COMMUNICATING SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION-

AN EXAMINATION OF WORK SCHEDULES, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT,

SUPERVISORY SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS

by

KALISHA DENISE HUDGIES SMITH

(Under the direction of Kecia M. Thomas)

ABSTRACT

The needs of single parents and dual career families make balancing work and personal life difficult. Workers are beginning to value financial gain less when faced with the loss of personal time. In line with social exchange theory, this study proposed that perceived work/life integration can be predicted based upon the utilization of compressed workweeks as a display of organizational support. Organizational support theory suggests that when employees are given the opportunity to utilize new human resource benefits, they will have reduced work/life conflict. In line with leader-member exchange theory, this study also proposed that perceived supervisory support and employee perception of managers' communication ability would moderate the relationship between organizational support and work/life integration. Employees from a large global company were surveyed. Support and communication variables significantly predicted work/life integration; however, no moderators were found.

INDEX WORDS: Work/life integration, Perceived Organizational Support, Perceived Supervisory Support, Communication, Social Exchange Theory, Leader-Member Exchange Theory, Compressed Workweeks

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving family that has always encouraged me to be my best. First I would like to dedicate this to my husband Ravelle, thank you for your patience and encouragement through this process. To my mom and dad, I would not be, if it weren't for you. To my Granny and my grandfather (Dea.), it is because of your love, guidance, and protection that I have accomplished so much. To my grandma Evelyn and grandpa Stan, you have not only encouraged me to be successful in school, but you helped me to remember to value the arts, which has helped me have a well-balanced, exciting life. To my aunt Denise, you are the reason I value education. You taught me that no matter what's been accomplished, there's always more I can learn. To my cousins, who are like siblings, you've kept me grounded, and reminded me that although we all grow at different levels, the only thing that matters is that we continue to grown. Thanks to my long-time friends that have become like sisters, Colette, Deonna, Michelle, and Stephanie. You have been there encouraging me, and reminding me that my only option is to succeed for years. To Ciara, Rianna, Jayden, Canaan, and Jerimiah, remember you can be whatever you want, if you work hard to achieve. Finally, this document is dedicated to my new baby boy. Thanks Will for giving me such a precious smile to comfort me as I persevered through this milestone. When I wanted to give up, you were my inspiration to be a successful role model for you and your future siblings.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recruitment and retention have been important issues in human resource management for years, and they continue to be today. In a 2005 survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and CareerJournal.com, three out of four employed workers that responded said they were either actively or passively engaged in a job search (Society of Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2006). Greenhaus (2002) stated that employers "who want to retain their talent, boost performance, and increase morale, are finding new ways to recognize and support employees' other [non work] responsibilities" (p. 46). He also noted that work/life programs introduced in the early 1990s were intended to be recruiting incentives, and despite economic slowdowns, the percentage of employers offering some kind of work/life benefit is growing. Programs that consider both employees' work and personal lives have been shown to increase attraction, retention, productivity, and perceived firm performance, and they may provide the infrastructure necessary to attract the best human resources (Arthur & Cook, 2004).

Long gone are the days when families comprise a working husband, a stay-at-home-wife, and two children. This type of family makes up less than 6% of the U.S. population (Polach, 2003). Families now include many single and dual-career parents, same sex couples, and blended families. Sixty-three percent of working women have children under age 6, and nearly three-fourths have children under 18 (Polach, 2003). Because of these changing demographics, many researchers have studied the impact of the work-family relationship (Dunham, Pierce, & Castaneda, 1987; Pierce & Duhnam, 1992).

Allen (2001) identified three policies that were relevant for alleviating work-family conflict: work benefits, family-oriented organizational support, and supervisory support. Benefits associated with flexible work arrangements, such as compressed workweeks, were more highly related to perceptions that the organization was supportive of the family. These polices explained a significant amount of variance associated with work/family conflict, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover. Allen found that employee perceptions of family supportiveness negatively predicted work-family conflict. Family supportive organizational policies mediated the relationship between the benefit and work/family conflict, and between supervisory support and work/family conflict. In short, employees that perceived the organization as less family-supportive experienced more work-family conflict than those who perceived that the organization was more family-supportive.

Developments in social exchange theory suggest that work-family benefits may promote employee participation and initiative through a felt obligation to give extra effort in return for additional benefits (Haar & Spell, 2004). Social exchange theory has recently been applied in organizational settings to provide a basis for understanding the roles that organizations and managers play in creating feelings of employee obligation and pro-organizational behaviors such as performance and citizenship (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002). According to Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996), the two main ways that social exchange has been conceptualized in the management literature are as a global exchange relationship between employees and the organization, and as a focused relationship between subordinates and their superiors.

According to Settoon et al., (1996), research findings suggest that "positive, beneficial actions directed at employees by the organization and/or its representatives contribute to the

establishment of high-quality exchange relationships" (p. 219). This study looked at the effects of a compressed workweek schedule (one means of organizational support), employee perceived organizational support, and perceived supervisory support with respect to the general concept of work/life integration.

<div align="center">From Work/Family Balance to Work/Life Integration</div>

The work/family literature seeks to understand how individuals learn to effectively manage or minimize work/family conflict. Work/family conflict is defined as a form of inter-role conflict, in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect (Martins, Eddleston, & Veiga, 2002).

Considerable research has been conducted on the ways that employees, women in particular, are affected by different programs and initiatives labeled as family friendly. However, work/family conflict is not exclusive to women. Catalyst, a research organization that studies issues in women's career advancement, has been examining work/family issues since 1968. Catalyst has demonstrated in recent studies that a majority of women and men across various job levels and functions find balancing work/life responsibilities challenging regardless of gender, family situation, generation, level, or geography (Catalyst, 2003).

Today many men as well as women express problems dealing with their competing roles. In one study, men reported feeling uneasy about leaving work early for family commitments because they felt they would be perceived as less committed to the organization (Polach, 2003). In a 1990 study, Hall looked at how men perceived work/family conflict and found that 71% of men felt that family responsibilities negatively affected employees' careers and ability to advance. Men reported wanting to be seen as dedicated careerists, and felt that if they took parental leave or utilized flexible work arrangements, they would be seen as eccentrics and not

serious about their careers. Work/family conflict is thus no longer a problem experienced only by working mothers.

Similarly, conflict between work and personal life is not restricted to parents. Young professionals may struggle with the loss of the free time they had in high school or college. In a study by Catalyst (2001), it was found that 78% of Generation Xers (defined as individuals born between 1964 and 1975) said that flexible work polices and programs were extremely or very important to their job advancement and satisfaction. Learning to effectively manage the transition from the more flexible world of school schedules to the ever increasing 40+ hour workweek is a challenge for many new entrants into the workforce (Polach, 2003).

Just as the face of the working population has changed, so has employers' and researchers' understanding of the important factors facing employees who are trying to reach a balance. We now understand that extra-work demands in people's lives include but are not limited to family responsibilities (Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman, & Garden, 2005). All employees must learn to balance various areas of their personal lives, which may include caring for siblings, aging parents, or offspring, as well as interests in athletic, religious, and creative outlets.

