Master's thesis

Exploring Supervisors' Age, Work Resources, and Shared Parenthood in Promoting Family-Supportive Behaviors

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Initially, we aimed to complete the writing process by the end of May. However, due to delays in ethics applications and data requests, we have extended our timeline to finish by July 30th.

Abstract

Employees face significant pressure to balance their professional and personal lives in the current workplace. This, combined with an aging workforce, raises the question of whether older supervisors are more inclined to engage in family-supportive supervisory behavior (FSSB) than younger supervisors. Using conservation of resources and shared reality theories, we examined if age-related differences in age-related differences in decision authority and schedule control as two work resources predict more FSSB enactment in older supervisors, and if shared parenthood between supervisors and employees moderates this effect. Baseline and six-month follow-up data from 155 supervisors and 1,040 employees across two U.S. companies were collected by the Work, Family, and Health Network and analyzed. Multilevel path analysis revealed that supervisor age did not predict higher FSSB levels; instead, supervisor tenure was a more consistent predictor. Supervisor decision authority and schedule control did not mediate the relationship between supervisor age and FSSB levels. Shared parenthood did not moderate the relationship between work resources and FSSB. These findings enhance our understanding of FSSB and the factors influencing supervisors' supportive behaviors.

Keywords: family-supportive supervisor behaviors, supervisor age, job autonomy, shared reality, work-family

Exploring Supervisors' Age, Work Resources, and Shared Parenthood in Promoting Family-Supportive Behaviors

The demands of the 24/7 economy, coupled with the increasing complexity of work and family responsibilities, have posed challenges to employees seeking to balance their professional and personal lives (Hammer & Zimmerman, 2011). In response, organizations increasingly recognize the importance of family-supportive supervisor behavior (FSSB), which refers to supervisors' behaviors aimed at facilitating employees' management of work and family responsibilities (Hammer et al., 2007). The implementation of FSSB by supervisors is vital for enabling employees to benefit from company-mandated work-life policies fully (Straub, 2012). Employees with family-supportive supervisors have been consistently found to experience lower interference between their work and family responsibilities, higher job satisfaction, and lower burnout (Guo et al., 2024). Despite the consistent link between FSSB and positive employee outcomes, our understanding of when and why supervisors engage in these behaviors remains limited (Crain & Stevens, 2018).

The growing importance of FSSB coincides with another significant workplace trend: the fast-growing proportion of older workers in industrialized countries. In Europe, for example, the proportion of workers aged 50 and older has significantly increased from 26% in 2009 to 34% in 2022 (Eurostat, 2023). Similarly, the U.S. projected an increase in the labor force share of people aged 65 and older from 6.6% in 2020 to 8.5% by 2032 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). As a result, workplaces are becoming more age-diverse, and organizations can choose among workers from different age groups when recruiting supervisors (Kunze & Menges, 2017). Consequently, in promoting FSSB in the workplace, organizations should consider the role of age in shaping supervisors' likelihood of being supportive toward facilitating employees' professional and personal responsibilities.

Age is a unique characteristic associated with accumulated social life experience (Grossmann et al., 2012; Luong et al., 2011), bringing valuable attributes to supervisors (Walter & Scheibe, 2013; Zacher et al., 2015). Notably, age has also been linked to the experience of having more resources and facing fewer demands in work and family settings (Demerouti et al., 2012) and maintaining a better balance of resources and demands (Scheibe et al., 2022). Thus, being older may provide supervisors with a wealth of knowledge and a capacity for effective guidance, particularly in promoting FSSB to facilitate their employees' professional and personal responsibilities.

However, previous studies on FSSB have largely overlooked the role of supervisors' age. Studies investigating the antecedents of FSSB have primarily emphasized the significance of family-supportive perceptions and organizational culture (Guo et al., 2024). Only a small portion of studies has explored the demographic characteristics of both supervisors and employees as antecedents of FSSB (Crain & Stevens, 2018). Yet, they primarily focused on demographic similarities between supervisors and employees, such as gender and race, marital, and parental status (see Basuil et al., 2016; Foley et al., 2006).

Considering the importance of age in the experience of resources (Demerouti et al., 2012), this study aims to explore age-related antecedents of FSSB. More specifically, the study focuses on supervisors' work resources as factors that facilitate engagement in FSSB. Building upon previous research, this study conceptualizes FSSB as an extra-role behavior, involving actions perceived by supervisors to extend beyond their formal managerial duties (Toegel et al., 2013). Supervisors may see engaging in FSSB as requiring additional time and energy, necessitating an extra investment of resources (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino et al., 2010). Drawing on the conservation of resource theory (COR; Hobfoll, 1989), we argue that as supervisors age, they accumulate critical work resources that effectively compensate for the extra time and energy required for FSSB, thereby enhancing their engagement in FSSB.

Specifically, the current study focuses on supervisors' job autonomy, which is delineated into two key resources: (a) *decision authority*, referring to the individuals' perception of the possibilities to make decisions about their work (Karasek, 1979); and (b) *schedule control*, referring to the individuals' perception of control over the hours that they work (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). These resources can empower supervisors to shape the work environment, aiding employees' professional and personal responsibilities (Allen, 2001; Hammer et al., 2007; Karasek, 1979). Moreover, Ng and Feldman's (2010) meta-analysis indicates that individual job autonomy accumulates as employees age, thus making it an age-relevant resource for engaging in FSSB.

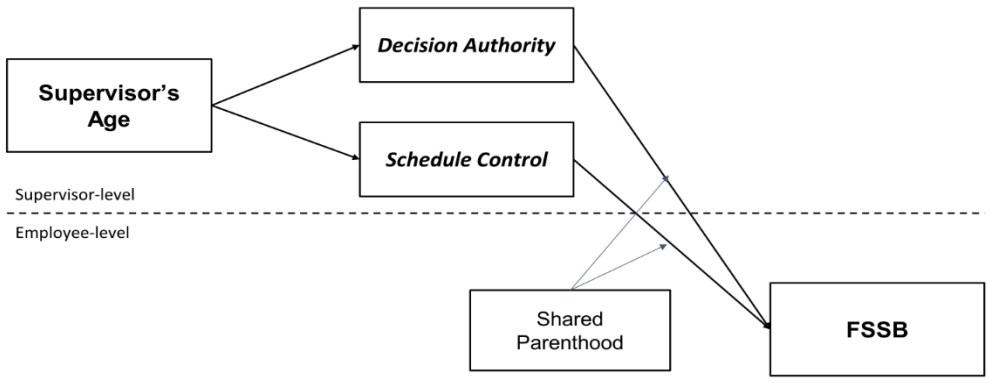
Additionally, this study aims to expand the understanding of the relationship between age, work resources, and FSSB by examining their boundary conditions. While supervisors gain more job autonomy as they age, they may not always utilize these resources to support their employees in managing both work and family responsibilities. We propose that the utilization of supervisors' work resources in the enactment of FSSB may be dependent on the establishment of a shared reality between the supervisors and their employees. Shared reality theory suggests that individuals are motivated to create a mutual understanding or shared beliefs towards a target referent (Echterhoff et al., 2009). In managing work and family responsibilities, a mutual understanding of family-related experiences, such as parenting, is especially relevant and has been shown to influence how employees' perceptions of FSSB (Basuil et al., 2016). When supervisors and employees share a parental status—that is they both are parents— they may share a mutual understanding of struggles in raising up their children and balancing their work schedules, resulting in higher reported levels of supervisors' FSSB. We extend this argument that this shared reality of parenthood may facilitate the mobilization of supervisors' work resources towards the enactment of FSSB, resulting in higher levels of FSSB. Accordingly, the current study tests this through the

similarity of parental status between supervisors and employees. Figure 1 illustrates the research model of the current study.

This study responds to Crain and Steven's (2018) recent calls to identify supervisor-level antecedents influencing FSSB. Taking the COR perspective (Hobfoll, 1989, 2010), we expand the nomological network of FSSB by exploring supervisors' age and age-related work resources as antecedents of FSSB. Furthermore, this study extends the COR theory by integrating the shared reality theory (Echterhoff et al., 2009), introducing unique relational processes that serve as boundary conditions shaping supervisors' resource investments. Finally, this study contributes to the current leadership and age literature by empirically examining age-leadership linkages through age-related differences in resources, which, in turn, predict leadership behaviors in the form of FSSB (Walter & Scheibe, 2013; Zacher et al., 2015).

Figure 1

Conceptual Model of the Present Study



Note. The figure depicts study variables measured at the supervisor- and employee-level. FSSB = Family-supportive supervisory behavior.

FSSB as an Extra-role Behavior

FSSBs refer to behaviors exhibited by supervisors tailored to specifically address their employees' family-related needs and challenges (Hammer et al., 2009). These behaviors include: (1) creating an environment where employees feel comfortable expressing concerns about balancing work and family demands and showing sympathy towards employees' family responsibilities (emotional support); (2) assisting employees in managing their day-to-day work and family needs by implementing adjustments and flexibility to work arrangements and providing guidance on understanding company policies and practices (instrumental support); (3) sharing examples and strategies for effectively integrating work and family needs (role modeling); and (4) proactively facilitating employees' effectiveness both at work and at home through strategic organizational or workflow redesign (creative work-family problem management) (Hammer et al., 2009). Employees likely perceive these behaviors subjectively, based on their expectations of how supervisors address their unique family needs. For instance, an employee expecting a newborn might need more information on leave policies, while one with school-aged children might need work redesign to accommodate school pickups. Hence, it is essential to consider FSSB from the employee's perspective.

While employees often expect FSSB, supervisors typically view these actions beyond their formal duties, as they require personal time and effort not covered by job descriptions. Consequently, FSSB has often been conceptualized as extra-role behavior (Pan, 2018; Straub, 2012; Toegel et al., 2013). For instance, providing emotional support to employees in managing their incompatible work and family needs, sharing advice related to work-life balance, and offering informal work arrangements are considered beyond standard managerial roles (Hammer et al., 2007; Toegel et al., 2013). This expectation discrepancy between the supervisors and employees can foster a perception of heightened demands to be

family-supportive and result in feeling overwhelmed among managers (Bolino et al., 2010). Moreover, engaging in FSSB may come at the expense of supervisors' task performance, particularly when resources such as time are limited (Bergeron, 2007). Therefore, supervisors need adequate resources or the ability to allocate additional ones to engage in FSSB effectively.

