		
Intercept	3.43	.20
Store (control)	0.01	.01
Banner (control)	0.03	.07
Job demands	-0.24*	.11
Job control	0.07	.16
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.05	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.07	.09
Job demands * Sacrifices	-0.36*	.11
Job demands * Concerns	0.06	.16
Job control * Sacrifices	0.19	.15
Job control * Concerns	0.22	.20

\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level



**Table 9**

*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Models Predicting Employee Work-Family Creative Management FSSB*

Variable	EST	SE
<b>Model 2: Job stressors</b>		
Intercept	3.13	.67
Store (control)	0.01	.01
Banner (control)	0.00	.10
Job demands	-0.06	.14
Job control	0.07	.17
<b>Model 3: Climate measures</b>		
Intercept	3.04	.55
Store (control)	0.01	.01
Banner (control)	0.01	.10
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.03	.07
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.07	.11
<b>Model 4: Job stressors, climate measures, and interactions</b>		
Intercept	3.21	.27
Store (control)	0.01	.01
Banner (control)	-0.00	.09
Job demands	-0.19	.14
Job control	-0.07	.20
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.24	.07
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.06	.12
Job demands * Sacrifices	-0.38*	.13
Job demands * Concerns	0.09	.20
Job control * Sacrifices	0.22	.18
Job control * Concerns	-0.11	.24

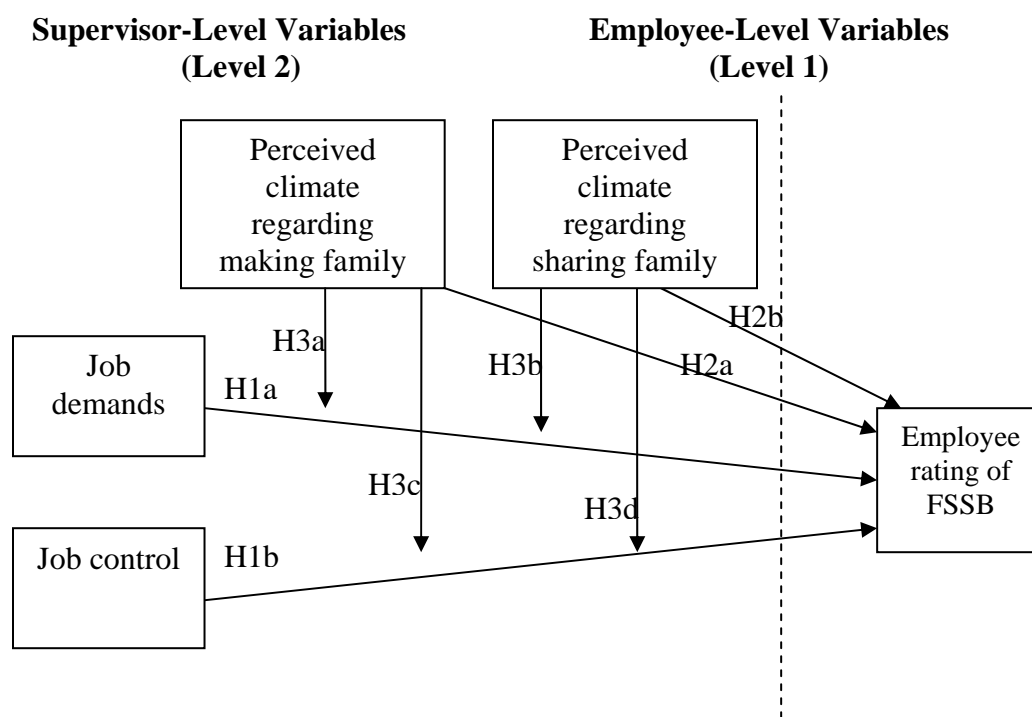
\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level

**Table 10**

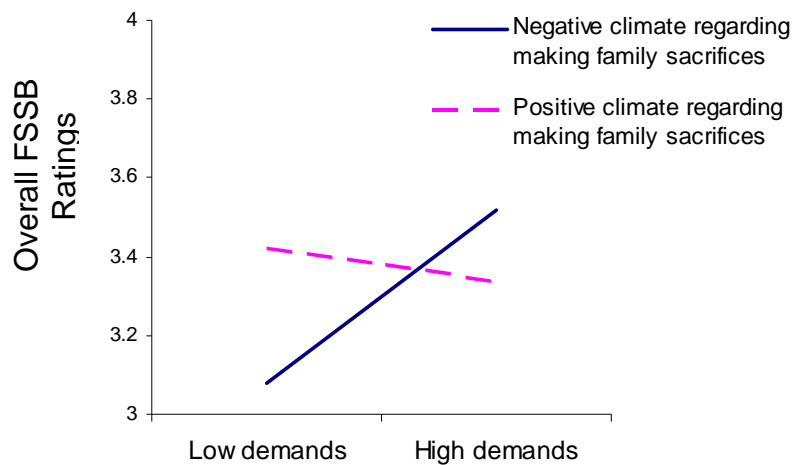
*Estimates of Fixed Effects and Standard Errors for Multilevel Models Predicting Employee Role Modeling FSSB*