The term *work/family balance* has been expanded to *work/life balance* or *work/life integration* - terms which factor in all potential barriers to successful work and personal role management. Unlike work/life balance, the term work/life integration implies that individuals can participate and obtain satisfaction in both their work and personal lives, regardless of how much time they invest in each (Burke, 2004). The term work/life integration will thus be used in the remainder of this paper to refer to the overarching concept of managing conflict among all personal and work responsibilities.

Work/Life Integration

Work/life integration is the process by which individuals manage work/life conflict. Work/life conflict occurs when pressures from the work role are incompatible with pressures from life outside of the work role (Siegel, et al., 2005). These competing role pressures are brought on by activities that are related and unrelated to work, such that fulfilling one's work responsibilities make it difficult to attend to activities outside the work domain. As work/life conflict is reduced, work/life integration is achieved.

Ignoring high levels of work/life conflict can be problematic for employers and employees alike. Individuals who do not effectively reduce work/life conflict have been shown to have increased psychological distress (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), higher accident levels, lost time, reduced productivity, lowered career satisfaction, poor physical health, and heavy alcohol use (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Martins, et al., 2002; Smith & Wedderburn).

Efforts to increase work/life integration have been shown to have several positive outcomes. According to Judge and Colquitt (2004), organizations that can help employees manage work and personal roles should gain competitive advantage by reducing workers' compensation claims, medical expenses, and withdrawal, while maintaining high levels of job performance. By reducing organizational stress, managing work/life conflict could potentially have several positive outcomes for the employee (e.g. job satisfaction), as well as for the employer (e.g. reduced turnover).

Organizational-Level Initiatives

It has been suggested that organizational-level initiatives, such as flexible work hours, as well as individual-level coping efforts, may lower levels of job stressors and work-family

conflict (Burke, 2004). Leonard (2003) found that nearly three-fourths of employees surveyed would sacrifice money for a better quality of life. A recent survey of 975 major U.S. employers found that employers are increasingly considering work/life issues, with 74% of employers offering flexible work arrangements, up from 67% in 1995 (Catalyst, 2005).

It has been found that workers are more accepting of human resource benefits that are available to all employees (Grover & Crooker, 1995). While few men work part-time, men have been found to use informal flexibility and full-time flexible work arrangements at almost the same rate as women (28.1% for men, 26.7% for women; Catalyst, 2005). Catalyst also found that 65% of women and 72% of men in dual-earner relationships would look for a formal flexible work program from a new employer.

According to Poe (2000), some childless workers feel that many of the gains made in obtaining flexible work arrangements and paid and unpaid leave never reach the majority of workers - those without young children. Employees have reported beliefs that work/family programs provided preferential treatment to parents (Kirby & Krone, 2002). It has been reported that a family-friendly backlash is occurring, where childless workers and workers with children who do not get to use family-friendly benefits are resentful about family benefits (Rothausen, Gonzales, Clarke, & O'Dell, 1998). In a survey by *USA Weekend*, 4 in 10 workers have heard co-workers complain about "parent perks" (Poe, 2000).

Although many company policies state that alternative work arrangements are for everyone, childless workers say that in practice, they are available for parents only (Poe, 2000). It is expressed that there is only so much flextime to go around, and once the parents have taken it, there isn't anything left. This resentment festers if employees believe that flexible-work programs are available only for parents (Hammers, 2003). Perceived inequities emerge according

to whether individuals can use the policies and according to the ways that employees are chosen

for these benefits (Kirby & Krone, 2002). While some initiatives are geared specifically towards

women or individuals with children (e.g. adoption benefits and childcare subsidies), alternative

scheduling arrangements can be used by all employees. Therefore, this study sought to examine

responses to gender neutral and parenting neutral benefits such as alternative work arrangements.

Alternative Work Arrangements

Alternative work arrangements (AWA's) are changes in the timing or location of the

workday. Perceived flexibility in timing of work has been found to be related to positive

outcomes from personal and business perspectives (Grover & Crooker, 1995). AWA's include

telecommuting, flextime, and flexible workweeks. Telecommuting allows employees to work

whenever and wherever it is most convenient for them (Hill, Hawkins, & Ferris, 2001). Like

telecommuting, flextime allows employees the opportunity to vary their hours of work.

However, the work is done within the traditional organizational setting. Often employees are

required to work a set of core hours, yet may vary their start and stop times.

While telecommuting and flextime have been found to have several benefits such as

increased productivity, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction (Goodrich, 1990; Hill & Hawkins,

1996; Kurland & Bailey, 1999; Powell & Mainiero, 1999; Schilling, 1999), they have also been

criticized for blurring the lines between work and personal responsibilities, creating work/life

conflict, creating insufficient coverage for employees in the office, and causing management and

supervision problems for individuals working away from the office (Hill, Miller, Weiner, &

Colihan 1998; Kurland & Bailey 1999; Rau & Hyland, 2002).

Another commonly used option is the compressed workweek. This is sometimes listed as

flextime, but has also been categorized as a flexible week. A compressed workweek is any

system of fixed working hours, more than 8 hours in length, which results in a workweek of less than 5 full days (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999). With this option, employees can work an increased number of hours per day, in order to get a full day off. This option allows managers to schedule hours within which employees must work, insuring proper coverage for the workload.

By having the employees in the office, the problems associated with lack of management/supervision are significantly decreased. However, employees are allowed a free day in the traditional work week to accommodate personal responsibilities. Kirby & Krone (2002) found that when the organization operated on compressed workweeks, no one complained that it was discriminatory (as is the case with family friendly policies), as everyone received the benefit. The compressed workweek is a work/family type of benefit; however it was not perceived as exclusive to parents, because all employees were rewarded with the work schedule.

A nationwide survey of U.S. human resource professionals found that 22% of organizations offered compressed workweeks (Catalyst, 2005), while another found that figure to be 27% (Vantage Solutions, 2006). In a study of MBA graduates, 11% of women and 8% of men were using compressed workweeks. In a 2004 survey of more than 600 organizations (Robinson, 2004), the proportion of employers that offered compressed workweeks jumped to 44%, up from 16% in 1996.

Not only are U.S. employers and employees using compressed workweeks, there is also widespread evidence of global usage. Employers in the United States, Canada, Japan, and numerous other countries are finding that one of the most valuable tools for recruitment and retention is offering work scheduling options, one of which is the compressed workweek (Hill, et al., 2001). Compressed workweeks have been common in Europe for years (Sunoo, 1996). They

are used in London (Huff, 2005), the Philippines (Hewitt Associates, 2006), and the Netherlands (Goudswaard & de Nanteuil, 2000). In 2005, one in five workers in Canada worked a compressed workweek (B.C. Council for Families, 2006). The 2000 Work-Life Balance study in the United Kingdom found that, 34 % of those studied had a preference for a compressed workweek (40% of males, 30% of females). In a 1997 British survey, fathers cited using compressed hours to engineer time with their families (Thornthwaite & Sheldon, 2002).

The compressed workweek is an AWA that has been used since the 1970's (Nord & Costigan, 1973). It has been in practice in several countries, for several decades. Because of the longevity of its appeal, the feasibility of its implementation, and its global popularity, this study will focus on compressed workweeks.