Supervisor's Age-related Work Resources and FSSB

Previous research has primarily focused on family-supportive organizational culture and supervisors' and employees' demographic characteristics other than age as antecedents of FSSB (Crain & Stevens, 2018; Guo et al., 2024). However, recent studies have highlighted the role of resources in facilitating FSSB. For instance, Ererdi et al. (2023) explored and found that supervisors' spousal support significantly increased their engagement in FSSB, suggesting that home resources enhance resource investment in the workplace. Moreover, family-supportive organizational culture and policies can also be regarded as a form of work resources that have been demonstrated to increase FSSB (Hammer et al., 2007; Las Heras et al., 2015; Mills et al., 2014). However, in an aging workforce, it is important to examine supervisors' resources subjected to age-related changes.

Supervisors may encounter changes in their work resource constellation as they age and progress through different career stages (Demerouti et al., 2012). These changes are often related to the evolving significance of various roles both in the workplace (e.g., subordinate, mentor, leader) and outside of work (e.g., child, partner) (Scheibe et al., 2022). Provided that age is associated with accumulated social role experiences, supervisors may experience a shift in their resources that is increasingly favorable as they grow older (Walter & Scheibe, 2013; Zacher et al., 2015).

Among this constellation of resources, job autonomy has been shown to increase with age and is particularly crucial to FSSB. Job autonomy encompasses the freedom and

discretion employees have in carrying out their work (Hackman & Oldham, 1975), comprising work scheduling autonomy, decision-making autonomy (synonymous with *decision authority*), and autonomy in choosing work methods (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). While decision authority focuses on control over how work tasks are performed (Karasek, 1979), it may overlook control over when and where work is performed (Kelly et al., 2011). Work scheduling autonomy or *schedule control*, defined by Thomas and Ganster (1995) as workers' perceived control over arrangements of their working hours, complements managing both work and non-work responsibilities (Kelly et al., 2011). In the present study, we explore how *decision authority* and *schedule control*, as distinct forms of job autonomy, may link supervisors' age to their engagement in FSSB.

Job autonomy has been shown to increase with age (Ng & Feldman, 2010). As individuals progress through their careers and enter later stages of life, they prioritize roles offering greater independence and handling higher complexity with less strain (El Khawli et al., 2023; Fried et al., 2007). This shift reflects older adults' emphasis on maintaining well-being, focusing on job characteristics that enable positive task experiences and nurture quality social relationships (Fried et al., 2007). Job autonomy, encompassing facets such as decision authority and schedule control, is particularly valued by older adults because it enhances job efficacy and facilitates the management of family responsibilities, such as eldercare (Ng & Feldman, 2015). Decision authority enables older adults to exert efficacy over their work tasks, allowing them to prioritize tasks requiring wisdom over those demanding quick processing, which declines with age (Hertel et al., 2013; Kooij et al., 2011; Truxillo et al., 2012). Similarly, schedule control empowers older adults to manage their working hours effectively, allocating more time for family and social engagements that become increasingly valued with age (Carstensen, 2006; Ng & Feldman, 2015).

Consequently, we hypothesize that age is associated with an increase in decision authority and schedule control, which are key indicators of work resources.

H1a: Supervisors' age is positively associated with supervisors' decision authority.

H1b: Supervisors' age is positively associated with supervisors' schedule control.

Both decision authority and schedule control are crucial resources for enacting FSSB. Hammer et al. (2007) argued that supervisors typically have significant discretion in deciding whether to authorize employees' use of established work-family policies or informal arrangements regarding work hours. Supervisors often perceive these discretionary acts as extra-role behavior, leading to potential resource loss (Toegel et al., 2013). According to COR theory (Hobfoll, 2010), supervisors with more resources are better equipped to counteract the resource loss associated with FSSB and promote such behaviors. Empirical findings suggest that individuals are more likely to focus on positive work behaviors when they perceive higher levels of authority (Anderson et al., 2012). Therefore, supervisors' perceived autonomy over their decisions and schedules will likely influence their engagement in FSSB. For instance, if supervisors believe they have control over approving work-family policies, they are more likely to authorize them. Similarly, if supervisors have flexibility in arranging their work hours to balance work and family responsibilities, they may find it easier to serve as role models for their employees. Consequently, greater decision authority and schedule control may promote higher levels of engagement in FSSB.

H2: Supervisors' (a) decision authority and (b) schedule control are positively related to FSSB.

Zacher et al. (2015) suggest that supervisors' age and leadership behaviors are linked via age-related changes in their work and interpersonal attributes. The current study proposes that supervisors' age and leadership behaviors, represented by FSSB, are connected through age-related changes in work resources, namely decision authority and schedule control. To

the extent that older supervisors have access to more decision authority and schedule control, they may exhibit more FSSB towards their employees, leading to higher employee-rated FSSB. Thus, we hypothesize that supervisors' age has a positive indirect effect on FSSB via an increase in decision authority and schedule control.

H3: Supervisors' age has a positive indirect effect on FSSB through (a) decision authority and (b) schedule control.

The Role of Shared Reality in Facilitating FSSB

Although age offers supervisors the accrued capacity to engage more in FSSB, the alignment of these resources with the cultivation of FSSB may depend on the formation of a shared reality between supervisors and employees (Echterhoff et al., 2009; Zacher et al., 2015). A shared reality is characterized by a commonality in beliefs or inner states regarding specific referents (Echterhoff et al., 2009). In the context of FSSB, these referents may include social expectations in balancing work and family responsibilities (Hammer et al., 2009). For example, supervisors and employees who are both parents may face similar challenges, such as managing childcare and assisting with school assignments while meeting deadlines and attending meetings throughout the day. When supervisors and employees share a common belief on how they should balance work and family responsibilities, they experience a shared reality. For instance, both supervisors and employees can share the belief that one can still be productive at work while attending to family responsibilities.

Higgins et al. (2021) highlight that individuals form such shared realities to fulfill their epistemic needs for understanding the target referent and their relational needs for connecting with others. This mutual understanding enhances trust and positive beliefs in others' views on the target referent (Echterhoff et al., 2005), extending beyond mere objective similarities to include a mutual inner state regarding the challenges of parenthood (Echterhoff, 2012). In this vein, shared reality can function as part of the supervisor-

employee interactions that shape how and when supervisors enact FSSB. According to the relational view of leadership, leadership is co-created through supervisor-employee interactions, whereby both supervisors and employees can equally shape leadership behaviors (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). This view highlights that FSSB is not a one-way street. That is, in order to establish a shared reality, managers must recognize employees' challenges in managing work and family responsibilities, while employees are encouraged to communicate their struggles in these domains (Pan, 2018; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Depending on the dynamic in the supervisor-employee interactions, it is likely that not all employees are treated equally, as each supervisor-employee pair may have different challenges and perspectives regarding how one should manage work and family responsibilities.

In the current study, we investigate the role of shared parenthood from the employees' perspective in facilitating FSSB. Previous study had considered different domains through which a shared reality about the act of balancing work and responsibilities could be established, such as through the similarity of gender roles in family caregiving, parental status, and marital status (Basuil et al., 2016). Among these domains, Basuil et al. (2016) found that employees perceive higher levels of supervisors' FSSB when they share similar parental status (i.e., having school-aged children below 18 years old), beyond similarities in gender and marital status. This also suggests that supervisors may be more inclined to mobilize resources for FSSB when they share a common understanding of the hardships of parenthood with their employees. Pan (2018) supports this notion, emphasizing that supervisors are more likely to engage in FSSB when they recognize their employees' struggles in managing work and family demands. Therefore, we hypothesize that shared parenthood between supervisors and employees, operationalized through aligned parental status of having school-aged children, moderates the relationship between supervisors'

decision authority and schedule control with FSSB. We expect that when supervisors and employees share parenthood, supervisors are more likely to utilize their decision authority and schedule control to engage in family-supportive acts towards those employees who are parents as well.

H4: Shared parenthood moderates the indirect effect of supervisors' age on FSSB through decision authority. Specifically, the indirect effects of age on employee-rated FSSB through (a) decision authority and (b) schedule control are stronger when both supervisors and employees have school-aged children (under 18 years old) living in their homes.

Methods

Procedures

We used pre-existing data from a large multisite intervention study conducted by the Work Family and Health Network (WFHN) in the United States. The study's original purpose was to investigate the impact of a workplace intervention aimed at reducing work-family conflict and enhancing employees' work and family outcomes (WFHN, 2015). Utilizing group-randomized field experiments, the WFHN collected data from two large companies. The first company represents a lower-wage, hourly workforce in the healthcare industry (codename LEEF), while the second represents a higher-wage, professional workforce in the telecommunication industry (codename TOMO) (Bray et al., 2013). Work groups comprising supervisors and employees were randomly assigned to either the treatment or control group. Supervisors in the treatment group underwent a workplace intervention focused on increasing their support and understanding of employees' work-family issues. Those in the control group underwent customary work practices from the Human Resources (HR) department. Data on supervisors' and employees' work and family characteristics were collected across four waves: baseline, at 6-, 12-, and 18-month follow-up after the intervention period. Trained field interviewers collected in-person data from supervisors and

employees using computer-assisted interview (CAPI) instruments and telephone. The interviews followed the principles in the Declaration of Helsinki, and approval was received from the appropriate institutional review boards.

The present study focuses on a subsample of supervisors and employees from LEEF and TOMO assigned to the control group, with data collected at baseline and the 6-month follow-up. We selected this subsample to investigate how age-related differences in Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB) are linked to age-related differences in supervisors' work resources. By focusing on the control group, we can explore the interplay between age, work resources, shared reality, and FSSB under typical Human Resources practices, enhancing the generalizability of our findings. At baseline, data on supervisors' age, work resources (i.e., decision authority and schedule control), and family characteristics (e.g., living with a partner or spouse, number of children) were collected. At the 6-month follow-up, employees rated their supervisors' FSSB. This design minimizes common method bias by temporally separating FSSB ratings from hypothesized predictors and utilizing different rating sources, namely the employees (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Sample Characteristics

The initial sample within the control group consisted of 96 supervisors and 691 employees in LEEF; and 107 supervisors and 351 employees in TOMO. Of the total 203 supervisors, 48 (31 from LEEF and 17 from TOMO) were excluded due to having no associated employees. Thus, our analytical sample amounted to 155 supervisors and 1,040 employees. From this sample of supervisors and employees, there were three supervisors from TOMO, 112 employees from LEEF, and 54 employees from TOMO who were missing FSSB ratings at the 6-month follow-up. Additionally, four employees were missing demographic information in either age, education, working hours, or the number of their children.

