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How national context moderates the impact of family-supportive supervisory behavior on job performance and turnover intentions

Family-supportive supervisory behavior

55

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study was to examine how national context moderates the impact of family supportive supervisory behavior (FSSB) on employee's job performance and turnover intentions. The authors consider direct and indirect (through work–family positive spillover) effects of FSSB. Our model is based on conservation of resources (COR) theory and boundary theory. The authors conceptualize national context as contributing resources to or threatening with loss of resources for individuals. To test the model, the authors use data from three Latin American countries – Brazil, Chile and Ecuador.

Design/methodology/approach – This is a cross-sectional study based on a survey of almost 988 individuals. The authors first test the direct and indirect effects (via bi-directional positive spillover) of FSSB on performance and turnover intentions without considering the moderating effects of national context (mediation analysis). Then, the authors test the effect of national context in our baseline model by conducting a moderation analysis of direct and indirect effects. The authors use seemingly unrelated regressions and account for control variables and country-level effects.

Findings – The results confirm that national context affects the relationships between FSSB and outcomes. As unemployment rises, the effect of FSSB on turnover intentions is stronger and the effect of FSSB on performance, via bi-directional work–family positive spillover, is stronger. When social expenditures increase, the relationship between FSSB and performance via work–family positive spillover becomes weaker. In addition, the authors find some unexpected results.

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Originality/value – The authors advance the understanding of how national context affects the impact of FSSB on outcomes, specifically in Latin America. The authors conceptualize national context as providing or threatening individuals' resources, using publicly available data on unemployment and social expenditures.

Keywords Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Family-friendly policy, National differences

Paper type Research paper

Resumen

El Propósito – Examinamos en qué medida el contexto nacional modera el impacto de los comportamientos de apoyo del supervisor (en inglés FSSB) sobre el rendimiento y la intención de rotación. Consideramos efectos directos e indirectos (a través del enriquecimiento trabajo-familia) de FSSB. Nuestro modelo se basa en la teoría de la conservación de recursos (en inglés COR) y la teoría de las fronteras. Conceptualizamos el contexto nacional como aquel que contribuye o amenaza los recursos disponibles por las personas que se desarrollan en dicho contexto. Para probar nuestro modelo usamos datos recogidos en tres países Latino-Americanos: Brasil, Chile y Ecuador.

La metodología – Es un estudio *cros-seccional* basado en encuestas a 988 personas. Primero probamos los efectos directos e indirectos (vía enriquecimiento bi-direccional) de FSSB en rendimiento e intención de rotación, sin considerar los efectos moderadores del contexto nacional (análisis de mediación). Después probamos el efecto del contexto nacional en nuestro modelo base, para lo cual conducimos un análisis de moderación de los efectos directos e indirectos. Utilizamos regresiones aparentemente no relacionadas, controlando diversos efectos individuales y nacionales.

Los Resultados – Nuestros resultados confirman que el contexto nacional afecta las relaciones entre FSSB y variables dependientes de estudio-en este caso rendimiento e intención de rotación. Cuando el desempleo aumenta, el efecto de FSSB en intención de rotación es mayor, y el efecto de FSSB en rendimiento, a través del enriquecimiento bi-direccional trabajo-familia, es más fuerte. Cuando el gasto social aumenta, la relación entre FSSB y rendimiento vía enriquecimiento trabajo-familia es más débil. Además, hallamos algunos resultados sorprendentes.

La Originalidad/el valor – Hacemos avanzar el conocimiento de cómo el contexto nacional afecta el impacto de FSSB en los resultados, específicamente en Latino-América. Conceptualizamos el contexto nacional como aquel que provee o amenaza los recursos individuales, y utilizamos datos publicados por organismos internacionales para medir el nivel de desempleo y el nivel de gasto social.

Palabras clave – Políticas de responsabilidad familiar; Diferencias nacionales; Ecuador; Brasil; Chile

Tipo de Artículo – Artículo de investigación

Resumo

Propósito/Objectivo – Examinamos em que medida o contexto nacional modera o impacto dos comportamentos de apoio do supervisor (em inglês FSSB) sobre o desempenho e a intenção de sair. Consideramos efeitos directos e indirectos (através o enriquecimento trabalho-familia) de FSSB. O nosso modelo baseia-se na teoria da conservação de recursos (em inglês COR) e na teoria das fronteiras. Conceptualizamos o contexto nacional como aquele que contribui ou ameaça os recursos disponíveis para as pessoas. Para testar este modelo, usamos dados de três países Latino Americanos – Brasil, Chile e Equador.

Metodologia – Este é um estudo *cros-sectional*, baseado em inquéritos a 988 indivíduos. Começamos por testar efeitos directos e indirectos (vía spillover positive bi-direccional) de FSSB no desempenho e intenção de saída, sem considerar os efeitos de moderação do contexto nacional (Análise de mediação). Depois testamos o efeito do contexto nacional no nosso modelo base levando a cabo uma análise de moderação de efeitos directos e indirectos. Utilizamos regressões e utilizamos variáveis de control e efeitos a nível de país.

Resultados – Os resultados confirmam que o context nacional afecta a relação entre FSSB e os resultados. À medida que cresce o desemprego, o efeito de FSSB nas intenções de saída e no desempenho, via spillover bidireccional trabalho-familia é mais forte. Quando cresce a despesa social, a relação entre FSSB e desempenho via spillover positivo trabalho-familia torna-se mais fraco. Encontramos também alguns resultados inesperados.

Originalidade/valor – Contribuímos para a compreensão de como o context nacional afecta o impacto de FSSB nos resultados, especificamente na América Latina. Conceptualizamos context nacional como o fornecimento ou retirada de Recursos individuais, usando dados públicos sobre o desemprego e despesas sociais. Para testar o nosso modelo usamos dados recolhidos em três países da América Latina.

Palavras chave – Políticas de responsabilidade familiar; Diferenças nacionais, Ecuador; Brazil; Chile

Tipo de Artigo – Artigo de investigação

Introduction

Family-supportive supervision, in which managers empathize with their subordinates' desire to seek balance between work and family responsibilities (Thomas and Ganster, 1995), is receiving increasing attention as an important factor in people's experiences of combining work and family. The interest can be attributed to two reasons. First, family-supportive supervision significantly impacts outcomes that we care about (Hammer *et al.*, 2011), such as work–family conflict and work–family positive spillover (WFPS) (Hammer *et al.*, 2009), control over work time (Aryee *et al.*, 2012), psychological strain (Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2013), physical health (Hammer *et al.*, 2011), job performance (Aryee *et al.*, 2012; Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012) and job attitudes, including turnover intentions (Bagger and Li, 2011; Hammer *et al.*, 2009; Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012). Second, family-supportive supervision is relatively easy to manipulate (Hammer *et al.*, 2011). Unlike more complex structural and cultural interventions, increasing the level of family-supportive supervision requires only a behavioral change for an individual – the supervisor. Such a change can be achieved with a mere few hours of training (Hammer *et al.*, 2011), in contrast with much more significant efforts that are involved in changing organizational culture (Benko and Weisberg, 2007; Perlow, 2012).