Compressed Workweeks and Work/Life Integration

A compressed work-week is usually 40 hours long, and compressed into fewer than 5 days (Schmidt & Duenas, 2002). The employee is given longer working hours each day, having fewer days each week (Alberta Department of Human Resources and Employment, 2004). The number of working hours can be varied to give employees a free day every other week, one day every month, or even two free days per week. With the compressed workweek, the total number of hours an employee works does not change; instead the way the hours are scheduled is modified. Compressed work schedules are generally used for full-time workers; however, in the case of part-time workers, the employee may be required to work more than 8 hours in a day (Office of Personnel Management, 2006). The intended goals of using a compressed workweek are to better balance work, free time, and take home pay, and to reduce exposure to fatigue (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998).

The disadvantages associated with compressed workweeks are increased fatigue and tiredness (Baltes, et al., 1999; Ronen & Primps, 1984), negative impacts on family and social life, a significant increase in general health complaints, decrease in work quality, and difficulties with staffing (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998). Other negative consequences include increased need for managerial planning, inability of the supervisor to be present when employees are on the job, and extra implementation costs (Baltes, et al.).

Research suggests that the primary gains to the organization achieved by implementing a compressed workweek are reduced overhead costs per operational hour, payment for hours worked, increased retention, and a shorter workweek for each employee with no less pay (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998).

Flexible work options give employees greater control over management of work and nonwork activities, and facilitate employee efforts to achieve work/life integration (Allen, 2001). Compressed schedules have been shown to positively affect supervisor performance ratings, job satisfaction, and satisfaction with work schedule (Allen, 2001; Grover & Crocker, 1995; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Potential benefits to the employee for using a compressed schedule are reduced overtime hours, reduced impact of work on weekends, increased employment opportunities, reduced travel to work, savings time and costs, and reduced number of shifts worked. Compressed workweeks can impact various areas of work and personal life by giving employees a free day to spend with family, run errands, or take a vacation on a long weekend. Because of these benefits, the following hypothesis was posited:

H1: Employees working a compressed workweek schedule will report greater perceived work-life integration than employees working a traditional schedule.

Moderators of Compressed Workweeks and Work/Life Integration

The benefits of alternative work arrangements, compressed workweeks in particular, have been mixed. Some say it increases work/life integration (Baltes, et al., 1999), while others say it increases the prevalence of work/life conflict (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998). Baltes et al. suggested that the mixed results may point to the existence of moderators, and that more research is needed to better understand the relationship between alternative work schedules and various outcome measures. Casper, Martine, Beffardi, & Erdwins (2002) suggested that employers try to avoid interference with employees' family lives in order to avert negative effects on attitudes and performance; however, if it is necessary to ask employees to go above and beyond, organizations might ameliorate the negative effects of conflict by creating supportive workplaces.

Organizational Support Theory

Even the most family-friendly workplace policies are at best useless, and possibly counterproductive if the work climate does not support them (Grover & Crooker, 1995). Studies have shown that "family friendly" policies may not be enough to alleviate the strain of work-life conflict. It has been suggested that when piecemeal solutions such as flextime are implemented, they rarely help more than a few employees strike a meaningful, sustainable balance between work and personal life, because they do not permeate a company's culture or fundamentally change managers' behavior (Friedman, Christensen, & DeGroot, 1998).

Most executives still believe that every time an employee's personal interests "win," the organization pays the price in its bottom line (Friedman, et al., 1998), and subsequently organizations do not convey support for using such policies. Employees must feel comfortable enough to take advantage of policies. Workers won't risk their job security or chances for advancement by taking advantage of job arrangements that their boss dislikes (Perkins, 1993).

Social support has been found to attenuate the deleterious consequences of stress (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998). A meta-analysis by Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher (1999) found that in general social support significantly predicted the relationships between work-related stressors and a variety of strain variables. Simply offering work/life programs does not mean that employees will find the organization supportive of their work/life needs (Thompson, Jahn, Kopelman, & Prottas, 2004). Having sources of support can provide a buffering effect that helps individuals deal with work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Singh, 1998).

Perceived Organizational Support and Work/Life Integration

According to organizational support theory, the development of perceived organizational support (POS) is encouraged by employees' tendency to assign humanlike characteristics to the organization, which becomes the basis by which employees view their favorable or unfavorable treatment as an indication that the organization favors or disfavors them (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986) suggested that employees form a global hypothesis of the extent to which their organizations value their work and their welfare, both as employees and as persons. In accordance with previous research, perceived organizational support is operationalized by the quality of an individuals' social exchange relationship with the organization (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003).

A supportive work environment may enhance flexibility by offering information and direct help that facilitates work/life integration (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005). POS captures an individual's perceptions concerning the degree to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, et al., 1986). POS can include both work and non-work aspects of support. Regardless of whether that treatment is explicitly or

implicitly promised, POS captures the individual's perception of organizational treatment (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005).

POS may encourage employees to believe that the organization can be counted on to provide sympathy and tangible support in times of personal or work-related distress (Armeli, et al., 1998) Perceptions that an organization is family-supportive have been found to lead to reduced work-family conflict, increased job satisfaction, and increased organizational commitment (Allen, 2001). Work support has been found to be negatively related to work/family conflict (Aryee, et al., 2005). It has been suggested that even with high work/life conflict, individuals that perceive the organization to be supportive of their personal lives are less likely to respond to work/life conflict (Siegel, et al., 2005). Therefore the following hypothesis was posited:

> **H2**: There will be a positive relationship between POS and perceived work/life integration, such that employees with higher POS will perceive greater work/life integration than employees with low POS.

Perceived Organizational Support and Compressed Workweeks

Research has shown POS to be influenced by policies, procedures, and decisions indicative of the organization's concern with employee welfare and positive valuation of employee contributions (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). According to Coyle-Shapiro and Conway (2005), empirical evidence is accumulating to support a positive relationship between supportive organizational practices and POS. They state that the greater the inducements provided by the employer, the more POS is likely to be enhanced, as these inducements signal an investment in employees and recognition of their contributions. Armeli, et al. (1998) suggested that POS might convey willingness by the organization to provide the resources necessary to aid employees in

their desires for personal growth and achievement. Therefore the following hypothesis was posited:

> **H3**: Perceived organizational support will moderate the relationship between work schedule and perceived work/life integration. Employees using a compressed work schedule with high POS will report greater work/life integration than employees using a compressed work schedule with low POS. Employees without a compressed work schedule but with higher POS will report greater work/life integration than employees with low POS (see Figure 1).
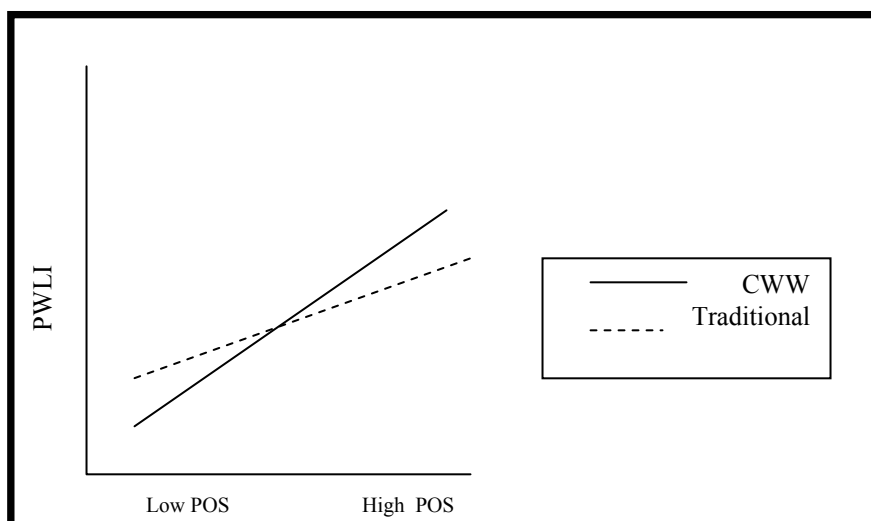
Figure 1. POS as a moderator of perceived work/life integration.
CWW = compressed workweek. PWLI = perceived work/life integration.

Individual Level Initiatives

Research has shown that the leader and his/her interaction with subordinates can influence subordinate outcomes both positively and negatively (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Leadership researchers have established that a considerate and supportive leader can help employees cope with personal crises (Murry, 2001). The leader is seen as the focal point for support, and reduces the direct effects of work stress on negative outcomes (Erera, 1992). The

supervisory relationship can also increase stress. Poor supervisor-subordinate relationships, characterized by low supervisor supportiveness, low quality communication, and lack of feedback, reduce individual well-being and contribute substantially to feelings of stress (Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill, & Stride, 2004). Dragoni (2005) stated the following:

> Leaders transmit their achievement priorities by engaging in behaviors and practices that support, reinforce, and imply their preferred behaviors, signaling what is expected and valued. Leaders model the behavior they deem appropriate and provide direct and indirect feedback on whether group members have met expectations, and reward individuals who exhibit expected behaviors (p.1086).

Supervisory support of non-work demands has been found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction and health (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). It has been suggested that a supportive supervisor makes it easier to balance work and family responsibilities (Thompson et al., 2004).

Murry (2001) suggested that when organizational members trust their leader and know that their supervisor will support them in dealing with a negative experience, such as work/life conflict, they are less likely to develop a negative attitude about their work. He suggested that more studies are needed to examine whether positive perceptions about the leader's role will buffer the effects of negative work experiences.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) has been defined and measured as a social exchange relationship between an employee and his or her immediate manager (Tekleab, Takeuchi & Taylor, 2005). This theory involves a process by which one leader influences one or more followers (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). LMX suggests that an interpersonal relationship evolves between supervisors and subordinates, against the background of a formal organization

(Wayne, Shore, & Linden, 1997). Based upon LMX, there is abundant empirical evidence that perceived social support from the leader is related to reduced perceived stress (Van Dierendonck, et al., 2004).

Supervisory social support refers to managers' specific sensitivity to employees' efforts to meet both work and home demands (Siegel, et al., 2005). Several studies support the view that POS and LMX are related, but distinct, social exchange processes (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). According to Wayne, et al. (2002), LMX focuses on the quality of exchange between the employee and the manager, and is based on the degree of emotional support and exchange of valued resources. They suggest that both top management and direct supervisors may have an influence on the development of social exchange relationships.

Social exchange has also been used to explain why subordinates become obligated to their supervisors to perform in ways beyond what is required of them in the formal employment contract, creating a felt obligation and willingness to contribute to the organization. As LMX increases in quality, supervisors enlist the help of subordinates on various tasks by offering inducements, creating obligations for the employee to reciprocate (Settoon, et al., 1996). Subordinates in high-LMX relationships experience more support and better two-way communication from their supervisor (Cropanzano, Pehar, & Chen, 2002).

Perceived Supervisory Support

A construct related to LMX, perceived supervisory support (PSS) is the degree to which supervisors' value employee contributions and care about their well-being (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). PSS describes an attitudinal response that is distinct from the response the employee forms about the organization as a whole (Allen, 2001). Viswesveran et al. (1999) found that for individuals that experience high levels of

work-family conflict, supervisory support can moderate (buffer) the effects of conflict and emotional strain, by minimizing the negative impact of work-family conflict among employees. The meaning that individuals associate with job-related stress is often managed or influenced by significant others, such as leaders (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Leadership behavior has been linked to effectiveness of individuals in dealing with various stressors such as combat conditions, conflict, panic, and disaster (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Behavior shown by supervisors toward their subordinates plays an important role in how supportive a work setting is perceived to be (Van Dierendonck, et al., 2004). It is widely acknowledged that subordinates are influenced by the support received from their supervisor, and that supervisors are one of the most common sources of stress in organizations (Van Dierendonck, et al.). Therefore the following hypothesis was posited:

H4: PSS will be positively related to perceived work/life integration such that employees that report higher PSS will perceive greater work/life integration than employees that report lower PSS.

Perceived Supervisory Support and Compressed Workweeks

Even when work/life polices such as compressed workweeks are implemented, employees still may not use them. It has been found that 67% of employees state that they would like to work a compressed workweek, even though only 6% actually did when given the option (Exploding Generation X Myths, 2005). Research has shown that one of the reasons people work more is that they perceive that supervisors expect extra work of them (Major, Klein, & Erhart, 2002). Managers need to clearly inform employees about business priorities and encourage them to be just as clear about personal priorities (Friedman, et al., 1998; Hewlett, Luce, & West, 2005).

Support from managers and supervisors is needed to convey management's support for work/life integration initiatives. Social support can reduce stress and moderate the influence of external sources of stress (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Supervisors need to recognize and support their employees as whole people, acknowledging and celebrating their roles outside of the office, and look for approaches that enhance the organization's performance and allow employees to pursue personal goals (Hewlett, et al., 2005). Therefore the following hypothesis was posited:

> **H5**: PSS will moderate the relationship between work schedule and work/life integration such that perceived work/life integration will be higher for individuals using a compressed work schedule who report high PSS than for those who report low PSS. Perceived work/life integration will be higher for employees using a traditional work schedule who report high PSS than for those who report low PSS (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Perceived supervisory support as a moderator of perceived work/life integration.
CWW = compressed workweek. PWLI = perceived work/life integration.
PSS = perceived supervisory support.

Communication as a Moderator

Kirby & Krone (2002) found that policies are ineffective if supervisors do not openly support them. They suggested that employees may fear consequences of using benefits. Many companies find a lower than expected number of employees taking advantage of work/life benefits. Ambiguous polices enhance uncertainty and negatively influence perceived supports (Allen, 2001). Lack of leader communication undermines follower trust in the leader (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

Several positive effects have been found for supervisor-employee relationships characterized by high communication. Subordinates who negotiate an open communication relationship, in which flow of communication is high, should have an increased understanding of their work environment, increased feelings of control, and decreased levels of uncertainty (Harris & Kacmar, 2006).