Just over half of the supervisors were men (56%) with an average age of 45.9 years old (*SD* = 8.9 years, range = 27–70 years). Most of them (45%) are aged between 36-45 years old (see Table 1), and most (98%) were highly educated. All worked full-time, averaging 48.3 hours per week (*SD* = 6.3), and had been working in their organizations for an average of 11.3 years (*SD* = 8.8 years). Most (83%) were married or living with a partner, and 59% were living with a child or children with an average of 2 children (*SD* = 0.9). Additionally, 27% reported providing care for adult relatives six months before data collection.

Across the supervisors, the number of employees rating their FSSB at the 6-month follow-up ranged from 1 to 26 (*M* = 5.8, *SD* = 6.0). Almost three-quarters (74%) were women with an average age of 41.1 years old (*SD* = 11.7 years, range = 18–72 years), and the majority (73%) had a college degree. They worked on average 40.2 hours per week (*SD* = 7.8) and had been working in the organizations for an average of 8.2 years (*SD* = 7.9 years). Additionally, 70% reported living with a spouse or partner, 57% had one or more children living together with them (*M* = 1.8, *SD* = 0.9), and 26% reported providing care for an adult relative.

Table 1

Demographic Variables of Supervisors and Employees

Demographic	Supervisor (*n* = 155)	Employees (*n* = 1,040)
Age Group		
18-25 years old	0 (0.0%)	133 (12.8%)
26-35 years old	14 (9.0%)	207 (19.9%)
36-45 years old	70 (45.2%)	301 (28.9%)
46-55 years old	45 (29.0%)	275 (26.4%)
> 56 years old	26 (16.8%)	122 (11.7%)
Missing	–	2 (0.2%)
Gender		
Male	69 (44.5%)	276 (26.5%)
Female	86 (55.5%)	764 (73.5%)

Table 1

(Continued)

Demographic	Supervisor (*n* = 155)	Employees (*n* = 1,040)
Education		
Grade 1-8	0 (0.0%)	5 (0.5%)
Grade 9-11	0 (0.0%)	34 (3.3%)
Grade 12 or GED	3 (2.9%)	234 (22.5%)
College 1-3 years	48 (31.0%)	389 (37.4%)
College 4 years more	104 (67.1%)	377 (36.2%)
Missing	–	1 (0.1%)
Living condition		
Single	26 (16.8%)	314 (30.2%)
With a spouse/partner	129 (83.2%)	726 (69.8%)
Number of children		
0	64 (41.3%)	445 (42.8%)
1	25 (16.1%)	250 (24.0%)
2	48 (31.0%)	236 (22.7%)
3	12 (7.7%)	75 (7.2%)
4	4 (2.6%)	25 (2.4%)
5	2 (1.3%)	6 (0.6%)
6	–	–
7	–	1 (0.1%)
8	–	1 (0.1%)
Missing	–	1 (0.1%)
Adult care responsibility (six months prior)		
Yes	42 (27.1%)	270 (26.0%)
No	113 (72.9%)	770 (74.0%)

Measures

Decision Authority (Reported by Supervisors)

Supervisors' decision authority was measured using a three-item subscale from the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ; Karasek et al., 1998). Supervisors rated each item using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A sample item was: "On your job, you have very little freedom to decide how you do your work." Sum scores were computed by averaging supervisors' ratings across the three items, with higher

scores indicating greater decision authority, demonstrating good internal consistency. The supervisor-level reliability of this scale was .72, 95% CI [.61, .80] (McDonald's omega; Dunn et al., 2014), demonstrating adequate internal consistency.

Schedule Control (Reported by Supervisors)

The current study adapted 8 items from the original 14-item scale developed by Thomas and Ganster (1995) to measure supervisors' schedule control. Supervisors indicated the extent to which they have control over their work time and location using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*very little*) to 5 (*very much*). A sample item is "How much choice do you have over the total number of hours you work each week?" Similar to decision authority, we averaged supervisor ratings across the eight items, with higher scores indicating greater perceived schedule control. The supervisor-level reliability of this scale was .80, 95% CI [.75, .84] (McDonald's omega; Dunn et al., 2014), indicating good internal consistency.

FSSB (Reported by Employees)

Employees rated their supervisors' FSSB using four items from the FSSB Short Form scale (FSSB-SF; Hammer et al., 2013). Each item represented one of the four dimensions of FSSB: (a) "Your supervisor makes you feel comfortable talking to him/her about my conflicts between work and non-work" (emotional support), (b) "Your supervisor makes you feel comfortable talking to him/her about my conflicts between work and non-work" (instrumental support), (c) "Your supervisor demonstrates effective behaviors in how to juggle work and non-work issues" (role modeling), and (d) "Your supervisor demonstrates effective behaviors in how to juggle work and non-work issues" (creative work-family management). Employees rated each item using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The employees' ratings across four items were averaged, with higher scores indicating higher levels of employee-rated FSSB. The

employee-level reliability estimate of this scale study was .90, 95% CI [.89, .92] (McDonald's omega; Dunn et al., 2014), showing good internal consistency.

Shared Parenthood

A dummy variable was created at the employee level to represent shared parenthood. We first identified whether both supervisors and employees had at least one school-aged child (under 18 years old) living at home. Employees were coded as 1 (*shared parenthood*) if both they and their supervisors were living with school-aged child(ren), and as 0 (*no shared parenthood*) if only one or neither were living with school-aged child(ren). Table 2 presents the number of supervisor-employee dyads with and without shared parenthood.

Table 2

Shared Parenthood in Supervisor-Employee Dyads

	Supervisor (N = 155)		
Employees	With child(ren)	Without child(ren)	Total
With child/ren	230 [a]	265	495
Without child/ren	267	277	544
Total	497	542	1039

Note. One employee did not provide information about the number of children they have.

[a] This represents the number of employees with shared parenthood.

Control Variables

Our dataset comes from two distinct organizations. Thus, we control for the organizations (coded as 1 = LEEF and 0 = TOMO) in subsequent analyses. Next, we account for supervisors' and employees' gender, organizational tenure, and working hours. Previous research has indicated that gender influences individuals' perceptions of work resources and the implementation of FSSB (Huffman & Olson, 2017). Organizational tenure has been shown to impact how individuals evaluate and access autonomy in the workplace (Brimeyer

et al., 2010). Furthermore, variability in individuals' working hours is closely associated with perceptions of work-time control and may thus act as a confounding factor for schedule control (Kubo et al., 2013). Additionally, in line with prior studies examining the impact of shared realities on FSSB, we also control for individuals' living arrangements (coded as 1 = living together with a spouse/partner and 0 = living alone) and their responsibilities for adult care (1 = responsible for adult care and 0 = not responsible for adult care) (Basuil et al., 2016; Foley et al., 2006).

Analytical Strategy

To assess whether missing data is a concern, we compared the final analytical sample of supervisors and employees with those excluded. First, 25% of supervisors (48 out of 203) were excluded for lack of associated employees. Comparing these supervisors to those in the analytical sample, we found no significant differences in demographics and work characteristics (see Appendix A1), suggesting no bias resulting from systematic differences among supervisors. Second, we assessed employees excluded due to nonresponse to FSSB ratings at the 6-month follow-up. The 16% of employees who were excluded mainly due to nonresponse in employee-rated FSSB had lower tenure and did not have school-aged children at home (see Appendix A2). These patterns suggest that nonresponse in FSSB ratings was missing at random (MAR; Rubin, 1976) because it is related to the observed data (i.e., age, tenure, and having children at home). Subsequently, we conditioned for employees' tenure and information about having children at home, and utilized Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) estimator to handle our missing data and estimate the path coefficients in our model. Under the assumption of MAR, FIML has been demonstrated to be favorable for handling missing data in multilevel data structure compared to the multiple imputation (Larsen, 2011).

Following the handling of missing data, we assessed the assumptions of each path of the hypothesized model (see Appendix B). Histogram plots of the continuous variables revealed slight skewness in supervisors' tenure, working hours, decision authority, schedule control, and employee-rated FSSB ratings. We also detected minor violations of homogeneity assumptions for supervisor-level paths, specifically from supervisor age to decision authority and from supervisor age to schedule control. However, no multicollinearity was observed in any of the paths. To address these non-normal distributions and assumption violations, we employed robust standard error estimators provided in the Mplus 8.10 software (Muthén & Muthén, 2017)

Prior to the main analyses, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to validate the factor structures of the scales. Subsequently, given the confirmed nested data structure, missingness pattern, and the results of the assumption checks, we performed a multilevel path analysis with the FIML estimator with robust standard error in the Mplus 8.10 software (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). We specified 2-2-1 multilevel mediation model to examine indirect effect of supervisors' age on employees FSSB ratings via supervisors' decision authority and schedule control. Next, we examined the conditional indirect effect of supervisors' age on employees' FSSB by including a cross-level effect of supervisors' decision authority and schedule control (both measured at Level-2) on the path from employees' shared parenthood to employee-rated FSSB (at Level-1). We applied cluster mean centering to employees' shared parenthood, subtracting the cluster mean and reintroducing it as a Level-2 covariate. This step was necessary to accurately estimate the within-cluster effect of shared parenthood prior to incorporating cross-level interactions (Yaremych et al., 2023). Afterwards, any significant conditional effect of employees' shared parenthood was probed through simple slope analysis at average levels of supervisors' decision authority and schedule control and with or without the shared parenthood. We

reported the path estimates of the study variables with and without covariates to provide transparency on the influence of covariates (Mändli & Rönkkö, 2023).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Two separate confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to examine the factor structure of the scales using Mplus 8.10 software (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) assessed the distinctiveness of supervisors' decision authority and schedule control. The CFA results in Table 3 indicated that the two-factor model fit the data better than the one-factor model (Satorra-Bentler $\Delta\chi2 = 27.1$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$), providing support for the distinctiveness between supervisors' decision authority and schedule control. Second, a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) examined the multilevel structure of employees' ratings of FSSB, following Muthén's (1994) guidelines. Prior to the MCFA, intraclass correlations (ICC1) were calculated for each of the four FSSB items to assess variances at the supervisor level (Snijders & Bosker, 2012). We found ICC scores ranging from 0.05 to 0.11, with an average of 0.08. These values are relatively lower than those of Dyer et al. (2005), who reported ICC scores between 0.10 and 0.26 for leadership behavior scales using GLOBE project data. Lai and Kwok (2015) demonstrated that given a design effect[1] of more than 1.1, researchers should consider the multilevel structure in their model. In the current study, the design effects (*deff*) were ranging from 1.24 to 1.52 above the 1.1 threshold, thus warranting the use of a multilevel approach. The MCFA model fit indicated that a multilevel structure of the FSSB ratings provided a good fit to the data ($\chi2 = 17.38$, df = 4, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.06, $SRMR_{within} = 0.01$, $SRMR_{between} = 0.03$) (see Appendix C for comparison).