The enthusiasm for family-supportive supervisory behavior (FSSB) (Hammer *et al.*, 2009; Hammer *et al.*, 2007) and the evidence for its importance are based primarily on US samples, which can render us blind to the impact of national – i.e. macro-level – factors that may facilitate or hinder the ability of family-supportive supervisors to make a difference for their employees. This gap in the literature is problematic, as empirical evidence and theoretical arguments are mounting that national context significantly impacts work–family experiences in intricate ways (Bardoel and De Cieri, 2009; Ollier-Malaterre *et al.*, 2013; Trefalt *et al.*, 2013).

In this paper, we examine how national context moderates the effects of FSSB on job performance and turnover intentions. We focus this examination on three Latin American countries – Chile, Brazil and Ecuador. We conceptualize national context as potentially providing resources to individuals or threatening individuals with a loss of resources that could potentially help in managing work and family.

We test how national context moderates the direct of FSSB on job performance and turnover intentions and indirect effects through WFPS and family-to-work positive spillover (FWPS). We selected the two dependent variables (job performance and turnover intentions) for their relevance for companies and individuals, as well as for the

clear evidence of their relationships with FSSB (Aryee *et al.*, 2012; Bagger and Li, 2011; Hammer *et al.*, 2009; Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012), which enables us to focus our examination on the moderating effect of national context. Bi-directional WFPS is a mechanism by which gains in one domain can be linked to enhanced functioning in the other domain (Wayne, 2009). We focused on positive spillover because the benefits of occupying multiple roles are still less-well understood than the costs of it (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006; Spreitzer, 2013; Wayne, 2009) and because prior research found that the positive interplay between work and family mediates the relationship between FSSB and outcomes, while work–family conflict does not (Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012). Importantly, we decided to use WFPS rather than work–family enrichment as our variable because the former is conceptually distinct from performance (Hanson *et al.*, 2006; Wayne, 2009), one of our dependent variables, while the latter by definition includes improved performance (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006).

Organizing framework

Two theories promise to be particularly useful in explaining how national context moderates the relationship between FSSB, WFPS, job performance and turnover intentions: conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll, 2002) and boundary theory (Ashforth *et al.*, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996). The basic tenet of Hobfoll's (1989, p. 516) COR theory is "that people strive to retain, protect, and build resources and that what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources". Individuals accumulate resources to be able to deal with stress, invest resources to get more of them and use resources when they are dealing with stress (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll *et al.*, 1993). In fact, according to the COR theory, stress is defined as a reaction to the threat or an actual net loss of resources, or to a lack of gain following an investment of resources. Therefore, resources are the only thing we need to examine to understand stress (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources can be objects, personal characteristics, conditions, energies or support that are valued by the individual.

From the COR perspective, FSSB is a resource that can further generate other resources. Specifically, we see FSSB as a condition that facilitates better work–family management, which in turn improves people's sense of self-efficacy, skills for balancing work and family and their relationships with supervisors. The national context can also add or take away resources to facilitate better work–family management. For example, countries that – through social expenditures – invest in low-cost high-quality public child care, add critical resources to parents who are trying to combine work and family. Conversely, countries with high levels of unemployment make it more challenging for individuals to balance work and family for fear of losing their jobs and not being able to find new ones.

Boundary theory (Ashforth *et al.*, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996; Zerubavel, 1991) contends that people create and maintain boundaries to simplify their environment and impose order on it. Boundaries between work and family are socially constructed and, although they are to a large degree institutionalized (Ashforth *et al.*, 2000), individuals construct them idiosyncratically (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Individuals erect, maintain and change their boundaries (Nippert-Eng, 1996) in continuous negotiations and renegotiations with others, especially with "border keepers" (Clark, 2000), i.e. individuals who are particularly influential in defining each domain. Supervisors act as important border keepers in the work domain (Clark, 2000; Perlow, 1998). Permeability of people's boundaries between work and family describes how easily one role invades and assumes the territory of another

(Pleck, 1977). It varies on a continuum from impermeable, when individuals strictly segment the two domains, to permeable, when individuals integrate them. Individuals have different preferences for segmentation and integration (Kreiner, 2006; Kreiner *et al.*, 2009; Nippert-Eng, 1996; Rothbard *et al.*, 2005) and they adjust the permeability of their boundaries to particular circumstances, such as organizational climate (Kossek and Lautsch, 2012), quality of the relationship with a particular work colleague or supervisor (Trefalt, 2013) and macro-context (Boswell *et al.*, 2014).

From the boundary theory perspective, we argue that FSSB encourages increased permeability of work–family boundaries in both directions. Supportive supervisors at work recognize and provide support for family demands (Hammer *et al.*, 2009), which allows family demands to enter the work domain. In addition, because family-supportive supervision generates desirable resources such as self-efficacy (Mills *et al.*, 2014), employees are likely to allow those resources to permeate into their family domain.

Boundary theory and COR combine to further inform work and family interplay. We argue that individuals decide on the permeability of their work–family boundaries so that they best retain, protect and build resources. Because FSSB gives employees cues about their supervisors' preferred degree of segmenting or integrating, employees react to FSSB by erecting boundaries that enable them to best retain, protect and build resources given how family-supportive their supervisors are. All else equal, employees with more supportive supervisors will have more permeable boundaries. Therefore, we combine COR and boundary theory in our argument that individuals' decisions about the (im)permeability of their boundaries reflect the principles of COR, that is, to generate and be able to use as many resources as possible at work and at home.

Model and hypotheses

Our model summarizes existing empirical findings about the relationships between FSSB, WFPS, job performance and turnover intentions, and then tests how national context moderates the direct and indirect relationship between FSSB and turnover intentions and job performance. The model is summarized in Figure 1. To preserve space and maintain our focus on the role of national context in the model, we only formally propose hypotheses about the moderating effects of national context (a similar approach was used by Siegel *et al.* (2005)). Relationships depicted with dotted lines have been tested in prior research, which we summarize below, and we test them again here as the baseline for our model.

FSSB, WFPS, FWPS, job performance and turnover intentions

Based on existing research, we expect that FSSB is associated with lower turnover intentions and higher job performance. In addition, we expect that bi-directional WFPS mediates the relationship between FSSB and turnover intentions and between FSSB and job performance.

Recent research based on US data shows that higher levels of family-supportive supervision are associated with lower turnover intentions (Bagger and Li, 2011; Hammer *et al.*, 2011; Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012) and with better job performance (Bagger and Li, 2011; Odle-Dusseau *et al.*, 2012). Further, Odle-Dusseau *et al.* (2012) show that work–family enrichment – their measure of the positive side of work and family interaction – mediates the relationships between FSSB and turnover intentions, and between FSSB and some aspects of job performance. Research suggests that WFPS has

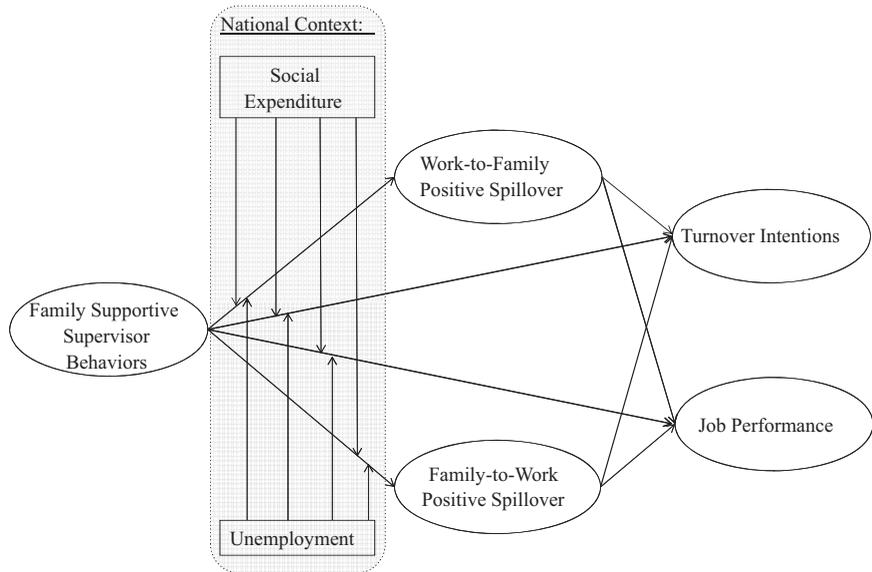


Figure 1. The tested model: national context moderates the impact of family-supportive supervisory behavior on job performance and turnover intentions