If employees feel that management involves them in decisions concerning workload, provides adequate explanations concerning decisions that affect work/life integration, and listens respectfully to concerns about managing work demands, organizational commitment will not suffer, even in high conflict situations (Siegel, et al., 2005). It has long been recognized that participants give compliance when they work in a supportive and non-threatening setting, where interactions are free and easy, compliments are frequent, and communication flows vertically and horizontally in the hierarchy (Marcus & House, 1973). Communication from organizational members creates cultural norms as to the appropriateness of using benefits. Therefore, high communication is expected to have a positive effect on work/life integration. The following two hypotheses were posited accordingly:

H6: Communication will be positively related to work/life integration such that employees who report higher levels of communication will have greater perceived work/life integration.

H6a: Communication will moderate the relationship between compressed workweek schedules and perceived work/life integration such that perceived work/life integration for employees using the compressed workweek will be higher for employees with higher supervisory communication than for employees with lower communication. Employees using a traditional work schedule who report higher communication will report greater perceived work/life integration than those who report lower supervisory communication (see Figure 3).

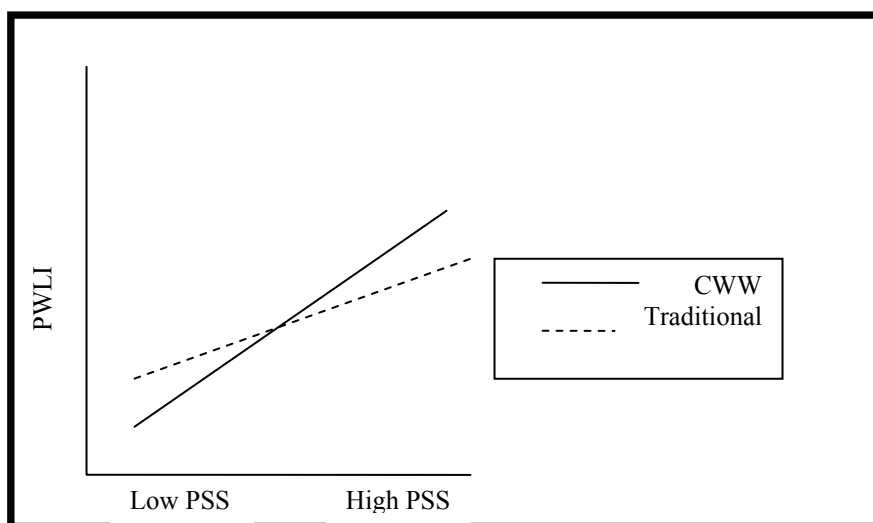*Figure 3.* Communication as a moderator of perceived work/life integration.
CWW = compressed workweek. PWLI = perceived work/life integration.

While research has not looked specifically at a possible interaction among organizational communication, POS, and work/life integration, there is evidence for a possible interaction. Even in organizations that support flexible policies, managers may communicate negative signals indicating that the use of the benefits is a problem for them and for the company as a whole

(Kirby & Krone, 2002). Workplace communication with superiors and co-workers has been found to be an important influence on employees' perceptions regarding psychologically important aspects of their work environment, such as a perceived organizational support (Allen, 2001; Moideenkutty, Blau, Kumar, & Nalakath, 2001).

Armeli, et al., (1998) found POS to be positively related to high-quality employee-supervisor relationships. Intraorganizational communication conveys messages of support (Allen, 2001). Organizations can communicate support by providing tangible benefits (e.g. child-care facilities, flexible work arrangements) and by helping employees reduce uncertainty. Compressed workweeks are an example of such a benefit.

Employees that report higher levels of communication may have higher levels of POS. Employees that perceive greater communication with their supervisors and managers may have higher levels of POS and perceive more work/life integration. POS has been found to be positively related to family-oriented actions and high quality employee-supervisor relationships (Armeli, et al., 1998). Through POS, employees may feel that they are valued by the organization and that the organization is concerned for their well-being (Masterson & Stamper, 2003), regardless of their work schedule. The following hypothesis is thus posited:

H7: Supervisor communication ratings will predict perceived work/life integration over and beyond the effects of CWW and POS.

The social exchange relationship has been shown to be a significant predictor of a number of important employee attitudes and behaviors, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, intentions to leave, and others (Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999). Leadership support has been shown to increase

commitment to the leader and the organization, reduce turnover intentions and increase satisfaction (Murry, 2001; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

This study looked at the impact of the compressed workweek on employee perceptions of work/life integration. Based in social exchange theory, this study attempted to explain the mixed results found in previous research. In addition to work/life integration, this study also looked at the impact of the compressed workweek and social exchange relationship on job satisfaction and employee desire to quit.

Kirby & Krone (2002) found that policies are ineffective if supervisors do not openly support them. They suggested that employees may fear consequences of using benefits. Many companies find a lower than expected number of employees taking advantage of work/life benefits. Ambiguous polices enhance uncertainty and negatively influence perceived supports (Allen, 2001). Lack of leader communication undermines follower trust in the leader (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

Several positive effects have been found for supervisor-employee relationships characterized by high communication. Subordinates who negotiate an open communication relationship, in which flow of communication is high, should have an increased understanding of their work environment, increased feelings of control, and decreased levels of uncertainty (Harris & Kacmar, 2006).

If employees feel that management involves them in decisions concerning workload, provides adequate explanations concerning decisions that affect work life balance, and listens respectfully to concerns about managing work demands, organizational commitment will not suffer, even in high conflict situations (Siegel, et al., 2005). It has long been recognized that participants give compliance when they work in a supportive and non-threatening setting, where

interactions are free and easy, compliments are frequent, and communication flows vertically and horizontally in the hierarchy (Marcus & House, 1973). Communication from organizational members creates cultural norms as to the appropriateness of using benefits. Therefore, high communication is expected to have a positive effect on work/life integration. The following two hypotheses are posited accordingly:

H6: Communication will be positively related to work/life integration such that employees who report higher levels of communication will have greater perceived work/life integration.

H6a: Communication will moderate the relationship between compressed workweek schedules and perceived work/life integration such that perceived work/life integration for employees using the compressed workweek will be higher for employees with higher supervisory communication than for employees with lower communication. Employees using a traditional work schedule who report higher communication will report greater perceived work/life integration than those who report lower supervisory communication.

The hypothesized relationships are depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Communication as a moderator of perceived work/life integration. CWW = compressed workweek. PWLI = perceived work/life integration.

While research has not looked specifically at a possible interaction among organizational communication, POS, and work/life integration, there is evidence for a possible interaction. Even in organizations that support flexible policies, managers may communicate negative signals indicating that the use of the benefits is a problem for them and for the company as a whole (Kirby & Krone, 2002). Workplace communication with superiors and co-workers has been found to be an important influence on employees' perceptions regarding psychologically important aspects of their work environment such as a perceived organizational support (Allen, 2001; Moideenkutty, Blau, Kumar, & Nalakath, 2001).

Armeli, et al., (1998) found POS to be positively related to high-quality employee-supervisor relationships. Intraorganizational communication conveys messages of support (Allen, 2001). Organizations can communicate support by providing tangible benefits (e.g. child-care facilities, flexible work arrangements) and by helping employees reduce uncertainty. Compressed workweeks are an example of such a benefit.