[1] Design effect = 1 + (Average cluster size – 1) × intraclass correlation. Average cluster size in the current study is 873 / 152 = 5.74. The design effects ranging from 1 + (5.74 – 1) × 0.05 = 1.24 to 1 + (5.74 – 1) × 0.11 = 1.52.

Table 3

Model Fit for Decision Authority and Schedule Control (Supervisor-level)

Models	$\chi 2$	df	CFI	RMSEA 90% CI	SRMR	AIC	BIC
One-factor	134.08	44	0.78	0.10 - 0.14	0.08	4678.55	4778.98
Two-factor	88.00	43	0.89	0.06 - 0.11	0.06	4631.90	4735.37

Note. N = 155. CFI = Comparative Fit Index. RMSEA = Root Mean Square of Approximation. CI = Confidence Interval. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Residual. AIC = Akaike Information Criterion. BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion.

Descriptive Analyses

Table 4 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations between supervisor-level and employee-level variables. Correlations at supervisor-level were obtained by computing the means of employee responses within their respective supervisors' unit. We found no statistically significant relationships between supervisors' age and either decision authority (r = .10, p = .15) or schedule control (r = -.05, p = .59). Both supervisors' decision authority (r = .24, p = .007) and schedule control (r = .34, p < .001) were positively associated with the mean FSSB ratings at the supervisor-level. Notably, supervisors' tenure was positively correlated with schedule control (r = .23, p = .005) and mean FSSB ratings at supervisor-level (r = .19, p = .03), but not with decision authority (r = .15, p = .06). At the employee level, no relationships were found between having school-aged children at home and employee-rated FSSB (r = .03, p = .38), or between shared parenthood and employee-rated FSSB (r = .05, p = .16). Supervisors' living condition (single/with a spouse or partner) and adult care were unrelated to any study variables, and therefore were excluded from the subsequent analyses for parsimony (Mändli & Rönkkö, 2023).

Table 4

Mean, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations of Study Variables

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Supervisor-level															
1. Industry [a]	0.42	0.50	–	.27***	.66***	-.26**	-.12	-.28***	.07	-.25**	.19*	-.14	-.10	-.30***	-.11
2. Age (years)	45.88	8.86		–	.28***	.30***	-.17*	-.07	.14	-.53***	.11	-.04	-.04	-.37***	.07
3. Gender [b]	0.55	0.50			–	.00	-.03	-.30***	.14	-.30***	.03	-.09	-.25***	-.37***	-.08
4. Tenure (years)	11.35	8.82				–	-.06	.06	.06	-.15	.15	.23**	-.07	-.11	.19*
5. Working hours	48.34	6.34					–	.08	.08	-.02	-.01	.03	-.01	.04	-.02
6. Living condition [c]	0.83	0.37						–	.16	.12	.03	.01	.08	.09	-.09
7. Adult care [d]	0.27	0.45							–	-.11	-.11	.06	.02	.01	-.02
8. Children at home [e]	0.52	0.50								–	.01	.07	.07	.74***	.01
9. Decision Authority	4.09	0.66									–	.48***	.02	.01	.24**
10. Schedule Control	3.43	0.76										–	-.02	.05	.34***
Employee-level															
11. Children at home [e]	0.48	0.50											–	.55***	-.03
12. Shared parenthood [f]	0.22	0.42											.56***	–	.02
13. FSSB (6-month)	3.67	0.88											.03	.05	–

Notes. Correlations below the diagonal are employee-level correlations (N = 874-1,040). Correlations above the diagonal are supervisor-level correlations (N = 131-155). FSSB = Family-supportive Supervisory Behavior.

[a] 0 = TOMO, 1 = LEEF.

[b] 0 = male, 1 = female.

[c] 0 = single, 1 = living with a spouse or partner.

[d] 0 = no, 1 = yes.

[e] 0 = no school-aged children at home, 1 = with school-aged children at home.

[f] 0 = no shared parenthood, 1 = shared parenthood

$^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5 presents the estimates of the multilevel path analysis. Hypotheses 1a and 1b posited a significant and positive relationship between supervisors' age and their decision authority and schedule control. Contrary to our hypotheses, supervisors' age was unrelated to their decision authority or schedule control. Thus, Hypotheses 1a and 1b were not supported. Hypotheses 2a and 2b posited a positive relationship between supervisors' decision authority and schedule control with FSSB ratings. However, the results showed that supervisors' decision authority was not associated with employee-rated FSSB. Supervisors' schedule control was also not associated with employee-rated FSSB. Thus, Hypotheses 2a and 2b were not supported. Subsequently, we computed the indirect effects of age on FSSB via supervisors' decision authority (Hypotheses 3a) and schedule control (Hypotheses 3b). Indirect effects were computed by specifying new parameters that multiply the estimates of Hypotheses 1a with 2a for decision authority, and 1b with 2b for schedule control. Consistent with the nonsignificant results from Hypotheses 1a-1b and 2a-2b, we found no significant indirect effects of age on FSSB via decision authority (indirect effect = 0.00, *SE* = 0.00, *p* = .62, 95% CI [-0.001, 0.001]) and via schedule control (indirect effect = 0.00, *SE* = 0.00, *p* = .94, 95% CI [-0.002, 0.002]).

Hypotheses 4a and 4b builds on Hypotheses 3a and 3b, suggesting that the indirect effects of supervisors' decision authority and schedule control were moderated by shared parenthood between supervisors and employees. We found no significant cross-level interactions between decision authority and shared parenthood on FSSB (*B* = -0.20, *SE* = 0.15, *p* = .16, 95% CI [-0.58, 0.17]). The cross-level interaction between schedule control and shared parenthood on FSSB was also not significant (*B* = 0.28, *SE* = 0.22, *p* = .20, 95% CI [-0.28, 0.84]). These results, along with the lack of indirect effects of age on FSSB through

Table 5

Multilevel Path Analysis Estimates

	Decision authority			Schedule control			FSSB		
Predictors	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*
Supervisor-level (Level 2)									
Industry	.230 (.107)	[-.046, .506]	.032	-.213 (.125)	[-.536, .110]	.090	-.084 (.098)	[-.337, .170]	.396
Age	.005 (.006)	[-.011, .021]	.412	-.001 (.008)	[-.021, .020]	.936	-.003 (.004)	[-.014, .009]	.557
Decision authority							.035 (.067)	[-.138, .207]	.602
Schedule control							.093 (.052)	[-.040, .227]	.072
Shared parenthood							-.095 (.155)	[-.493, .304]	.540
Residual variance	**.413 (.054)**	**[.273, .552]**	**.000**	**.556 (.058)**	**[.400, .706]**	**.000**	**.051 (.028)**	**[-.020, .123]**	**.062**
Employee-level (Level 1)									
Tenure							.005 (.004)	[-.005, .015]	.227
Children at home							.063 (.098)	[-.191, .317]	.522
Shared Parenthood							-.098 (.763)	[-2.063, 1.868]	.999
Residual variance							**.708 (.047)**	**[.586, .829]**	**.000**
Cross-level interaction									
Decision authority × Shared parenthood							-.204 (.146)	[-.579, .171]	.161
Schedule control × Shared parenthood							.280 (.219)	[-.283, .843]	.200

Note. Level 1 *N* = 1,040; Level 2 *N* = 155. Statistically significant estimates are bolded. Shared parenthood coded as 0 = no shared parenthood and 1 = shared parenthood. Children at home coded as 0 = no school-aged children at home and 1 = with school-aged children at home. FSSB = Family-supportive supervisory behavior. SE = Standard error. CI = Confidence interval.

decision authority and schedule control, suggest that the moderated mediation effects in Hypotheses 4a and 4b were unsupported.

The results of Hypothesis 1a-4b remain consistent even after controlling for supervisors' gender, tenure, and working hours (see Table 6). Interestingly, among the control variables, supervisors' organizational tenure emerged as a consistent predictor for supervisors' decision authority and schedule control, and employee-rated FSSB. Supervisors' organizational tenure was positively associated with their decision authority (B = .02, SE = .01, p = .005, 95% CI [.002, .038]). Supervisors' organizational tenure was also positively associated with supervisors' schedule control (B = .02, SE = .01, p = .002, 95% CI [.004, .041]). Supervisors' organizational tenure was also statistically correlated with employee-rated FSSB (B = .01, SE = .01, p = .013, 95% CI [.000, .025]). However, it is important to note that the 95% CI of this relationship contains 0, which suggest uncertainty about the true effect size.