<b>Control Variable</b>	<b>EST</b>	<b>SE</b>
<b>Model 2: Job stressors</b>		
Intercept	2.82	.56
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.07	.08
Job demands	-0.17	.11
Job control	0.24	.14
<b>Model 3: Climate measures</b>		
Intercept	3.29	.47
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.04	.08
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	-0.01	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.04	.10
<b>Model 4: Job stressors, climate measures, and interactions</b>		
Intercept	3.33	.21
Store (control)	0.00	.01
Banner (control)	0.04	.76
Job demands	-0.25*	.11
Job control	0.08	.17
Work climate regarding making family sacrifices	0.01	.06
Work climate regarding sharing family concerns	0.03	.09
Job demands * Sacrifices	-0.19	.11
Job demands * Concerns	-0.05	.17
Job control * Sacrifices	0.43*	.16
Job control * Concerns	0.01	.21

*\* Indicates significance at the  $p < .05$  level*

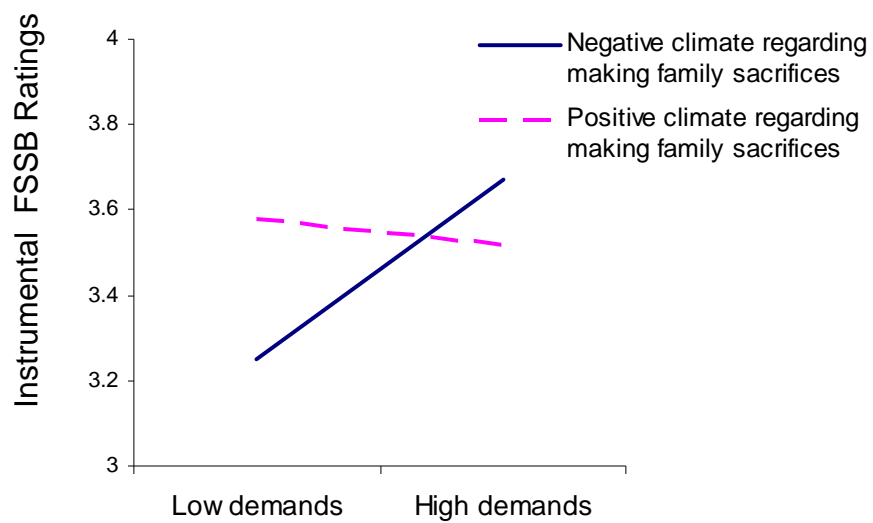
**Figure 1.** Full hypothesized model.

**Figure 2.** Significant interaction between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices on overall FSSB.\*

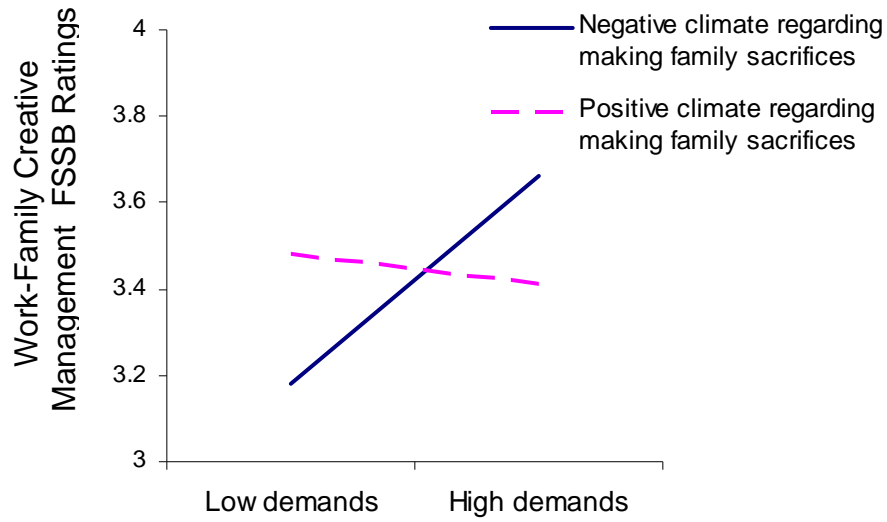


\* *Note:* The interaction was only significant in the full model. The interaction was no longer significant when a smaller model including only controls, climate regarding making family sacrifices, job demands, and the interaction.