Notes: Horizontal arrows represent the baseline model; vertical arrows represent the hypothesized role of national context

a similar effect to that of work–family enrichment. For example, one study found that FWPS reduced turnover intentions (Wayne *et al.*, 2006), and two others suggest that FWPS may boost job performance (Ruderman *et al.*, 2002; van Steenbergen *et al.*, 2007).

The moderating role of national context

Our main contribution is based on the argument that national context moderates the direct and indirect (via WFPS and FWPS) effects of FSSB on turnover intentions and job performance because it provides resources for, or demands resources of, individuals. We argue that the more resources that are provided at the national level for employees to facilitate work–family balancing, the less the employees value FSSB and the lower the FSSB’s impact. If fewer resources are available at the national level, however, FSSB is very much needed and desired by employees. Therefore, if FSSB is made available in national contexts with scarce resources and/or high stress, it will be more appreciated and will have higher impact on outcomes.

Two relevant characteristics of national context that affect individuals’ resources available for balancing work and family are social expenditures and unemployment rate. Social expenditures are a feature of national context that increases individuals’ resources. These governmental expenditures aim to increase individuals’ welfare, and include investments in health, income transfers, education, housing, employment, social security and personal social services (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Kovacheva *et al.*, 2007; Franzoni, 2008; Saraceno *et al.*, 2005). While according to COR additional resources always reduce stress, we predict this effect may be lower when social expenditures are high, so that the resources at the national level are abundant, and the additional resource

of FSSB does little to further decrease employees' stress. Therefore, national context will moderate the relationship between FSSB and turnover intentions and between FSSB and job performance such that the relationships will be weaker in conditions of high social expenditures than in conditions of low social expenditures.

Unemployment, a characteristic of national context that increases stress of individuals because it represents a threat of job loss (Hobfoll, 1989) and the potential difficulty of finding another (Clark *et al.*, 2010; Kessler *et al.*, 1988; Luechinger *et al.*, 2010) has the opposite effect. When unemployment is high, employed individuals experience stress due to the threat of losing their jobs and the important resources associated with them (Linn *et al.*, 1985; Murphy and Athanasou, 1999; Pellegrini and Rodriguez-Monguio, 2013). Such conditions leave employees in dire need of resources to alleviate their stress, so that FSSB can make an important difference. Conversely, in conditions of low unemployment, where other jobs are readily available, losing one's job is experienced as less stressful (Green, 2011; Houssemand and Meyers, 2011) because the job can more easily be replaced by another. With low stress, additional resources such as FSSB make less of a difference. Therefore, we expect that the impact of FSSB on performance and turnover intentions will be stronger when unemployment is high than when it is low. In summary, we hypothesize:

- H1a.* Social expenditures moderate the direct effect of FSSB on turnover intentions so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures.
- H1b.* Unemployment rate moderates the direct effect of FSSB on turnover intentions so that the effect will be stronger with higher unemployment.
- H2a.* Social expenditures moderate the direct effect of FSSB on job performance so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures.
- H2b.* Unemployment rate moderates the direct effect of FSSB on job performance so that the effect will be stronger with higher unemployment.

National context also moderates the indirect effect of FSSB on outcomes, through bi-directional WFPS. WFPS is the transfer of resources (such as positive affect, skills, behaviors and values) from one domain to another, thus having beneficial effects on the latter domain (Hanson *et al.*, 2006). One of the conditions for positive spillover is permeable boundaries. Without them, any resources that are generated in one domain remain there, so that no positive spillover can occur.

In national contexts with high levels of social expenditures, support for families is demonstrated at the national level (Guo and Gilbert, 2007; Franzoni, 2008). While individuals are likely to respond to their supervisors' cues (i.e. level of FSSB) under any condition, employees will be more responsive to such cues in a national context where low social expenditures provide little support and, therefore, any work-family support is at the supervisors' discretion. In other words, a family-friendly national context, characterized by high social expenditures, will encourage employees to follow their own preferences regarding boundary permeability even if a particular supervisor is not supportive. Therefore, FSSB will have a weaker impact on WFPS when social expenditures are high. When social expenditures are low, in contrast, individuals will be highly responsive to the FSSB by adjusting the permeability of their boundaries and, therefore, WFPS to their supervisors' preferences, which will impact the level of WFPS.

We argue that the relationship between FSSB and WFPS is particularly strong in conditions of high unemployment at the national level. Consistent with COR, employees are particularly responsive to their supervisors' cues when they have few options for alternative employment (Huang *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, we expect that, under conditions of high unemployment, employees will adjust their boundaries' permeability in response to their supervisors' cues, so that FSSB will have a strong impact; in contrast, under conditions of low unemployment, individuals will feel freer to follow their own boundaries' permeability preferences regardless of their supervisors' cues, so that FSSB will have a more modest impact. Incorporating prior research linking WFPS to turnover intentions and job performance, we therefore predict:

- H3a.* Social expenditures moderate the indirect effect of FSSB on turnover intentions via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures.
- H3b.* Unemployment rate moderates the indirect effect of FSSB on turnover intentions via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be stronger with higher unemployment.
- H4a.* Social expenditures moderate the indirect effect of FSSB on performance via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures.
- H4b.* Unemployment rate moderates the indirect effect of FSSB on performance via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be stronger with higher unemployment.

Method

Participants and procedure

To test our hypothesized model, we collected data from employees in three countries – Brazil, Chile and Ecuador. Each country collaborator invited local business school program participants to be part of our study during 2011. These participants were asked to invite others to obtain responses from employees in a wider range of industries, organizations and jobs.

We chose to test how national context moderates the relationships in three countries in Latin America that, despite some similarities, represent a wide spectrum of historical, political, and economic realities in Latin America. Moreover, they also exhibit a context rather different from that of the USA, where the base-line model used in this paper was developed and tested. With this sample, we can accomplish two objectives:

- (1) to test the model in contexts different from that in which the model was developed; and
- (2) to test how macro resources and threats moderate the proposed relationships.