Discussions

As managing work and family responsibilities becomes more complex, the family-supportive role of supervisors is increasingly important. Integrating ideas from the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 2010) and shared reality theory (Echterhoff et al., 2009), this study examined whether supervisors' age-related work resources, like decision authority and schedule control, were linked with employee-rated family-supportive supervisory behavior (FSSB) and if these effects are moderated by shared parenthood. The multilevel path analysis found no association between supervisors' age and their decision authority or schedule control. Additionally, there was no evidence that decision authority and schedule control were related to employee-rated FSSB, nor was there an indirect relationship between supervisors' age and employee-rated FSSB. Shared parenthood between supervisors and employees was also not associated with employee-rated FSSB and did not moderate the

Table 6

Multilevel Path Analysis Estimates with Covariates

	Decision authority			Schedule control			FSSB		
Predictors	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*	*Estimate (SE)*	*95% CI*	*p*
Supervisor-level (Level 2)									
Industry	.566 (.197)	[.059, 1.074]	.004	-.007 (.168)	[-.439, .426]	.968	-.064 (.136)	[-.415, .288]	.641
Gender	-.320 (.181)	[-.786, .145]	.076	-.074 (.153)	[-.467, .320]	.628	.069 (.117)	[-.232, .370]	.554
Working hours	.006 (.007)	[-.014, .025]	.447	.004 (.013)	[-.029, .037]	.765	.000 (.005)	[-.014, .014]	.994
Tenure	**.020 (.007)**	**[.002, .038]**	**.005**	**.022 (.007)**	**[.004, .041]**	**.002**	**.012 (.005)**	**[.000, .025]**	**.013**
Age	.000 (.006)	[-.017, .016]	.972	-.009 (.008)	[-.030, .013]	.268	-.006 (.004)	[-.018, .005]	.212
Decision authority							.009 (.067)	[-.163, .182]	.890
Schedule control							.064 (.051)	[-.068, .197]	.211
Shared parenthood							-.079 (.152)	[-.469, .312]	.602
Residual variance	**.381 (.042)**	**[.272, .491]**	**.000**	**.527 (.057)**	**[.381, .673]**	**.000**	.041 (.021)	[-.013, .094]	.052
Employee-level (Level 1)									
Tenure							.004 (.004)	[-.006, .014]	.323
Children at home							.074 (.097)	[-.176, .324]	.477
Shared Parenthood							-.090 (.732)	[-1.975, 1.794]	.902
Residual variance							**.708 (.046)**	**[.591, .826]**	**.000**
Cross-level interaction									
Decision authority × Shared parenthood							-.201 (.122)	[-.516, .114]	.100
Schedule control × Shared parenthood							.271 (.224)	[-.306, .848]	.227

Note. Level 1 N = 1,040; Level 2 N = 155. Statistically significant estimates are bolded. Shared parenthood coded as 0 = no shared parenthood and 1 = shared parenthood. Children at home coded as 0 = no school-aged children at home and 1 = with school-aged children at home. FSSB = Family-supportive supervisory behavior. SE = Standard error. CI = Confidence interval.

indirect effects of decision authority and schedule control on FSSB. Instead, we found a significant direct effect of supervisors' tenure on supervisors' decision authority, schedule control, and employee-rated FSSB.

Theoretical Implications

The lack of age differences in supervisors' decision authority and schedule control is surprising. Previous meta-analysis has shown age to be positively associated with more job autonomy (Ng & Feldman, 2010). However, our sample was notably homogenous, with 46% being in the middle-age group (36-45 years old; Demerouti et al., 2012) and 98% holding a college degree. Ng and Feldman (2010) showed that the relationship between age and job autonomy diminishes significantly when over 40% of the sample holds a college education. Consequently, the lack of a clear association between advanced age and higher levels of decision authority and schedule control in our highly educated sample may be due to this homogeneity.

Our study also found that neither supervisors' age nor work resources were linked to higher levels of employee-rated FSSB. One explanation could be that employees evaluate or interpret how supervisors use their resources differently. Employees likely view FSSB as a standard part of a supervisor's role (Toegel et al., 2013), but expectations regarding what constitutes adequate FSSB may vary. Employees with higher expectations may rate FSSB lower if their needs are unmet, while those with more modest expectations might rate supervisors higher. Additionally, supervisors' efforts to enact FSSB may not always be visible or recognized by employees, leading to potential underestimation of supervisors' efforts, as seen in the organizational citizenship literature (Chang et al., 2007). Despite the lack of significant relationships with employee-rated FSSB, we observed a positive association between supervisors' decision authority and schedule control and aggregated FSSB ratings at the supervisor level. This suggests that FSSB might be interpreted differently

when measured at a team level, though this study's support for this notion is limited due to the inadequate reliability of aggregated scores (see Appendix D). Future research with improved design is needed to further explore FSSB as a team-level phenomenon.

In considering the role of shared reality in parenthood, our study found no association between shared parenthood and employee-rated FSSB, nor did it moderate the relationships between supervisors' decision authority and schedule control with employee-rated FSSB. These findings contradict previous work by Basuil et al. (2016), who found that employees sharing parenthood with their supervisors rated FSSB more highly. The discrepancy may stem from the time lag between the indicators of shared parenthood and employee-rated FSSB. Basuil et al. (2016) used cross-sectional data, whereas our study examined shared parenthood effect on employee-rated FSSB after six months. While supervisors' and employees' parental status may remain constant, the shared reality of parenthood might change over this period. For shared reality to exist, one of the parties must believe that they have a shared understanding of parenthood (Echterhoff et al., 2009). Thus, a shared reality may cease to exist if one of the parties establishes a different experience of parenthood. For instance, a supervisor and an employee may initially share similar views on parenthood. However, if the supervisor can afford childcare, they can commit more to work, set stricter deadlines, and expect employees to manage family issues without impacting their work. Meanwhile, the employee may continue to struggle with family responsibilities, leading to a divergence in their experiences and perspectives. This divergence is further pronounced in the U.S. workforce, which prioritizes work commitments over family commitments (Basuil et al., 2016), as evidenced by the limited access to paid parental leave across most U.S. employers (Kossek, 2015). Such changes are subjective experiences and may not be closely reflected in this study, which utilizes objective measures to examine shared parenthood.

Moreover, establishing a shared reality involves a motivation to understand and connect with others (Higgins et al., 2021). In the context of FSSB, this motivation manifests in the relational processes tied within supervisor-employee interactions (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). For instance, might inquire about employees' work and family lives to understand how they navigate responsibilities between the two domains and strengthen relationships. Depending on their perception of supervisors and their own position relative to them, employees may either openly share details about their family life or hesitate to disclose such information (Fairhurst & Antonakis, 2012). As previously discussed, differing role expectations may affect how employees perceive these inquiries, with employees likely responding positively to the inquires as part of the supervisor's expected role (Toegel et al., 2013). Furthermore, followership theory may suggest that employee traits and behaviors can shape supervisors' responses (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). It is possible that employees' supportive behaviors towards their supervisors create a reciprocal effect, where supervisors respond by engaging in FSSB, thus fostering a cycle of mutual support (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015). Finally, contextual factors, such as family-supportive organizational culture, may also reinforce relational processes that lead to FSSB (Hammer et al., 2007; Matthews & Toumbeva, 2015; Mills et al., 2014)

Instead of age, the current study seems to suggest that supervisors' organizational tenure can play a more significant role in predicting higher levels of FSSB. Although the effect of tenure on employee-rated FSSB is practically very small, it is worth considering the role of supervisors' tenure in a highly educated sample such as ours. Unlike chronological age, tenure solely reflects the time spent within the organization, which is linked to organization-specific knowledge and experiences that develop over time (Lahaie, 2005). These experiences and knowledge are crucial for supervisors to effectively support employees in balancing work and family responsibilities. Supervisors need to be

knowledgeable about formal work-family policies to guide employees and organize work in accordance with these policies (Hammer et al., 2007), which can be gained through organizational tenure. In addition to formal policies longer tenure allows supervisors to develop implicit procedures for flexibly arranging employees' work to facilitate their family responsibilities (Hammer et al., 2007; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Highly tenured supervisors might also be more comfortable implementing informal changes in work arrangements, as others ascribe more discretion to them. This aligns with our study's findings that tenure is associated with higher levels of decision authority and schedule control. In short, supervisors' organizational tenure may represent organization-specific knowledge and experience in organizing employees' work and supporting employees' family responsibilities.

Practical Implications

This study showed that supervisors' organizational tenure, rather than age, seems to play a more influential role on employee-rated FSSB. As supervisors spend more time in organizations, they accumulate knowledge and experience in organizing employees' work to support their family responsibilities (Lahaie, 2005). Thus, organizations should leverage the experience of long-tenured supervisors through mentorship or training programs for less tenured supervisors. Long-tenured supervisors are often more motivated to share their knowledge with less experienced colleagues, which contributes to their well-being and intention to remain in the organization (Burmeister et al., 2020; Carstensen et al., 1999). Moreover, facilitating knowledge transfers across different age or tenure groups can help curb age- or tenure-based discrimination in the workplace (Kunze & Hampel, 2022). These mentorship programs can also be part of the socialization process for newly hired supervisors. Given their lack of familiarity with organizational policies and informal practices, it is important to equip them with the knowledge to effectively implement work-family policies,

aiding their integration, especially in family-supportive organizations (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).

This study also highlights the importance of contextual factors and relational processes in enacting FSSB. Fostering a family-supportive organizational culture encourages supervisors to act more supportively (Mills et al., 2014) and promotes positive evaluations of FSSB from employees (Foley et al., 2006). Furthermore, organizations should facilitate relational processes that create a shared understanding of the challenges related to managing work and family responsibilities. Although this study found no evidence for shared parenthood, previous research shows that supervisors act more supportively if they are receptive to employees' struggles with work and family management (Pan, 2018). Thus, supervisors are encouraged to discuss various commitments that may affect employees' work, not just work-related ones.

Limitations and Future Directions

Several limitations should be noted along with the results of this study. First, the current sample consisted of mostly highly educated supervisors, with a relatively homogenous group of middle-aged supervisors (36-45 years old; Demerouti et al., 2012). This homogeneity could mask age-related effects on job autonomy, potentially leading to the false conclusion that age does not predict supervisors' job autonomy. Additionally, the average age of employees closely matched that of the supervisors, which does not reflect a typical aging workforce where a larger age discrepancy (typically 10-15 years) is present between supervisors and employees (Dietz & Fasbender, 2022; Kunze & Hampel, 2022). Future research should aim to collect more diverse age samples of supervisors and employees.

Despite the lack of age effects, the effect of tenure was consistent in the current sample. Although not initially expected, this finding aligns with North (2019) suggestion to

consider generations, age, tenure, and experiences (GATE) in examining the influence of an aging workforce on work outcomes. Future studies should explore how each of these facets uniquely contributes to supervisor behaviors.

Another limitation is the operationalization of shared parenthood. In this study, shared parenthood was defined using an objective measure of supervisors and employees report of school-aged children currently residing in their homes. While previous research found that objective measure of shared parenthood influenced FSSB ratings (Basuil et al., 2016), this measurement approach may not capture the shared inner states crucial to the shared reality concept (Echterhoff et al., 2009). However, we still consider it useful for using objective measures as a proxy for shared reality because parenting is a highly salient personal identity (Katz-Wise et al., 2010). Supervisors and employees with parenting responsibilities are likely to build shared inner states due to the strong salience of this identity. Nonetheless, future research should use direct measures of individual inner states to more accurately represent shared reality as conceptualized by Echterhoff et al. (2009). Furthermore, our current operationalization only considered home-residing children as indicators of parenthood, excluding the experience of parenthood that came from adult children who have left the house. Supervisors and employees with adult children may still recall the challenges of having children at home (Sullivan et al., 2010). Another operationalization may therefore be to define parenting status for supervisors more broadly as having any children.