Employees that report higher levels of communication may have higher levels of POS. Employees that perceive greater communication with their supervisors and managers may have higher levels of POS and perceive more work/life integration. POS has been found to be positively related to family-oriented actions and high quality employee-supervisor relationships (Armeli, et al., 1998). Through POS, employees may still feel that they are valued by the organization and that the organization is concerned for their well-being (Masterson & Stamper, 2003), regardless of their work schedule. The following hypothesis is thus posited:

H7: Supervisor communication ratings will predict perceived work/life integration over and beyond the effects of CWW and POS.

Attitudes, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover

The social exchange relationship has been shown to be a significant predictor of a number of important employee attitudes and behaviors, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, intentions to leave, and others (Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999). Leadership support has been shown to increase commitment to the leader and the organization, increase performance, reduce turnover intentions and increase satisfaction (Murry, 2001; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Research has found positive linkages between general workplace attitudes and individual performance outcomes, job satisfactions, and individual performance (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

When a valued employee departs unexpectedly, studies have estimated direct turnover costs per employee to be between two and seven times the annualized income of an individual employee's salary/benefits package (Herman, 1997). Stress is estimated to cost U.S. businesses approximately $300 billion per year because of lower productivity, higher absenteeism, and turnover (Murphy & Zagorski, 2005). Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades (2002) found that when leaders communicated well with their employees and treated their subordinates with respect and recognition, they had greater retention.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

Employees from a large global service provider responded to the survey as part of a larger annual organizational study of job satisfaction conducted in September 2005.   The response rate for the annual survey was 92%. All employee workgroups currently using a compressed workweek were selected. The compressed schedule had been in place for six months at the time of survey. A meta analysis by Baltes et al. (1999), found that 6 months was the median time frame from intervention implementation to data collection used when studying flextime programs, such as the compressed workweek. Comparable workgroups using traditional work schedules were selected as a comparison group, based upon geographic location, and overall respondent characteristics, and size.

International employees were not given the opportunity for a compressed workweek schedule. As such, only U.S. employees were retained for analysis. Part-time employees were also excluded, given that they did not meet the criteria for a compressed workweek as identified by the organization. Through this method, the study included a total of 1,682 non-management union employees from four geographic regions, six districts, 40 centers, and 74 workgroups. A breakdown of respondents by workgroup is presented in Table 1. Ninety percent of employees ($N = 1,508$) had been employed with the company for more than six years at the time of the survey. Because of organizational restrictions for anonymity, demographic data were not collected.

Procedure

The CWW schedule was defined as a 4-day workweek at 10 hours per day. Anything over 40 hours was considered overtime. All managers were given the option to try a compressed workweek. They were not given the option to pick particular employees to use the compressed schedule, only whether it would be available. If implemented, all of their employees were able to work the compressed schedule. Everyone was expected to work the compressed workweek, and only employees with special circumstances were allowed to remain on the traditional schedule. There was no big roll out for the program, reducing the possibility for backlash from those that did not receive the option. All individuals within a workgroup were scheduled for 40 hours per week, regardless of scheduling method.

Results of past surveys indicated work/life integration as an area of concern for U.S. domestic regions within the organization. Exit interviews with high performing employees, who resigned, revealed that work/life conflict was the number one reason for leaving the organization (85% of women and 67% of men; $N = 56$). Surveys were completed through the company's online intranet. Each item was presented individually on the computer screen, and employees were not allowed to move to the next screen without indicating an answer.

Measures

Perceived Work/life Integration Index

To measure employees' perceptions of work/life integration, a 3-item measure was used ($\alpha = .81$). This scale contained questions such as, "In general, company policies and programs help employees balance work and personal life responsibilities"[1] and "I am able to take time off

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[1] In the Work/Life Integration measure, the word balance was used, as employees were not familiar with the term integration.

when I need it." This index was developed by organizational researchers to look at overall work/life issues within the organization. The questions were rated on a 5-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). Lower scores indicated higher levels of perceived work/life integration.

POS Index

This scale was previously used in assessment of organizational climate, organizational commitment, benefits assessments, and job satisfaction. The 14-item scale was used to measure POS. Questions were similar to Eisenberger's (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support. The scale had high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .92. This scale contained questions such as, "How do you rate the company on your total compensation" and "How would you rate the company on your career opportunities." Responses were made on a 5-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 (*very good*) to 5 (*very poor*). Lower scores indicated higher levels of perceived organizational support.

PSS Index

To measure PSS, an 18-item scale was used. This scale assessed the degree to which employees perceived their supervisor to value their overall contributions, and support their well-being and development. Cronbach's alpha was .96. Questions included "My Management Team treats employees with respect," "My Management Team is sincere in its attempt to understand the employee's point of view," and "The members of my Management Team are accessible when I need them." Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). This scale assessed employees' perceptions of their relationship with their management team in three areas: accountability, customer service focus, communication, and work environment. Subscales were identified and validated in earlier versions of the survey.

The composite of the three subscales was used to obtain a global score. The scale has been used to identify potential areas for employee development for management and assessing job satisfaction.

<u>Communication Index</u>

This subscale was developed originally as a subscale of the PSS Index, to measure supervisor-subordinate communication ($\alpha = .92$). Items for the communication subscale were identified and validated in previous versions of the survey. The 6-item scale included questions such as, "The members of my Management Team are accessible when I need them" and "I feel comfortable discussing important workplace issues with someone on my Management Team." The measurement scale was the same as that of the PSS index.

<u>Job Satisfaction and Desire to Quit</u>

Employees were asked to indicate their overall job satisfaction in a one-item measure which asked, "In general, how satisfied are, you as an employee at this organization?" A one-item measure was also used to gauge employees' intentions to leave the organization: "I would stay at this company even if a comparable job was available at another company." Items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*).

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Correlations, means, and standard deviations for the study measures are presented in

Tables 2, 3, and 4. Principal-components analysis of the data was completed followed by

Oblimax, oblique rotation. A four-factor solution provided Eigenvalues greater than one for all

factors, corresponding to PWLI, PSS, POS, and communication subscales (see Table 5). All

subscales had reliability estimates that would be considered to be acceptable according to

(Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Cronbach alphas ranged from .81 to .96.

Work schedule was not significantly correlated with PWLI (contrary to hypothesis 1),

desire to quit, or job satisfaction. Significant correlations between POS, PSS, and supervisor

communication suggested that Hypotheses 2, 4, and 6 are supported. To further examine these

relationships, and to test for direct and moderated effects, separate hierarchical regression

analyses were conducted. Hierarchical regression equations first considered the control variables,

next tested for main effects, and then examined two-way interactions (Cohen & Cohen, 1975).

Tables 6 through 17 present the results of the regression analyses for the three dependent

variables.

Perceived Work/Life Integration

An independent t-test comparing the mean perceived work/life integration of employees

receiving compressed workweeks versus those with the traditional work schedule revealed no

significant differences ($M_{CWW} = 9.70$, $SD = 4.07$ vs. $M_{trad} = 9.38$, $SD = 4.02$, $t(1541)1.54$, $p >$

.05).