Ecuador, Chile and Brazil represent the two main cultural traditions in Latin America, which are rather different from that of the USA. While the USA was mostly colonized by the Dutch and the British (in addition to Spaniards, the French and the Swedes among others), Latin America was mainly colonized by the Spaniards and the Portuguese. Such historical influence is best illustrated in these countries' language differences: while in the USA English is the official language, Ecuadorians and Chileans speak Spanish

because they were colonized by Spaniards, and Brazilians speak Portuguese as a result of their colonization. At the time the data were collected, these Latin American countries' political situation, measured by government effectiveness, were also rather varied and different from that of the USA. To illustrate such wide spectrum, one can take government effectiveness, as defined and measured by the World Bank, which captures the perceptions of the quality of public and civil services, the quality of policy formulation and implementation and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies. In terms of government effectiveness (World Bank, 2014), the USA ranks in the first quartile in the world (the 90th percentile) as does Chile (the 87th percentile), while Brazil ranks in the second quartile (the 54th percentile) and Ecuador in the third (the 37th percentile). Last, these countries differ from each other and from the USA in their economic situations, as measured by their respective gross national income (GNI) per capita. While in 2011, the USA had a GNI of \$52,309 (United Nations, 2014), in Chile that figure was less than half of it (\$20,804), in Brazil less than a third of it (\$14,275) and in Ecuador less than a fifth (\$9,998).

All the scales used in our survey were initially developed in English but the survey was administered in Spanish in Chile and Ecuador and in Portuguese in Brazil. To preserve the meaning of the items with the translation, we followed the approach suggested by Harkness *et al.* (2003). A bilingual researcher translated the questions into the local language. This version was then back-translated into English by another bilingual researcher, and the back translation was compared with the English original. Revisions were made by each country collaborator to ensure conceptual equivalence of the English and the Spanish and the Portuguese versions (Harzing *et al.*, 2013). The surveys were administered online.

In total, the researchers invited 2,701 individuals to participate in the study. Our final sample is 988. As we do not know how many of the 2,701 participants invited others, we can only estimate the response rate, which is lower than 36 per cent. Our sample is diverse and includes managerial and non-managerial employees in the "real" economy, i.e. all respondents in our sample and their employing organizations are subject to local regulation and taxation. In the final sample, 735 (74 per cent) of the respondents were male, which resembles the gender composition of program participants in the schools involved in this research. The respondents ranged in age from 19 to 65 years, with the largest age group being the one between 31 and 40 (39 per cent). Most of the respondents reported holding at least a bachelor's degree (72 per cent), being married or cohabitating (70 per cent) and having at least one child (74 per cent). Half of the respondents had management responsibilities (50 per cent). Respondents in each country represented all the different sectors of the economy, including for profit, non-profit and government.

Measures

Our survey items were self-reported and we used validated existing measures where available. All items were answered using a seven-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.

Family-supportive supervisor behavior. We measured family-supportive supervisor behavior with seven items from the Hammer *et al.*'s (2009) scale. Four items correspond to the emotional support dimension (e.g. "My supervisor is willing to listen to my

problems in juggling work and non-work life”), and one item corresponds to each of the other three dimensions:

- (1) instrumental support (“I can depend on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts between work and non-work issues”);
- (2) role modeling (“My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance”); and
- (3) creative work–family management (“My supervisor thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit employees and the company”).

Reliability for this scale was estimated at 0.91.

FWPS and WFPS. We measured FWPS using [Stanko’s \(2011\)](#) measure. Consistent with our conceptualization – and unlike measures of enrichment ([Carlson et al., 2006](#)) – this four-item scale measures an experience that *may* improve performance in the receiving domain but does not necessarily do so. Items include:

- Fulfilling my family responsibilities has enriched the interpersonal skills I need to succeed at work.
- Overcoming obstacles at home has given me more confidence in my abilities at work.
- Juggling multiple tasks at home has improved my ability to multi-task at work.
- Being involved at home has enabled me to better understand people at work.

We measured WFPS with four items, mirroring Stanko’s items, to capture the extent to which participation at work facilitates family life. For example, the first item was “Fulfilling my work responsibilities has enriched the interpersonal skills I need to succeed at home”. Before collecting the data for this study, using a Spanish sample of full-time workers participating in a graduate school program ($N = 126$), the FWPS and WFPS scales were factor analyzed for testing their factorial validity. The factor analysis using an orthogonal rotation resulted in a two-factor solution, where all items loaded primarily in their respective factor, and more than 70 per cent of the variance is explained. Based on this evidence, both dimensions were included in the data collection for the present study, where the reliability for FWPS and WFPS was estimated at 0.85 and 0.86, respectively.

Turnover intentions. We measured turnover intentions with three items from [O’Reilly et al.’s \(1991\)](#) measure of intention to leave. A sample item is “I frequently think of quitting my job”. Reliability of this scale was estimated at 0.85 in our study.

Job performance. We used four items from [Williams and Anderson \(1991\)](#) in-role performance scale. A sample item is “I adequately complete assigned duties”. Reliability of this scale was estimated at 0.89. The decision to use self-reported measures of performance was driven by the fact that it was not possible to contact the respondents’ supervisors across diverse sectors of the economy. Although supervisor ratings of performance are preferred ([Podsakoff et al., 2003](#)), we sought to increase the reliability of job performance by highlighting to respondents the guaranteed anonymity of their responses to reduce their need to present themselves favorably for career or social acceptance purposes ([Conway and Lance, 2010](#)). We also explained to participants that the researchers would not contact their employers. These measures were aimed to

increase the reliability of self-evaluations of performance (Van der Heijden and Nijhof, 2004), following others' examples (Baruch, 1996).

Unemployment rate and social expenditure. For each country, the measures for unemployment rate and social expenditures were obtained from The Economic Commission for Latin America data set (Cepal, 2013) for 2011, the same year in which the data were gathered. In this data source, both variables are defined and measured as ratio scales (i.e. continuous variables). This means that country scores for both variables may be ordered, distances between scores are quantifiable and scores may take any value between 0 and 100 per cent without loss of meaning (Bryman, 2012). Unemployment rate is measured as a percentage of unemployed persons in the total regulated labor force. Social expenditures are measured as the percentage of the GDP representing benefits to, and financial contributions targeted at, households and individuals provided by public institutions, to provide support during circumstances which adversely affect households' and individuals' welfare. Brazil, Chile and Ecuador had unemployment rates of 6.7, 8.2 and 7.6 per cent, respectively, and social expenditures of 19.7, 27.9 and 30.9 per cent of GDP, respectively. Because both variables are continuous, unemployment rate, social expenditure and FSSB were standardized before creating our interaction terms.

Control variables. To increase the robustness of our conclusions, we included six control variables that correlate simultaneously with FSSB and our dependent variables, according to prior research: gender (0 = female, 1 = male), age (in years), tenure (in years), relationship status (0 = single, 1 = spouse/stable partner), parental status (0 = nonparent, 1 = parent) and the level of work-family benefits. For measuring work-family benefits, we followed a similar method to the one used in past research (Bagger and Li, 2011). We asked respondents to indicate whether they had access to each benefit (e.g. telecommuting, compressed work schedule and flexible scheduling) in their employing organization (1 = yes, 0 = no/I don't know). For this measure, we listed 16 benefits that have been identified as representative in the work-family literature and we created a single score by adding them up.

We also assessed the possible response difference across the three countries included in our study. The Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (1) scores of FSSB (0.014), WFPS (0.150), FWPS (0.132), job performance (0.243) and turnover intentions (0.085) are in most of the cases higher than the 0.05 recommended value (Bliese *et al.*, 2007; Bliese and Hanges, 2004), suggesting that possible response differences can be attributed to country membership. To account for these difference, and other country-level omitted variables that can explain these differences, we included two categorical (dummy) variables to account for fixed country-level effects. This method has been recently used in other studies where differences in individual level mechanisms across countries are analyzed using country scores for the moderating variable (e.g. Reiche *et al.*, 2013). Table I provides details about the sample sizes and descriptive statistics for the key variables for each country.

