How important are informal work-family support? A meta-analytic path analysis of supervisor work-family support and employee outcomes

Lusi Wu
wu628@purdue.edu

Rong Su

Ellen E. Kossek

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgg

Part of the Communication Commons, Human Resources Management Commons, Organizational Behavior and Theory Commons, Political Science Commons, Psychology Commons, and the Sociology Commons

Recommended Citation

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
The work-family literature distinguishes two types of work-family support in the workplace: formal work-family support and informal work-family support (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011). Formal work-family support comprises organizational work-family policies, such as onsite child care. Informal work-family support includes supportive work-family culture, family supportive supervisor, and supportive coworkers (Kossek et al., 2011; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). While the outcomes of formal organizational work-family support have been meta-analytically examined (e.g., Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2013; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007), there has yet to be a comprehensive review of the effect of informal organizational family support. There is a lack of consensus among researchers on the significance and magnitude of its effects across diverse samples.

Our meta-analysis examines relationships between informal work-family support in organizations, which are organizational supportive work-family culture and supervisor family support, and employee outcomes. Bivariate results indicate that supportive work-family culture had positive associations with supervisor family support ($r = .36$) and employees’ use of work-family policies ($r = .13$). Supervisor family support had positive relationship with employees’ use of work-family policies ($r = .20$). Employees’ use of work-family policies was negatively related to employee work-family conflict ($r = -.23$), which had negative relationships with job satisfaction ($r = -.32$), organizational commitment ($r = -.19$), and positive relationship with turnover intention ($r = .39$) and work-related strain ($r = .43$).