The correlation matrix was examined to identify the potential influence of tenure and workgroup size as a control variable. As shown in Table 2, both tenure and workgroup size were significantly correlated with PWLI. Employees that worked for the organization for shorter periods of time reported greater PWLI than those that worked for the organization for longer periods of time. Employees in smaller workgroups also reported greater PWLI. Workgroup size was also significantly positively correlated with the compressed work schedule, such that individuals in larger workgroups were more likely to have a compressed work schedule than those in smaller workgroups. Predictor variables were centered to minimize problems associated with predictor multicollinearity (West, Aiken, & Krull, 1996).

Results of the POS-Communication-PWLI regression are presented in Table 6. In Step 1, tenure (β= 0.25, p <.00), and workgroup size (β= -.12, p <.00), significantly predicted PWLI (F(2, 1540) = 74.19). While Step 2 accounted for 36% of the variance, work schedule did not significantly predict PWLI (β = .03, p > .05). POS significantly predicted PWLI (β = 0.55, p = .00). The interaction term POS-CWW was not significant (ΔR^2 = .00, β = 0.00, p > .05). Communication added incremental value over that predicted by the POS-CWW interaction (ΔR^2 = 0.12, β = 0.44, p = .00). The full model accounted for 47% of the variance. While Hypotheses 1 and 3 were not supported, Hypotheses 2 and 7 were supported.

Results of the test of PSS-PWLI are presented in Table 7. When presented together in Step 2, PSS (β = 0.63, p < .00) and work schedule (β = .04, p <.05) significantly predicted PWLI. Step 2 accounted for 45% of the variance. The interaction of PSS and work schedule was not significant (β = -0.04, p > .05). Hypothesis 4 was supported; however Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

As shown in Table 8, results of the regression equations looking at communication revealed that work schedule ($\beta = 0.05$, $p < .05$) and communication ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < .00$) were significant in Step 2. Communication and work schedule accounted for 43% of the variance in the model. The interaction term was not significant ($\beta = -0.05$, $p > .05$). Hypothesis 6 was supported. Hypothesis 6a was not supported.

Results of the separate regression equations suggested that all the predictor variables had significant direct effects. A regression equation with all predictor and interaction variables was performed (see Table 9). Work schedule ($\beta = 0.04$, $p < .05$), POS ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = .00$), PSS ($\beta = 0.26$, $p = .00$), and communication ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = .00$) had significant direct effects on PWLI ($R^2 = .48$, $F(6,1536) = 240.77$, $p = .00$). No interaction effects were found to be significantly predictive of PWLI.

Desire to quit

An independent t-test suggested that there is no significant difference in desire to quit between individuals on a compressed workweek and those on a traditional work schedule ($t(1541) = .61$, $p > .05$). Tables 10-13 present the regression results for the analyses of desire to quit as the dependent variable. Desire to quit was significantly correlated with all variables except work schedule. Hierarchical regressions again were performed to test direct and moderated effects of the variables on employee desire to quit. Tenure and workgroup size were significantly related to desire to quit, and were entered as control variables in the regression equations.

Results of the POS-Communication-Intention-to-Quit regression are presented in Table 10. Step 2 was significant ($F(4, 1538) = 302.95$, $p = .00$), accounting for 44% of the variance. Work schedule was not significant ($\beta = 0.03$, $p > .05$), however POS was significant ($\beta = 0.66$, p

= .00). There was no significant change in R^2 from entering the interaction term of POS and work schedule into Step 3 (ΔR^2 = .00, p > .05). In the full model, communication added incremental value (ΔR^2 = .06, β = 0.31, p = .00), and work schedule was significant (β = 0.04, p < .05).

Regression results with PSS as a predictor are presented in Table 11. In Step 2, after controlling for tenure and workgroup size, work schedule (β = 0.05, p < .00) and PSS (β = 0.63, p = .00) were significant (R^2 = .41). The interaction term was not significant in Step 3, (β = -0.02, p > .05).

Results for the relationship between the interaction of work schedule and communication are presented in Table 12. The regression equations revealed that work schedule and communication had direct effects on desire to quit (work schedule β = 0.05, p = .01, and communication β = 0.59, p = .00), but no interaction effect was found (β = -0.02, R^2 = .36, p > .05).

As with PWLI, one regression equation with all predictors was run for desire to quit. Results are presented in Table 13. Work schedule (β = 0.04, p < .05), POS (β = 0.43, p =.00), PSS (β = 0.22, p = .00), and communication (β = 0.13, p = .00) had significant direct effects on desire to quit, accounting for 51% of the variance. No interaction effects were found to be significantly predictive of employee desire to quit.

<div align="center">Job Satisfaction</div>

An independent t-test suggested no significant difference in job satisfaction between individuals on a compressed workweek and those on a traditional work schedule ($t(1541)$ = -0.15, p > .05). Tables 14-17 present the regression results for the analyses with job satisfaction as

a dependent variable. As with the other dependent variables, job satisfaction was significantly

correlated with all independent variables except work schedule.

Hierarchical regressions examining direct and moderated effects of POS and

communication on employee job satisfaction are presented in Table 14. Work schedule

($\beta = 0.05$, $p = .01$) and POS ($\beta = 0.71$, $p = .00$) were significant predictors of job satisfaction

($F(4, 1538) = 387.51$, $p = .00$, $R^2 = .50$). As shown in Figure 4, the interaction term of POS and

work schedule was significant ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = .01$, $R^2 = .50$), such that employees working a

compressed workweek with low POS reported lower job satisfaction than those on a traditional

schedule with low POS, and employees working a compressed workweek with high POS

reported greater job satisfaction than those on a traditional schedule. In Step 4, communication

added incremental value to the model ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p = .00$, $\beta = 0.32$, $p = .00$), accounting for 57%

of the variance.

Regression results with PSS as a predictor of job satisfaction are presented in Table 15.

After controlling for tenure and workgroup size, work schedule ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = .00$) and PSS

($\beta = 0.71$, $p = .00$) were significant ($R^2 = .50$, $p = .00$). The interaction term PSS x Work

Schedule, however, was not significant, ($\beta = -0.04$, $p > .05$, $R^2 = .50$).

Results for the interaction of work schedule and communication are presented in Table

16. The regression equations revealed that work schedule and communication had direct effects

on desire to quit ($R^2 = .40$, $p = .00$, work schedule $\beta = 0.07$, $p = .00$ and communication $\beta = 0.63$,

$p = .00$), but no interaction effect was found ($\beta = 0.04$, $p > .05$).

A regression equation with all predictors was run for job satisfaction (see Table 17). Step

2 revealed significant direct effects ($F(6, 1536) = 374.21$, $p = .00$). Work schedule ($\beta = 0.06$ $p = .00$), POS ($\beta = 0.42$, $p = .00$), and PSS ($\beta = 0.44$, $p = .00$) had significant direct effects on PWLI,

accounting for 59% of the variance. Communication was not a significant predictor of job satisfaction (β = -0.02, p > .05). In step 3, the change in R^2 was not significant (ΔR^2 = .00, p > .05), indicating no significant interaction terms.