Additionally, the study focused on a limited range of work resources, specifically types of autonomy. The findings suggest that these resources may not be proximal to FSSB enactment. Instead, tenure, reflecting individual knowledge and experience in organizing work and family responsibilities, appears more relevant (Hammer et al., 2007). Future research should examine other proximal resources to FSSB.

Lastly, the six-month time lag between baseline and FSSB ratings could be problematic. Longer time lags have been shown to underestimate effects (Dwyer, 1983). This raises the question of the appropriate time frame for studying FSSB. There is a need for clearer theorizing about whether FSSB should be examined on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. For instance, Ererdi et al. (2023) examined the effect of relational resources on FSSB on a weekly basis, while Matthews and Toumbeva (2015) studied the lagged effect of leader-member exchange on FSSB over six weeks. Future research should carefully consider the appropriate time frame for assessing the impact of work resources on FSSB (Griep et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The current study reveals that among a sample of highly educated supervisors, age does not significantly influence their engagement in family-supportive supervisory behaviors (FSSB). Instead, supervisors' tenure appears to play a role in differentiating supervisors who are more versus less readily available to engage in FSSB. Organizational tenure represents the accumulated organization-specific knowledge and experience that supervisors leverage to navigate formal policies and informal practices effectively. While we found no evidence for the role of shared reality in influencing FSSB, it remains essential to consider the contextual factors, such as the dynamics of supervisor-employee interactions, in understanding how supervisors mobilize their resources to enact FSSB. These findings underscore the importance of considering tenure when developing programs aimed at enhancing FSSB and suggest that future research should further explore the multifaceted influences of organizational tenure.

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Appendix A

Statistical Analyses Results to Identify Missingness

Table A1

Missingness with Supervisor-level Predictors

	M (*SD*)				
	Excluded (1)	Not Excluded (0)	*t*	*df*	*p*
Age	43.9 (10.66)	46.9 (8.66)	1.0	68	.20
Tenure	10.6 (9.50)	11.3 (8.82)	0.5	74	.60
Working hours	46.2 (7.57)	48.3 (6.34)	2.0	69	.08
Decision authority	4.04 (0.75)	4.09 (0.66)	0.4	71	.70
Schedule control	3.44 (0.64)	3.43 (0.76)	-0.1	93	.90
	n		$\chi 2$	*df*	*p*
Gender					
Male	16	69	1	1	.20
Female	32	86			
Living arrangements					
With spouse or partner	38	129	0.2	1	.70
Single	10	26			
Adult care					
Yes	9	42	0.9	1	.30
No	39	113			
Parental status					
With school-aged children	20	80	1	1	.30
Without school-aged children	28	75			

Note. $N = 203$. This table compares supervisors that were excluded for not having any employees associated with them with those who do. Welch's two sample t-test was utilized to examined the difference between continuous variables. Chi-square statistics were computed for categorical variables.

Table A2

Missingness with Employee-level Predictors

	M (*SD*)				
	Excluded (1)	Not Excluded (0)	*t*	*df*	*p*
Tenure	6.35 (7.17)	8.59 (8.08)	4.0	251	< **.001**
	n		$\chi 2$	*df*	*p*
Gender					
Male	45	231	0.01	1	.90
Female	121	643			
Living arrangements					
With spouse or partner	116	610	0.00	1	1.00
Single	50	264			
Adult care					
Yes	38	232	0.80	1	.40
No	128	642			
Parental status					
With school-aged children	79	416	0.00	1	1.00
Without school-aged children	87	458			

Note. N = 1,040. This table compares employees that were missing their FSSB ratings with those who were not. Welch's two sample t-test was utilized to examined the difference between continuous variables. Chi-square statistics were computed for categorical variables. Significant *p-values* were bolded. Employees' age and working hours were not included in the analysis for missingness mechanisms due to some lacking this information.

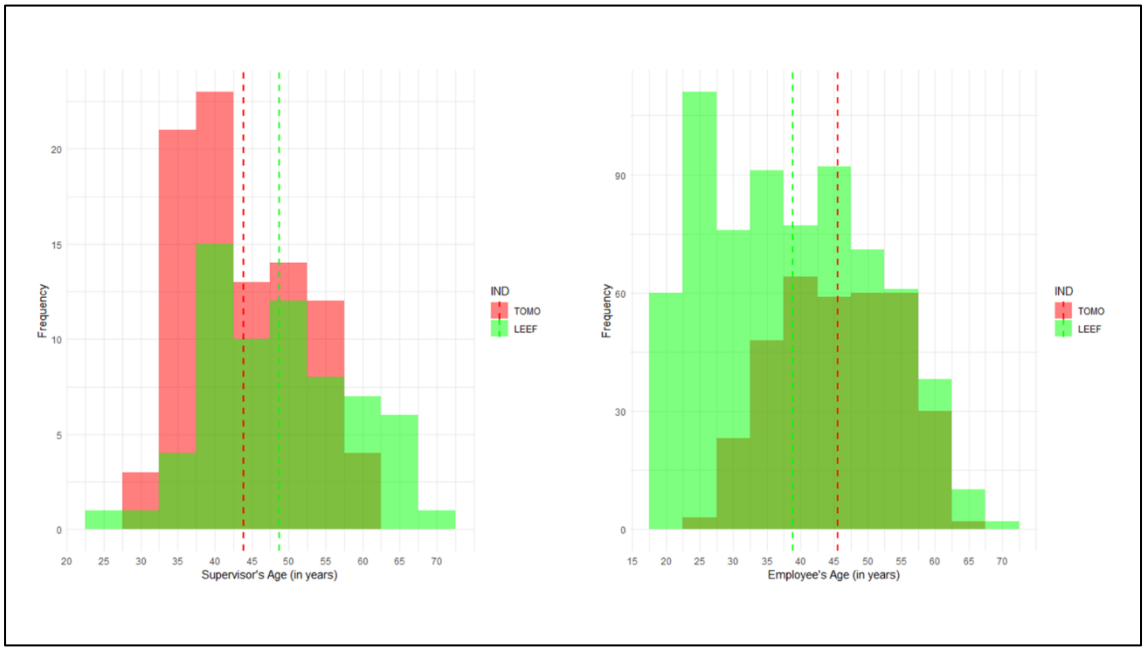
Appendix B

Data Inspection and Assumption Checks

In the following section, we analyze the continuous data for distributions and potential outliers. Figures B1-B3 present histograms of the continuous demographic data for both supervisors (N = 155) and employees (N = 1,040). Given that the data came from two different companies, we separated the histograms by company. The histograms indicate that supervisors' and employees' age and working hours were fairly normally distributed, whereas tenure for both groups was positively skewed. Additionally, no strong outliers were found among the continuous demographics, except for one outlier in supervisors' working hours, reporting 75 hours per week.

Figure B1

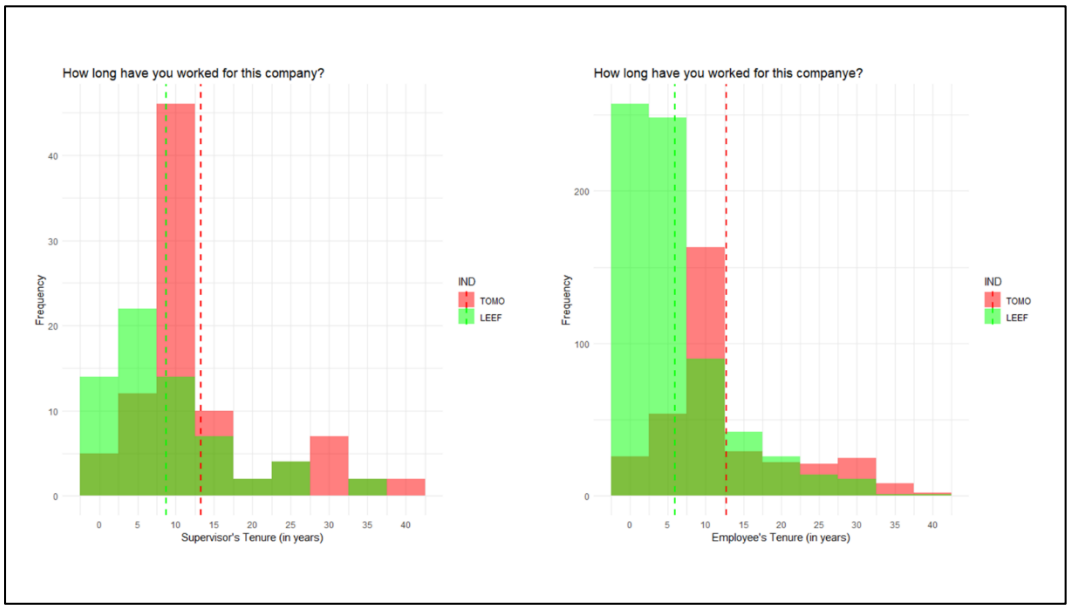
Distribution of Supervisors' and Employees' Age



Note. Skewness for supervisors' age (left figure) ranged from 0.12 to 0.41. Skewness for employees' age (right figure) ranged from -0.05 to 0.21.