Analysis

We tested our hypothesized model in two complementary steps. We first tested the direct and indirect effects (via bi-directional positive spillover) of FSSB on performance and turnover intentions without considering the moderating effects of national context by conducting a mediation analysis (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). These results work as

Table I.
Sample size, means,
and standard
deviations for the
main variables per
country

Country	Sample size	FSSB	FWPS	WFPS	TI	Performance	Unemployment	Soc. expenditure
Brazil	239	4.730 (1.160)	5.567 (1.182)	5.446 (1.270)	2.485 (1.560)	5.874 (0.869)	0.067 [-1.567]	0.197 [-0.902]
Chile	333	4.886 (1.535)	5.622 (1.136)	5.209 (1.248)	3.170 (1.910)	6.246 (0.541)	0.082 [0.033]	0.279 [-0.045]
Ecuador	416	5.324 (1.654)	6.297 (0.982)	6.112 (1.180)	3.630 (1.818)	6.645 (0.631)	0.076 [1.010]	0.309 [1.641]

Notes: *N* = 988; FSSB = family supportive supervisor behaviors; FWPS = family-to-work positive spillover; WFPS = work-to-family positive spillover; TI = turnover intentions; Standard deviations are in parentheses; Standardized country scores for unemployment rate and social expenditure appear between brackets Unemployment rate and social expenditure correspond to the information gathered by CEPAL for the year 2011

a baseline for understanding the impact of national context. In a second step, we tested the effect of national context (*HI-H4*) in our baseline model by conducting a moderation analysis of direct and indirect effects (Hayes, 2013). In both steps, we conducted our analysis using seemingly unrelated regressions (SUR) in STATA 12 (StataCorp, 2011), accounting for our control variables as well as country-level effects (using two dummy variables) in each regression.

SUR is appropriate for conducting our analysis for several reasons. Although the equations linking independent, mediator and dependent variables may seem unrelated, allowing the error terms to correlate alleviates empirical concerns of endogeneity and heteroskedasticity (Johnston, 1984; Zellner, 1962). Indeed, the two-step estimation in SUR enhances the capability to detect the true significance of the relationships studied (Antonakis *et al.*, 2010, 2014). Also, as it has been acknowledged by previous researchers (Preacher and Hayes, 2008; Preacher *et al.*, 2007), the resampling methods that are suitable for SUR increase the robustness of the estimates because they are less sensitive to non-normal distributions.

Results

Convergent validity

We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the discriminant validity of the five constructs included in our study by conducting maximum likelihood estimations in STATA 12.0 (StataCorp, 2011). Results are summarized in Table II. We compared a five-factor model in which all five factors loaded onto separate factors with three alternative models, including:

- (1) a four-factor model where WFPS and FWPS loaded onto a single latent factor;
- (2) a three-factor where WFPS and FWPS loaded onto a single latent factor and job performance and turnover intentions loaded onto a single latent factor; and
- (3) a one-factor model where all the variables loaded onto a single latent factor.

The results of the CFA show that our hypothesized five-factor model demonstrated a good fit with the data [$\chi^2(199) = 794.806$; $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.055; CFI = 0.951; SRMR = 0.046] (Hu and Bentler, 1999), a fit significantly better than any alternative model. This shows that the five factors included in our study are in fact distinct latent constructs.

Model	Description	chi-square	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR	Δ chi-square	Δ df	Significance
Model 1	5-factor model	461.156	140	0.048	0.967	0.959	0.046			
Model 2	4-factor model	852.743	144	0.071	0.926	0.912	0.052	391.587	4	0.000
Model 3	3-factor model	1,681.275	147	0.103	0.840	0.814	0.090	1,220.119	7	0.000
Model 4	1-factor model	4,242.387	150	0.166	0.574	0.514	0.147	3,781.231	10	0.000

Notes: Comparisons were made with Model 1; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; Model 1: all five factors loading separately; Model 2: FWPS and WFPS loaded onto a single latent factor; Model 3: FWPS and WFPS loaded onto a single latent factor and Job performance and turnover intentions loaded onto a single latent factor; Model 4: all the items loaded onto a single latent factor

Table II.
CFA of nested models ($n = 988$)

Measurement invariance

To ensure that we can make valid cross-national comparisons, we tested for measurement invariance following several of the [Brown \(2006\)](#) and [van de Schoot *et al.* \(2012\)](#) recommendations. More specifically, we first started by conducting an unconstrained CFA of the measurement model for each of the three countries separately. Results suggest that the measurement model has a good fit for Chile [$\chi^2(197) = 439.810$; $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.079; CFI = 0.904; SRMR = 0.058] and Ecuador [$\chi^2(197) = 380.174$; $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.053; CFI = 0.962; SRMR = 0.036] and an acceptable fit for Brazil [$\chi^2(197) = 354.667$; $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.044; CFI = 0.965; SRMR = 0.046]. Second, we conducted a multigroup CFA for testing fit of the measurement model after explicitly accounting for the different groups included in our data. Results show an acceptable fit with the data [$\chi^2(659) = 1,837$; $p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.073; CFI = 0.907; SRMR = 0.084]. Together, we can claim that the measurement model holds across the countries considered in our study and that there is no evidence suggesting substantial measurement variance across countries.

Baseline model

[Table III](#) presents descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations, and reliabilities for the variables included in our study. Results for our baseline model where we tested the direct and indirect effects (via bi-directional positive spillover) of FSSB on performance and turnover intentions without considering the moderating effects of national context are summarized in [Table IV](#). Regarding the direct effects of FSSB, as it is shown in Models 2 and 4 of [Table IV](#), after accounting for our control variables, we find a significant positive effect of FSSB on FWPS [$\beta = 0.139$; $p < 0.001$] and WFPS [$\beta = 0.184$; $p < 0.001$]. Also, as seen in Models 6 and 7, we find that FSSB is positively related to job performance [$\beta = 0.058$; $p < 0.05$] and negatively related to turnover intentions [$\beta = -0.239$; $p < 0.001$] after accounting for our control variables as well as FWPS and WFPS. Therefore, in our baseline model, we find evidence supporting the direct effect of FSSB on job performance and turnover intentions.

Regarding the effects of our mediating variables (FWPS and WFPS), results are summarized in Models 6 and 8 of [Table IV](#). As shown in Model 6, FWPS [$\beta = 0.075$; $p < 0.05$] and WFPS [$\beta = 0.152$; $p < 0.001$] are positively related to job performance after accounting for FSSB. Conversely, as shown in Model 8, FWPS [$\beta = -0.008$; n.s.] and WFPS [$\beta = -0.041$; n.s.] are not significantly related to turnover intentions after accounting for FSSB.