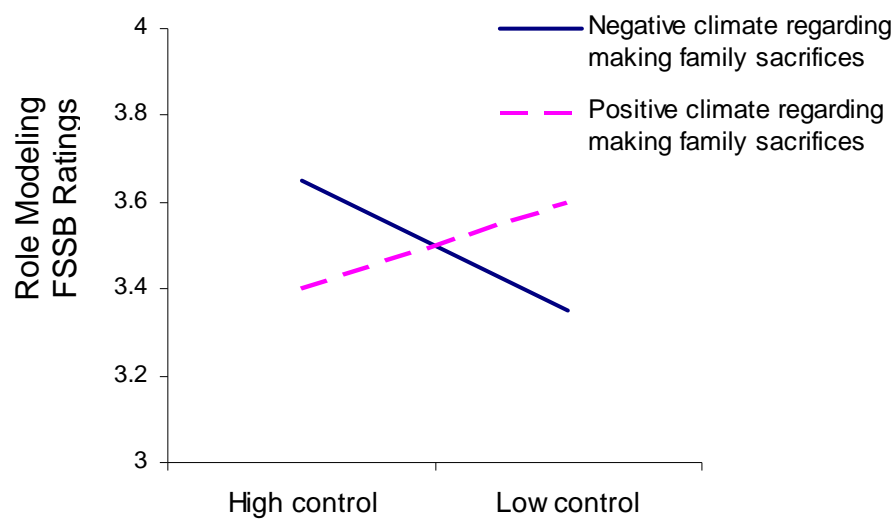
**Figure 3.** Significant interaction between job demands and work climate regarding making family sacrifices on instrumental FSSB.



**Figure 4.** Significant interaction between job demands and climate regarding making family sacrifices on work-family creative management FSSB.



**Figure 5.** Significant interaction between job control and climate regarding making family sacrifices on Role Modeling FSSB.



**Appendix:****Survey items**

<b>Supervisor Level Measures (Level 2)</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">Psychological Demands</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am not asked to do an excessive amount of work</li> <li>2. I have enough time to get the job done</li> <li>3. My job requires working very fast (R)</li> <li>4. My job requires working very hard (R)</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;">Job Control</p> <p>Skill Discretion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My job requires that I learn new things</li> <li>2. I have an opportunity to develop my own special abilities.</li> <li>3. My job requires a high level of skill</li> <li>4. I get to do a variety of things on my job</li> <li>5. My job requires a lot of repetitive work (R)</li> <li>6. My job requires me to be creative</li> </ol> <p>Decision Authority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.</li> <li>2. On my job, I am given a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work.</li> <li>3. I have a lot of say about what happens on my job</li> </ol> <p><i>Response Options: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Climate regarding Sharing Family Concerns</p> <p>“In my company, it is generally accepted that people...”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Might share concerns about their family.</li> <li>2. Can talk about family problems</li> <li>3. Can get advice on how to deal with family issues</li> </ol> <p><i>Response Options: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Climate regarding Making Family Sacrifices</p> <p>“In my company, it is generally accepted that people...”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Must take time away from their family to get their work done</li> <li>2. Have to put their family second to their jobs</li> <li>3. Need to make work their top priority</li> </ol> <p><i>Response Options: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)</i></p>



**Employee Level Measures (Level 1)**

## Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB)

**Emotional Support Dimension**

1. My supervisor is willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and nonwork life
2. My supervisor takes the time to learn about my personal needs
3. My supervisor makes me feel comfortable talking to him/her about my conflicts between work and nonwork
4. My supervisor and I can talk effect to solve conflicts between work and nonwork issues.

**Role Model Dimension**

1. My supervisor is a good role model for work and nonwork balance
2. My supervisor demonstrates effective behaviors in how to juggle work and nonwork balance
3. My supervisor demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job

**Instrumental Support Dimension**

1. I can depend on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it
2. I can rely on my supervisor to make sure my work responsibilities are handled when I have unanticipated nonwork demands
3. My supervisor works effectively with associates to creatively solve conflicts between work and nonwork

**Work-Family Creative Management Dimension**

1. My supervisor things about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit associates and the company
2. My supervisor asks for suggestions to make it easier for associates to balance work and nonwork demands
3. My supervisor is creative in re-allocating job duties to help my department work better as a team
4. My supervisor is able to manage the department as a whole team to enable everyone's needs to be met