Figure B2

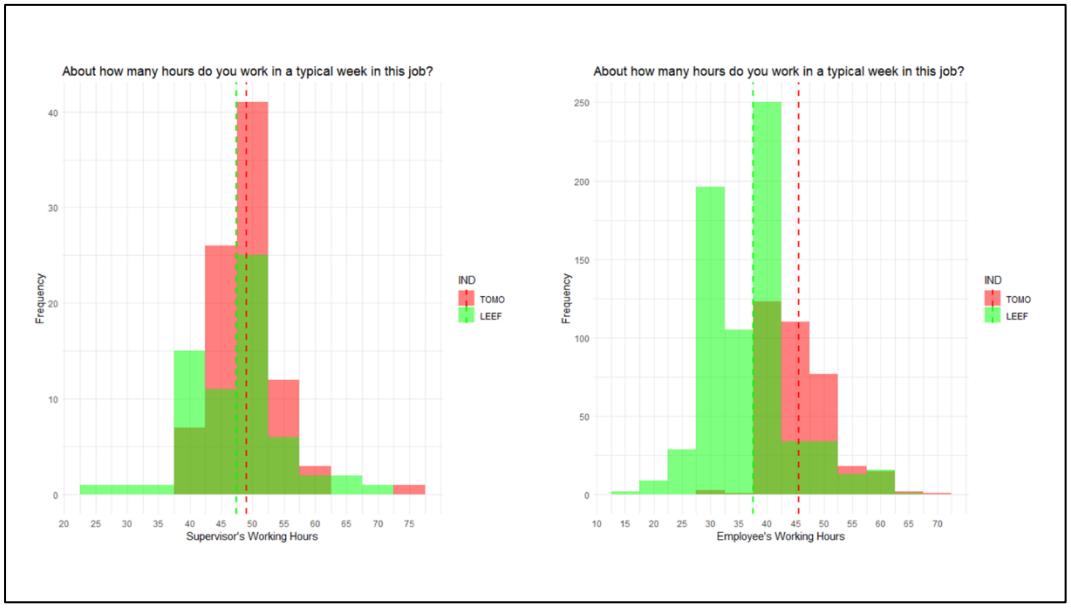
Histogram of Supervisors' and Employees Tenure



Note. Skewness for supervisors' tenure (left figure) ranged from 1.39 to 1.45. Skewness for employees' tenure (right figure) ranged from 1.14 to 1.87.

Figure B3

Histogram of Supervisors' and Employees Working Hours

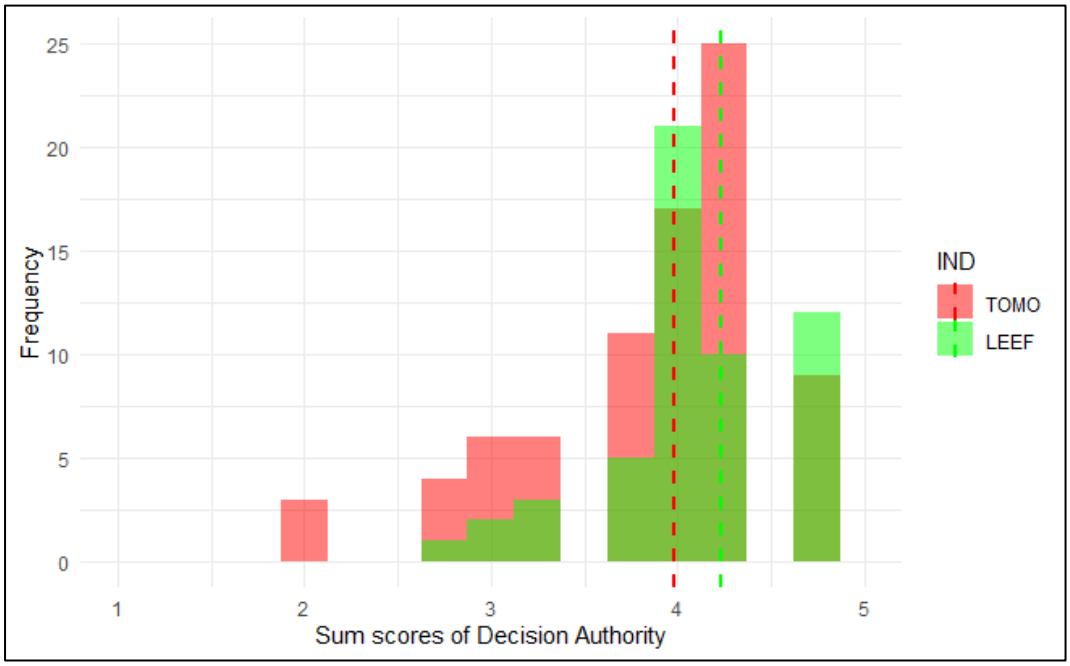


Note. Skewness for supervisors' working hours (left figure) ranged from 0.16 to 1.43. Skewness for employees' working hours (right figure) ranged from 0.64 to 0.92.

Figure B4-B6 present histograms of supervisors' decision authority and schedule control, and employee-rated FSSB with all showing negatively skewed distribution.

Figure B4

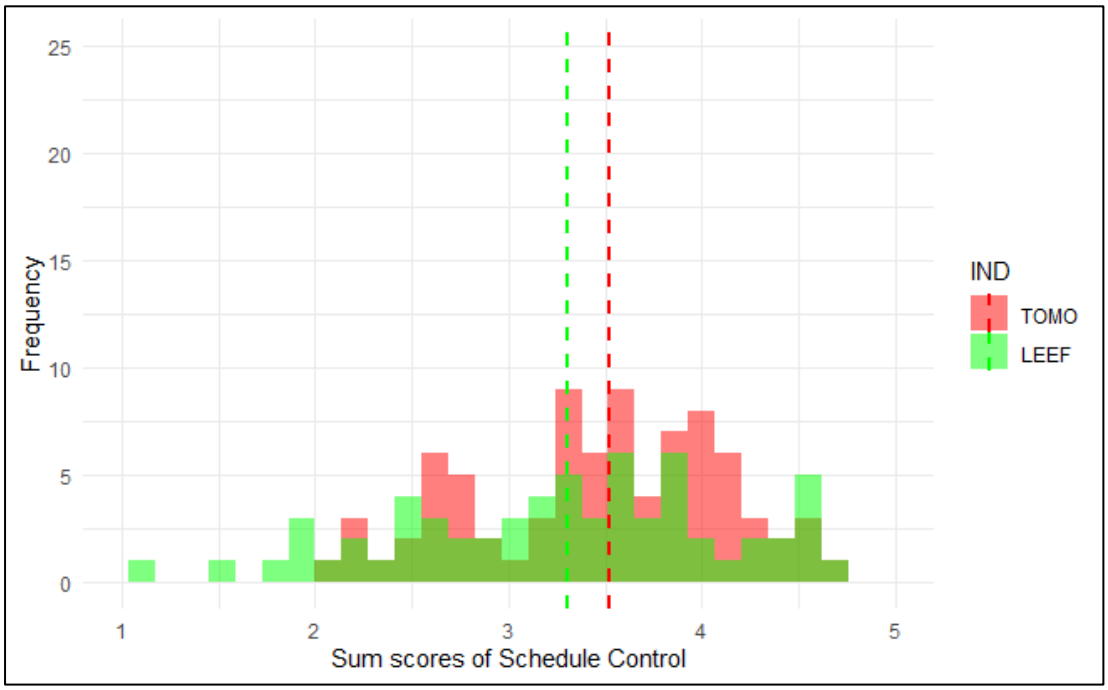
Histogram of Supervisors' Decision Authority



Note. N = 155. Skewness for supervisors' decision authority ranged from -0.83 to -0.47.

Figure B5

Histogram of Supervisors' Schedule Control



Note. N = 155. Skewness for supervisors' schedule control ranged from -0.32 to 0.17.

Figure B6

Histogram of Employee-rated FSSB at 6-month Follow-up

Note. N = 1,040. Skewness for employees-rated FSSB ranged from -0.72 to -0.70.

Next, we conducted assumption checks for the multilevel path analyses in two stages. First, we evaluated linearity, homogeneity of variances, and normality of residuals for the supervisor-level paths, where supervisors' decision authority and schedule control were regressed on supervisors' age and their covariates (Gelman et al., 2021). Second, we assessed these assumptions for the multilevel paths, where employee-rated FSSB ratings were regressed on supervisors' decision authority and schedule control, with shared parenthood as a moderating variable. For the multilevel paths, we checked linearity, homogeneity of variances, and normality of residuals at both the employee level (level-1) and the supervisor level (level-2) (Snijder & Bosker, 2012). Additionally, we evaluated multicollinearity in both stages.

Figure B7 presents the plots for assessing the assumptions of the supervisor-level path from supervisor age to decision authority, while Figure B8 presents the plots for supervisor age to schedule control. The Q-Q plots for residuals indicate that the assumption of normality of residuals was met for both paths. However, there was a slight violation of linearity assumptions for the path from supervisor age to decision authority, and a violation of homogeneity assumptions for the path from supervisor age to schedule control.

Figure B9 displays the plots for assessing the assumptions of the multilevel path. The plots show that the assumption of linearity and homogeneity of variance were met as indicated by the straight lines from each respective plot. Furthermore, there was a slight violation of normality of residuals at employee-level (level-1). However, the assumption of normality of random effects at the supervisor-level (level-2) was met.

Figure B7

Assumption Checks of Supervisor Age → Decision Authority Path (with Covariates)

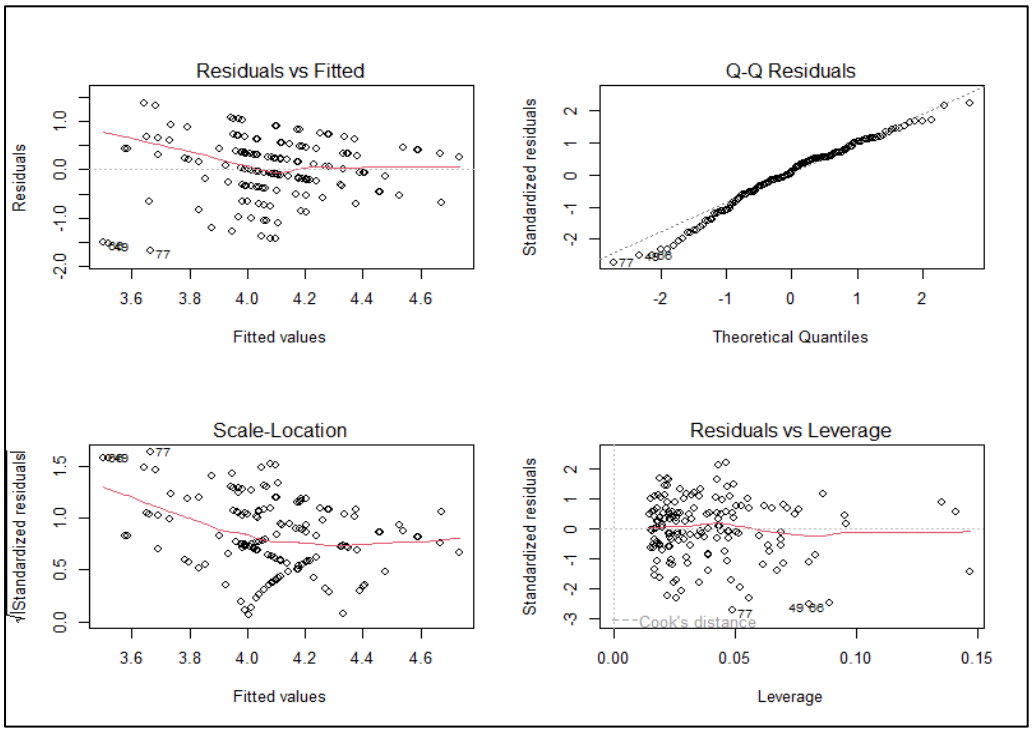


Figure B8

Assumption Checks of Supervisor Age → Schedule Control Path (with Covariates)