For testing the mediating effects, we conducted a formal significance test of indirect effects of FSSB on outcomes through FWPS and WFPS. Because we did not find significant effects of WFPS and FWPS on turnover intentions after controlling for FSSB, we only tested the indirect effects of FSSB on performance. To avoid power problems due to non-normal sampling distributions of an indirect effect ([MacKinnon *et al.*, 2004](#); [MacKinnon *et al.*, 2007](#)), we estimated bootstrapped bias-corrected confidence intervals. Results of the bootstrapped bias-corrected confidence intervals (bootstrap sample size = 5,000) show that the indirect effect of FSSB on job performance is significant through FWPS ($\beta = 0.010$ 95 per cent BC-CI [0.000, 0.025]) as well as WFPS ($\beta = 0.028$ 95 per cent BC-CI [0.012, 0.052]). In sum, in our baseline model, we find evidence supporting the mediating effect of FWPS and WFPS in the relationship between FSSB and job performance, but not for the relationships between FSSB and turnover intentions.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 Gender	0.256	0.437	—										
2 Age	37.340	9.659	-0.081*	—									
3 Relationship status	0.700	0.458	-0.209***	0.343***	—								
4 Parental status	0.744	0.437	-0.171***	0.345***	0.467***	—							
5 Tenure	8.033	7.119	-0.008	0.619***	0.223***	0.237***	—						
6 Benefits	6.154	3.016	-0.042	0.115***	0.080†	0.102**	0.140***	—					
7 FSSB	5.026	1.528	0.026	-0.080†	-0.092**	0.033	0.026	0.208***	—				
8 WFPS	5.647	1.258	0.061	-0.132***	-0.128***	-0.005	-0.044	0.097**	0.251***	0.856			
9 WFPS	5.893	1.138	0.078†	-0.084**	-0.095**	0.082*	-0.036	0.044	0.200***	0.672***	0.847		
10 TI	3.198	1.845	0.026	-0.229***	-0.061	0.007	-0.184***	-0.217***	-0.229***	-0.051	-0.008	0.762	
11 Performance	6.324	0.736	0.002	-0.196***	-0.087**	0.041	-0.121***	0.084**	0.180***	0.302***	0.285***	0.075†	0.885

Notes: $N = 988$; for gender, 0 = female, 1 = male; for relationship status, 0 = single, 1 = spouse/stable partner; for parental status, 0 = nonparent, 1 = parent; WFPS = family-to-work positive spillover; WFPS = work-to-family positive spillover; TI = turnover intentions; Cronbach's alpha is shown in bold on the diagonal; † $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table III.
Means, standard
deviations,
correlations and
Cronbach's alphas
($n = 988$)

Table IV.
Results of the
seemingly unrelated
regressions without
national context
($n = 988$)

Variable	FWPS			WFPS			Job performance			Turnover intentions		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 7	Model 8	Model 7	Model 8
	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Constant	-0.910***	-0.855***	-0.530**	-0.458*	-0.622**	-0.474*	0.429*	0.400*	0.429*	0.400*	0.429*	0.400*
Gender	0.196**	0.189**	0.107	0.098	0.046	0.015	0.089	0.095	0.089	0.095	0.089	0.095
Age	0.003	0.005	-0.002	-0.000	-0.007	-0.007	-0.019*	-0.019***	-0.019*	-0.019***	-0.019*	-0.019***
Tenure	0.002	-0.000	0.006	0.004	-0.002	0.003	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003
Relationship status	-0.118	-0.091	-0.075	-0.040	-0.032	-0.012	-0.061	-0.065	-0.061	-0.065	-0.061	-0.065
Parental status	0.308***	0.284***	115	0.083	0.163*	0.123	0.245**	0.252**	0.245**	0.252**	0.245**	0.252**
Benefits	0.016	0.006	0.037***	0.025*	0.027**	0.020*	-0.051***	-0.049***	-0.051***	-0.049***	-0.051***	-0.049***
FSSB	-	0.139***	-	0.184***	0.059*	0.058*	-0.239***	-0.239***	-0.239***	-0.239***	-0.239***	-0.239***
FWPS	-	-	-	-	-	0.075*	-	-0.008	-	-0.008	-	-0.008
WFPS	-	-	-	-	-	0.152***	-	-0.041	-	-0.041	-	-0.041
Delta R^2	0.118	0.018***	0.124	0.031***	0.196	0.038***	0.189	0.002	0.038***	0.002	0.189	0.002
R^2	132.281***	181.488***	140.180***	181.488***	236.777***	301.493***	226.341***	233.402***	301.493***	226.341***	233.402***	233.402***
χ^2												

Notes: $N = 988$; for gender, 0 = female, 1 = male; for relationship status, 0 = single, 1 = spouse/stable partner; for parental status, 0 = nonparent, 1 = parent; FSSB = family supportive supervisor behaviors; FWPS = family-to-work positive spillover; WFPS = work-to-family positive spillover; standardized regression coefficients reported; controls for country are included but not reported for simplicity; as social expenditure and unemployment do not vary within country, these variables are fully accounted for in controlling for country and therefore dropped from the analysis; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Test of hypotheses: effects of national context

At the core of *H1-H4* is the idea that national context moderates the direct effect of FSSB on turnover intentions and job performance and the effect of FSSB on FWPS and WFPS, and, therefore, the indirect effects of FSSB on outcomes. Combined, *H1-H4* involve a first stage and direct effect moderation model (Edwards and Lambert, 2007). To test these hypotheses, we first incorporated the interaction terms between FSSB and national context variables (social expenditure and unemployment rate) to our baseline model. More specifically, we included these interaction terms for predicting both, mediating and outcome variables. Results of the regressions are summarized in Table V. Second, using these results, and to avoid problems of non-normal sampling distributions, we conducted a formal significance test of conditional direct (*H1* and *H2*) and indirect (*H3* and *H4*) effects using bootstrapping procedures (MacKinnon *et al.*, 2004). In both cases, we estimated bias-corrected confidence intervals (bootstrap sample size = 5,000) at three different values of unemployment rate and social expenditure: at the mean level (0.000), at one standard deviation above the mean value (1.000) and at one standard deviation below the mean value (-1.000).

Table VI (upper part) reports conditional direct effects of FSSB on turnover intentions and performance, controlling for our mediating variables (FWPS and WFPS) (Edwards and Lambert, 2007). For turnover intentions as the outcome variable, the negative effect of FSSB on turnover remained significant when social expenditure was high ($\beta = -0.449$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.552, -0.343]) and for mean values ($\beta = -.255$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.316, -0.192]), but not when it was low ($\beta = -0.062$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.151, 0.031]). Therefore, we do not find support for *H1a*, there is a significant interaction but in the opposite direction predicted. Conversely, we found support for *H1b*. The negative effect of FSSB on turnover intentions remained significant when the unemployment rate was high ($\beta = -0.448$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.546, -0.344]) and for mean values ($\beta = -0.255$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.316, -0.192]), but not when it was low ($\beta = -0.063$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.155, 0.038]).

H2 referred to the conditional direct effects of FSSB on performance. For social expenditure, the relationship is stronger and not weaker as social expenditure increases because the positive effect of FSSB remained significant when social expenditure was high ($\beta = 0.127$ 95 per cent BC-CI [0.010, 0.266]) and for mean values ($\beta = 0.079$ 95 per cent BC-CI [0.014, 0.149]), but not when it was low ($\beta = 0.032$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.042, 0.108]). Similarly, for unemployment, the relationship is weaker and not stronger as unemployment increases because the positive effect of FSSB remained significant when unemployment was low ($\beta = 0.156$ 95 per cent BC-CI [.048, 0.282]) and for mean values ($\beta = 0.079$ 95 per cent BC-CI [0.014, 0.149]), but not when it was high ($\beta = 0.002$ 95 per cent BC-CI [-0.086, 0.093]). In sum, we do not find support for *H2a* and *H2b*. In both cases, we found significant conditional direct effects but in the opposite direction of our hypotheses.

