Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors (FSSB): Implications for Small Enterprises

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What is FSSB?

Informal supervisor support helping employees balance work and nonwork demands

Distinct from general workplace social support & family-supportive organizational perceptions

Inclusive of nonwork demands, not just family-related

Hammer et al. (2009)
Why Should Small Businesses Care?

Every employee counts in a small business

Lack of federal policies

Organizational discretion

Individual initiative
Why Now?

Changing demographics
  • E.g., female workers, eldercare responsibilities

24/7 economy

Advancing technology

Increased prevalence of work conflicting with nonwork life
More Specifically FSSB Provides...

1. Emotional Support
   I listen to my employees when they struggle balancing work and nonwork

2. Instrumental Support
   Mary’s dog got sick, so I’ll reschedule our meeting

3. Creative Work-Family Management
   Joe needs to pick up his children from school everyday, so I will shift his hours earlier

4. Role Modeling
   I demonstrate how to make time for family and work
2017 Review

Literature review of all FSSB and FSSB-related studies

Focus primarily on outcomes and consequences

Marked increase in interest
FSSB: Outcomes

- + Physical
- + Psychological
- + Wellbeing

FSSB

- Health
- Work
- Work-Life Balance
- + Job Satisfaction
- + Performance
- - Quitting
- - Work Conflicting with Family
FSSB: Predictors

- Culture
- Supervisor/Subordinate Relationships
- Org. Benefits
- Friendly Policies
- General Support
- Family-Friendly Culture
- Same Gender
- Same Ethnicity
- Both have Children

FSSB

- Health
- Work
- Work-Family
Outcomes of FSSB

Better Health
• Less disease risk, more sleep, improved wellbeing

Better Work
• Happier employees, more committed, increased performance

Better Work-Family
• Work improving family life, less conflict

E.g., Bagger & Li (2014); Crain et al. (2014); Thomas & Ganster (1995);
Implications for Small Businesses

FSSB can help reduce turnover

Potentially save small businesses money

Optimize performance

Reduce work-family conflict and increase satisfaction
Fostering FSSB

Supervisors more likely to engage in FSSB if:

• Work in a supportive culture
• Resources within organization allow them to enact these behaviors
FSSB Interventions

Computer-based training

Goal-setting and feedback

Group sessions

Research indicates positive results


What We Know

FSSB supports *nonwork* life, not just family

Related to positive outcomes for both individuals and organizations

Particularly relevant and useful for small businesses

Trainable
Thank you

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