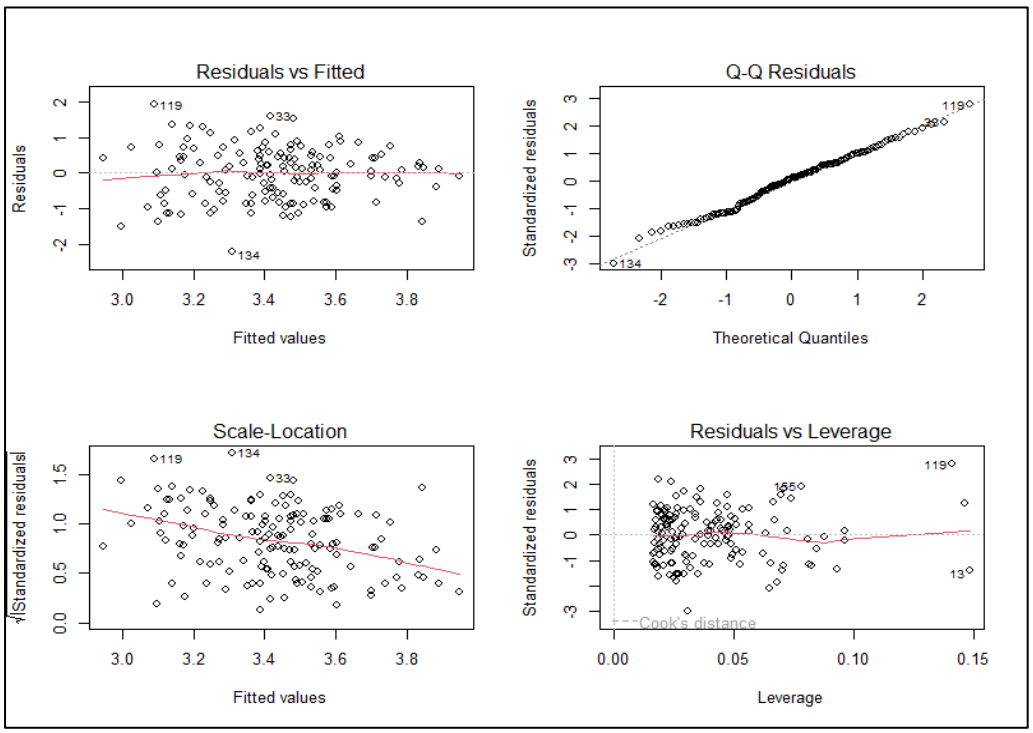
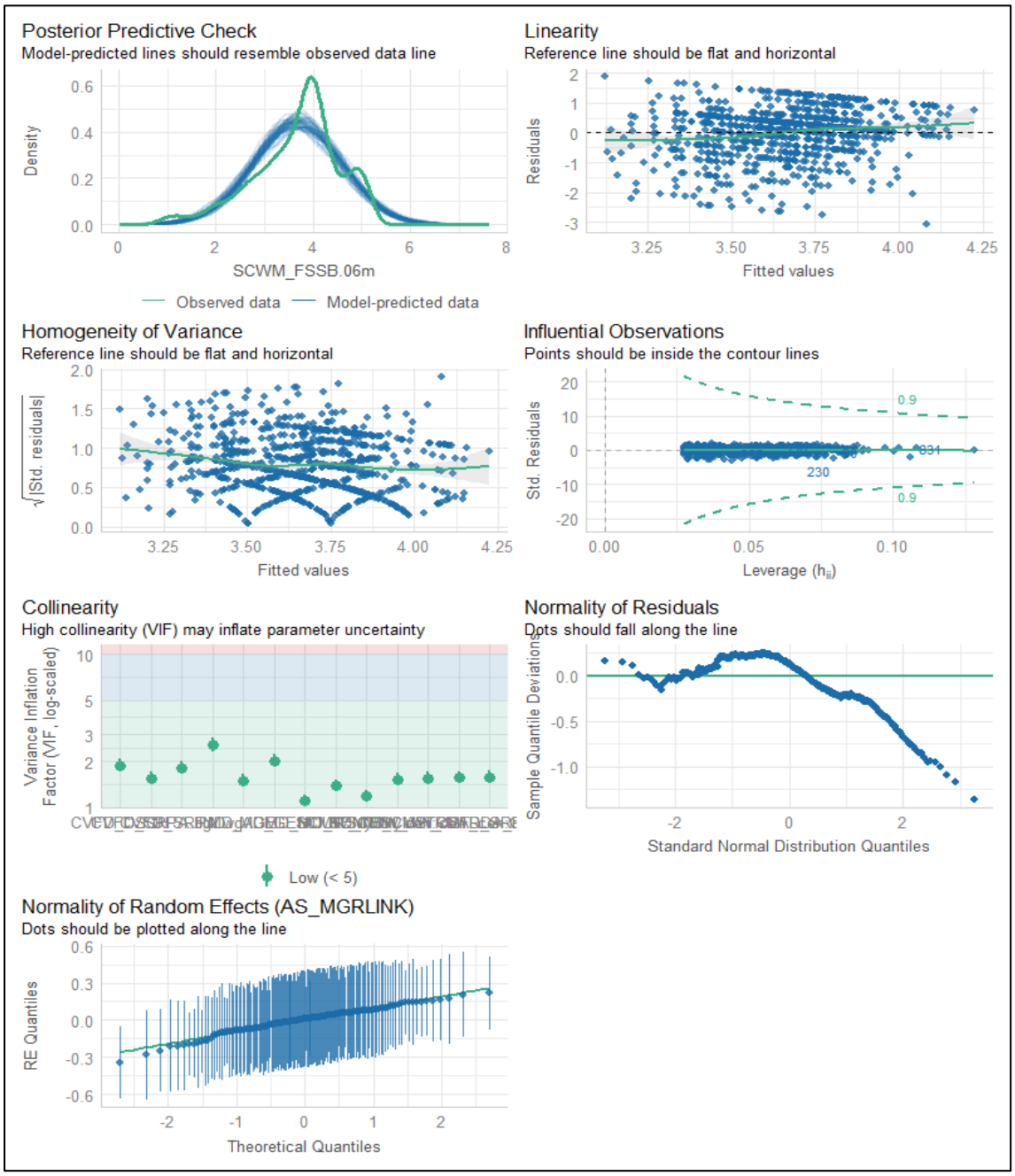


Figure B9

Assumption Checks for the Multilevel Path



Finally, we computed the VIF scores for all expected paths. The VIFs for the path from supervisor age to decision authority ranged from 1.05 to 2.16, and for the path from supervisor age to schedule control, they ranged from 1.05 to 2.13. Additionally, the VIFs for the multilevel models with employee-rated FSSB as outcome ranged from 1.10 to 2.57. Therefore, multicollinearity is not a concern.

Appendix C

Model Fits of Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Table C1

Model Fit for Decision Authority and Schedule Control (Supervisor-level)

Models	$\chi 2$	df	CFI	RMSEA 90% CI	SRMR	AIC	BIC
One-factor	134.08	44	0.78	0.10 - 0.14	0.08	4678.55	4778.98
Two-factor	88.00	43	0.89	0.06 - 0.11	0.06	4631.90	4735.37

Note. N = 155. CFI = Comparative Fit Index. RMSEA = Root Mean Square of Approximation. CI = Confidence Interval. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Residual. AIC = Akaike Information Criterion. BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion

Table C2

Model Fit for Single- and Multilevel Models for FSSB ratings

Models	$\chi 2$	df	CFI	RMSEA 90% CI	SRMR	AIC	BIC
Total	9.05[a]	2	1.00	0.03 - 0.11	0.012	7867.14	7924.61
Within	14.26	2	0.99	0.05 - 0.13	0.014	7734.71	7773.02
Between	66.86	2	0.94	0.37 - 0.56	0.038	-939.04	-914.85
Multilevel	17.38[a]	4	0.99	0.06	within = 0.014, between = 0.027	7847.84	7943.62

Note. Number of employees = 888. Number of supervisors = 152. There were 152 employees who did not provide ratings for all four items of the FSSB scale.

[a] Chi-square was estimated using maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (Muthén & Muthén, 2017)

Appendix D

Considerations for Aggregating Employee-rated FSSB

In the current study, FSSB ratings were measured at the employee level. Examining FSSB ratings at the supervisor level is plausible by aggregating employee ratings. To justify aggregating the FSSB ratings, we followed Biemann et al. (2012) recommendations to calculate (1) $r_{wg(j)}$ as a measure of agreement within supervisors (James et al., 1984), (2) intraclass correlations (ICC1), (3) reliability of supervisor-level means (ICC2) (Bliese et al., 2000), and (4) F-tests indicating whether average scores differed significantly across teams.

The results yielded an average $r_{wg(j)}$ of .78, ranging from .00 to 1.00 between supervisors. The ICC1 was .08, and ICC2 was .33, with $F(151, 722) = 1.503$, $p < .001$. According to LeBreton and Senter (2008), rwg(j) values between .71 and .90 indicate strong agreement. Thus, our results suggest strong agreement in FSSB ratings within supervisors' teams. The ICC1 of .08 indicates a small-to-medium effect of membership under the same supervisors on FSSB ratings. Additionally, the F-test showed significant differences in FSSB ratings due to team membership. However, the ICC2 indicates poor reliability for this aggregation. Considering all these measures, we decided not to proceed with analyzing the aggregated FSSB ratings.

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