H3 and *H4* predicted that national context moderates the indirect effect of FSSB on turnover intentions and job performance via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures and stronger with higher unemployment. As this moderated mediation mechanisms involves a first-stage moderation model (Edwards and Lambert, 2007), we used the results summarized in Models 2, 4, 6 and 8 of Table V for estimating the conditional indirect effects while controlling for the conditional direct effects (*H1* and *H2*). Table VI (bottom part) reports conditional

Table V.
Results of the
seemingly unrelated
regressions with
national context
($n = 988$)

Variable	FWPS			WFPS			Job performance			Turnover intentions		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 7	Model 8	Model 8	
	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	
Constant	-0.805***	-0.900***	-0.458*	-0.503*	-0.576**	-0.424*	0.414*	0.385*	0.081	0.086	0.086	
Gender	0.189**	0.187**	0.098	0.096	0.045	0.014	-0.019***	-0.019***	-0.019***	-0.019***	-0.019***	
Age	0.005	0.005†	0.000	0.000	-0.007	-0.007†	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	
Tenure	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.003	-0.002	-0.003	-0.034	-0.034	-0.034	-0.034	-0.037	
Relationship status	-0.091	-0.088	-0.040	-0.039	0.168*	0.136†	0.193*	0.198*	0.193*	0.198*	0.198*	
Parental status	0.284***	0.263***	0.083	0.066	0.025*	0.021*	-0.045***	-0.044***	-0.045***	-0.044***	-0.044***	
Benefits	0.006	0.006	0.025*	0.024*	0.114***	0.079**	-0.262***	-0.255***	-0.262***	-0.255***	-0.255***	
FSSB	0.139***	0.113***	0.184***	0.159***	0.034	0.047	-0.191***	-0.194***	-0.191***	-0.194***	-0.194***	
FSSB × social expenditure	-	-0.067†	-	-0.050	-0.059	-0.077*	-0.196***	-0.192***	-0.196***	-0.192***	-0.192***	
FSSB × unemployment	-	0.062	-	0.084*	-	0.080*	-	-0.012	-	-0.035	-0.035	
FWPS	-	-	-	-	-	0.159***	-	-	-	-	-	
WFPS	-	-	-	-	-	0.040***	-	-	-	-	-	
Delta R^2	0.136	0.145	0.155	0.165	0.202	0.242	0.217	0.218	0.217	0.218	0.218	
R^2	155.227***	166.928***	181.488***	195.122***	250.274***	315.581***	273.219***	275.817***	273.219***	275.817***	275.817***	
χ^2												

Notes: $N = 988$; for gender, 0 = female, 1 = male; for relationship status, 0 = single, 1 = spouse/stable partner; for parental status, 0 = nonparent, 1 = parent; FSSB = family supportive supervisor behaviors; FWPS = family-to-work positive spillover; WFPS = work-to-family positive spillover; standardized regression coefficients reported. Controls for country are included but not reported for simplicity; as social expenditure and unemployment do not vary within country, these variables are fully accounted for in controlling for country and therefore dropped from the analysis; † $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Moderator	Indirect effect via	Dependent variable	Boot coefficient	Boot SE	95% BC CI	Existence of conditional effect
<i>Direct effects social expenditure</i>						
-1 SD (-1.000)		Performance	0.032	0.038	-0.042; 0.108	No
Mean score (0.000)		Performance	0.079	0.034	0.014; 0.149	Yes
+1 SD (1.000)		Performance	0.127	0.065	0.010; 0.266	Yes
-1 SD (-1.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.062	0.047	-0.151; 0.031	No
Mean score (0.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.255	0.032	-0.316; -0.192	Yes
+1 SD (1.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.449	0.054	-0.552; -0.343	Yes
<i>Unemployment rate</i>						
-1 SD (-1.000)		Performance	0.156	0.060	0.048; 0.282	Yes
Mean score (0.000)		Performance	0.079	0.034	0.014; 0.149	Yes
+1 SD (1.000)		Performance	0.002	0.046	-0.086; 0.093	No
-1 SD (-1.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.063	0.050	-0.155; 0.038	No
Mean score (0.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.255	0.032	-0.316; -0.192	Yes
+1 SD (1.000)		Turnover intentions	-0.448	0.051	-0.546; -0.344	Yes
<i>Indirect effects social expenditure</i>						
-1 SD (-1.000)	FWPS	Performance	0.014	0.009	0.000; 0.036	Yes
Mean score (0.000)	FWPS	Performance	0.009	0.006	0.000; 0.024	Yes
+1 SD (1.000)	FWPS	Performance	0.004	0.006	-0.005; 0.021	No
-1 SD	WFPS	Performance	0.033	0.013	0.014; 0.067	Yes
Mean score	WFPS	Performance	0.025	0.009	0.011; 0.049	Yes
+1 SD	WFPS	Performance	0.017	0.012	-0.001; 0.047	No
-1 SD	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.002	0.007	-0.019; 0.011	No
Mean score	FWPS	Turnover intentions	-0.001	0.005	-0.012; 0.007	No
+1 SD	FWPS	Turnover intentions	-0.001	0.003	-0.011; 0.003	No
-1 SD	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.007	0.009	-0.028; 0.009	No
Mean score	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.006	0.007	-0.022; 0.006	No
+1 SD	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.004	0.006	-0.023; 0.003	No
<i>Unemployment rate</i>						
-1 SD	FWPS	Performance	0.004	0.006	-0.003; 0.021	No
Mean score	FWPS	Performance	0.009	0.006	0.000; 0.024	Yes
+1 SD	FWPS	Performance	0.014	0.009	0.000; 0.039	Yes
-1 SD	WFPS	Performance	0.012	0.010	-0.004; 0.038	No
Mean score	WFPS	Performance	0.025	0.009	0.011; 0.049	Yes
+1 SD	WFPS	Performance	0.039	0.014	0.016; 0.075	Yes
-1 SD	FWPS	Turnover intentions	-0.001	0.003	-0.011; 0.003	No
Mean score	FWPS	Turnover intentions	-0.001	0.005	-0.012; 0.007	No
+1 SD	FWPS	Turnover intentions	-0.002	0.007	-0.019; 0.011	No
-1 SD	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.003	0.004	-0.017; 0.022	No
Mean score	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.006	0.007	-0.022; 0.006	No
+1 SD	WFPS	Turnover intentions	-0.009	0.010	-0.033; 0.009	No

Notes: $N = 988$; FWPS = family-to-work positive spillover; WFPS = work-to-family positive spillover; bootstrap sample size = 5,000

Table VI.
Results for
conditional direct
and indirect effects

indirect effects of FSSB on performance and turnover intentions. Regarding *H3a* and *H3b*, for both social expenditure and unemployment as moderators, none of the indirect effects of FSSB on turnover intentions were significant. In all the cases the bias-corrected confidence intervals contained zero. Thus, we do not find support for *H3a* and *H3b*.

H4 predicted that national context moderates the indirect effect of FSSB on job performance via bi-directional WFPS so that the effect will be weaker with higher social expenditures (*H4a*) and stronger with higher unemployment (*H4b*). For social expenditure as the moderating variable, results of the bootstrapped bias-corrected confidence intervals reported in [Table VI](#) (bottom part) show that the indirect effect of FSSB on job performance through FWPS and WFPS was weaker as the social expenditure rose. More specifically, the indirect effect of FSSB on job performance through FWPS and WFPS is significant for low and mean values of social expenditure, but not for high. For unemployment rate as the moderating variable, we found that the indirect effect of FSSB on job performance through FWPS and WFPS is significant for mean and high but not for low values. In sum, we find that the relationship between FSSB and performance via WFPS and FWPS becomes weaker when social expenditure increases and stronger when unemployment increases. Thus, *H4a* and *H4b* are supported.

Discussion

The present study was designed to fill a gap in the literature on family-supportive supervision, a body of knowledge that to date has paid little attention to the role of national context. Our research question was how, and to what extent, national context moderates FSSB's impact on relevant outcomes (i.e. turnover intentions and performance). Our study was designed as well to show whether FSSB, a construct developed ([Hammer et al., 2013](#); [Hammer et al., 2009](#); [Hammer et al., 2007](#)) and tested ([Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012](#)) with US samples, was relevant in other contexts, specifically in Latin American countries with different social and political realities.

Our results confirm that national context affects the relationships between FSSB and outcomes. Specifically, the results confirm our hypothesis that the effect of FSSB on turnover intentions is stronger as unemployment rises. They also confirm that the relationship between FSSB and performance, via bi-directional WFPS, is stronger as unemployment increases. Finally, our results confirm our hypothesis that the relationship between FSSB and performance via WFPS becomes weaker when social expenditures increase.

Some of our results were unexpected. We found that, counter to our hypothesis, the relationship between FSSB and turnover intentions gets stronger with increasing social expenditures. The national context also affected the direct relationship between FSSB and job performance in direction opposite to what we hypothesized; the effect was stronger with higher social expenditures and weaker with higher unemployment. Finally, our results show no evidence of national context moderating the indirect effect of FSSB on turnover intentions.

Combined, these results help us to show that FSSB is indeed important across national contexts, as well as that its impact depends on national context. Our results also demonstrate the usefulness of conceptualizing national context as a source of and a threat to individuals' work-family resources. This is an important contribution because

most research has overlooked the role of national context on the effects of resources offered within the organizational domain, such as FSSB, leaving researchers and practitioners' alike blind to its impact.

Our unexpected findings offer additional insights. While we were expecting that the fewer the resources provided and the higher the threats posed by the national context, the higher the impact of FSSB on outcomes such as turnover intentions and performance. However, our results indicate that when it comes to the impact of social expenditures on the relationship between FSSB and turnover intentions, and when it comes to the impact of social expenditures and unemployment on direct effect of FSSB on job performance, this is not the case. In these cases, resources are not substitutes for each other, but rather seem to act in synergistic ways, thus having multiplicative effects. To explain these findings, we turned to recent cross-national research showing that state support for work–family balance is positively associated with the adoption of flexible arrangements by companies (Den Dulk *et al.*, 2013). The authors suggest that national context has a normative function, so that it influences what people regard as acceptable behaviors in social life, specifically by legitimizing behaviors and decisions regarding work–family balance. For our study, this means that in supportive national contexts (i.e. high social expenditures and low unemployment rate), employees expect support and thus respond strongly to the presence or absence of FSSB. In contrast, in unsupportive national contexts (i.e. high unemployment and low social expenditures), the presence or absence of supervisory support may go largely unnoticed because employees accept the signals from the national context that work–family issues are their own problem. In other words, resources offered at the national level carry a symbolic value, thus having a multiplicative effect, instead of working as substitutes for resources provided at the organizational level, as we had proposed. Thus, by making high social expenditures (providing health care, education and housing services to individuals and their families), governments would, willingly or unintentionally, affect what people regard as appropriate behavior for individuals or institutions in control of resources. Our findings imply that the impact of a resource provided within the organizational domain, such as FSSB, on outcomes is not only derived from the total amount of resources employees have access to but also from the consistency of the resources provided at different levels, i.e. national, organization and supervisory levels.

Importantly, our research demonstrates effectiveness of FSSB in contexts in which it was previously untested. Less than 1 per cent of management research deals with Latin America as a whole or with a single country within it (Lenartowicz *et al.*, 2003), and work–family research is no different. Our work helps to fill this important gap. Our findings confirm that WFPS and FWPS mediate the impact of FSSB on job performance across different Latin American national contexts, and that national context moderates the relationship between FSSB and bi-directional WFPS. Thus, our second contribution is the demonstration that although FSSB's impact depends on the unemployment rate and social expenditures in each national context (Johns, 2001; Kraimer *et al.*, 2014), FSSB is relevant across a number of Latin American countries.

Practical implications

Practitioners can glean important insights from our results. First, it is important to underscore that FSSB is associated with increased performance and reduced turnover intentions in all three countries from our sample. These results behove managers in

these countries – and by extension in other Latin American countries – to exercise family-supportive supervision. Thus, organizations in Latin America should train supervisors to increase their FSSB, particularly in countries with high unemployment and low social expenditures. A minimal investment in management training for supportive supervision (Hammer *et al.*, 2011) can potentially yield significant organizational benefits. Alternatively, organizations can hire or promote managers who already display family-supportive behaviors.

Limitations and future research

The cross-sectional design of our study prevents us from drawing definitive conclusions about causality. However, because all the relationships in our baseline model are theoretically derived from a strong body of research in the work–family literature, there is a strong rationale for the relationships we found. Nevertheless, we are still cautious in our inferences about causality, which makes longitudinal studies critical for the theoretical advancement of the field. The self-reported measure of job performance in our baseline model exposes our research to the risk of common source bias. Other variables in our baseline model call for self-reported measures because they are subjectively experienced. We were careful in our intent to decrease social desirability concerns, and we included data from an independent source at the country level for testing our hypotheses, which strengthens the reliability of the results by alleviating concerns of common source and method biases. Still, future research would strengthen the findings by collecting job performance data from other sources.

Finally, although our sample is relatively large ($n = 988$) and it comes from three countries that represent various socio-economic Latin American realities, the generalizability of our results outside of Latin America is not obvious. Similar studies using data from other areas of the world are needed. The countries in our sample exhibit small differences in terms of unemployment rate and social expenditures. With such data, we conducted a rather conservative test of our model. In the future, researchers should theorize and test the effects of other national-level variables that may as well affect the work–family interface. Moreover, due to the rather small number of countries included in our study, we were only able to test for the impact of national context on individual-level mechanisms indirectly as a moderator. Studies incorporating a larger set of countries may not only test the generalizability of our findings but also include countries as explanatory variables affecting, for example, the level of supervisors' work–family support.

Conclusion

Our findings present evidence for the importance of national context in understanding the effects of resources offered within the organizational domain, such as FSSB, on outcomes, specifically in Latin America. In this study, we conceptualize national context as providing or threatening individuals' resources to manage work and family, using publicly available data on unemployment and social expenditures. In doing so, we advance the understanding of how national context affects the impact of FSSB on outcomes. While this is a small step, it takes us in the direction of addressing the national context, which is often the “elephant in the room” (Den Dulk *et al.*, 2013). Our paper provides some critical answers and poses additional questions regarding the impact of FSSB in Latin America. Our hope is that other researchers will continue to deepen our

collective understanding beneficial to academics, legislators and practitioners alike. This is of major importance in a globalized world, with corporations operating in multiple countries with varied social, economical, cultural and legal contexts.

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