Results of regression equations with all variables should be interpreted with care, as supervisory communication and PSS are highly correlated. These variables are not analyzed together in the testing of the hypotheses, to minimize problems associated with collinearity.

Table 1.

Number of Respondents in Workgroup Separated by Work Schedule

Compressed Schedule		Traditional Schedule	
Workgroup	n	Workgroup	N
101	31	001	29
102	24	002	17
103	21	003	14
104	29	004	20
105	58	005	26
106	62	006	17
107	40	007	16
108	28	008	62
109	14	009	1
110	21	010	1
111	27	011	25
112	19	012	9
113	18	013	16
114	22	014	27
115	26	015	13
116	23	016	14
117	26	017	20
118	16	018	10
119	19	019	12
120	5	020	14
121	14	021	18
122	25	022	9
123	24	023	21
124	24	024	7
125	19	025	19
126	25	026	10
127	28	027	27
128	19	028	24
129	9	029	12
130	26	030	15
131	24	031	17
132	23	032	22
133	28	033	21
134	27	034	14
		035	16
		036	23
		037	18
		038	23
		039	17
		040	3
Total	844		699

Table 2

Overall Correlations and Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Tenure	4.40	1.31	--								
2. Workgroup Size	26.58	13.86	-.14**	--							
3. Compressed workweek	0.55	0.50	-.14**	.24**	--						
4. Perceived supervisory support	0.00	15.01	.23**	-.16**	-.09**	--					
5. Supervisor communication	0.00	6.05	.23**	-.17**	-.10**	.91**	--				
6. Perceived organizational support	0.00	3.37	.28**	-.15**	-.06*	.70**	.62**	--			
7. Perceived work/life integration	9.52	4.04	.27**	-.16**	-.04	.66**	.64**	.58**	--		
8. Desire to quit	2.63	1.22	.18**	-.11**	-.02	.64**	.60**	.66**	.63**	--	
9. Job satisfaction	2.39	1.11	.18**	-.11**	.00	.71**	.63**	.71**	.58**	.68**	--

Note: $N = 1,543$.   *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$.

Table 3

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Employees with a Traditional Work Schedule

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Tenure	4.61	1.18	--						
2. Workgroup Size	22.98	13.31	-0.06*	--					
3. PSS	1.45	15.06	0.13**	-0.14**	--				
4. COMM	0.65	6.10	0.15**	-0.14**	0.90**	--			
5. POS	0.24	3.40	0.17**	-0.12**	0.66**	0.60**	--		
6. PWLI	9.70	4.07	0.17**	-0.14**	0.67**	0.66**	0.57**	--	
7. Desire to quit	2.66	1.23	0.08*	-0.12**	0.65**	0.61**	0.65**	0.62**	--
8. Job Satisfaction	2.39	1.08	0.08*	-0.11**	0.70**	0.62**	0.68**	0.57**	0.66**

Note: n = 699. *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$.

Table 4

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Employees with a Compressed Work Schedule

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tenure	4.23	1.39	--						
Workgroup Size	29.56	13.60	-0.14**	--					
PSS	-1.19	14.88	0.29**	-0.16**	--				
COMM	-0.53	5.97	0.27**	-0.16**	0.92**	--			
POS	-0.20	3.34	0.35**	-0.15**	0.72**	0.63**	--		
PWLI	9.38	4.02	0.34**	-0.16**	0.65**	0.61**	0.60**	--	
Desire to quit	2.62	1.21	0.26**	-0.10**	0.63**	0.59**	0.67**	0.64**	--
Job Satisfaction	2.39	1.13	0.26**	-0.11**	0.72**	0.64**	0.73**	0.59**	0.69**

Note: n = 844. *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$.

Table 5

Principle Component Analysis for Data

Factors	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	23.50	53.41	53.41	23.52	53.45	53.45
2	1.92	4.36	57.77	1.84	4.17	57.62
3	0.87	1.98	59.75	0.87	1.98	59.60
4	0.61	1.38	61.13	0.67	1.53	61.13

Note: Factors had Eigenvalues greater than 1, with oblimax rotation.

Table 6

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, and Communication with Work/Life Integration as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Step 1	Step 2 (Hypothesis 2)	Step 3 (Hypothesis 3)	Step 4 (Hypothesis 7)
		Work/life Integration		
		β Values		
Tenure	0.25**	0.11**	0.11**	0.09**
Workgroup Size	-0.12**	-0.07**	-.07**	-0.04*
CWW		0.03	0.03	0.04*
POS		0.55**	0.54**	0.29**
POS x CWW			0.00	0.00
COM				0.44**
		Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.09**	.27**	.00	.12**
ΔF	74.19**	324.01**	.01	341.19**
R^2	.09	.36	.36	.48
Adjusted R^2	.09	.36	.36	.48
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537	6, 1536
Overall F	74.19**	214.66**	171.62**	231.54**

Note. N = 1,543.   Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS and COM are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 7

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and PSS with Work/life Integration as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Work/life Integration		
	Step 1	Step 2 (Hypothesis 4)	Step 3 (Hypothesis 5)
	β Values		
Tenure	0.25**	0.12**	0.13**
Workgroup Size	-0.12**	- 0.05	-0.05*
CWW		0.04*	0.05*
PSS		0.63**	0.65**
PSS x CWW			-0.04
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.09**	.36**	.00
ΔF	74.19**	509.43**	1.79
R^2	.09	.45	.45
Adjusted R^2	.09	.45	.45
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537
Overall F	74.19**	316.31**	253.53**

Note. $N = 1,543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. PSS is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 8

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and Communication with Work/life Integration as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Work/life Integration		
	Step 1	Step 2 (Hypothesis 6)	Step 3 (Hypothesis 6a)
	β Values		
Tenure	0.25**	0.13**	0.14**
Workgroup Size	-0.12**	-0.05*	-0.05*
CWW		0.05*	0.05*
COM		0.60**	0.64**
COM x CWW			-0.05
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.09**	.34**	0.00
ΔF	74.19**	452.56**	2.78
R^2	.09	.43	.43
Adjusted R^2	.09	.42	.43
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537
Overall F	74.19**	285.13**	228.92**

Note. $N = 1,543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. COM is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule, and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 9

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, PSS and Communication with Work/life Integration as the Dependent Variable

| Variables | Work/life Integration | | |
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	β Values		
Tenure	0.25**	0.09**	0.09**
Workgroup Size	-0.12**	-0.04*	-0.04*
CWW		0.04*	0.04*
POS		0.23**	0.21**
PSS		0.26**	0.26**
COM		0.23**	0.29**
POS x CWW			0.04
PSS x CWW			0.00
COM x CWW			-0.08
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.09**	.40	.00
ΔF	74.19**	295.67**	1.60
R^2	.09	.49	.49
Adjusted R^2	.09	.48	.48
Df	2, 1540	6, 1536	9, 1533
Overall F	74.19**	240.77**	161.23**

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS, PSS, and Communication are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 10

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, and Communication with Desire to quit as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Desire to quit			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	β Values			
Tenure	0.17**	-0.00	-0.01	-0.02
Workgroup Size	-0.09**	-0.02	-0.02	-0.00
CWW		0.03	0.03	0.04*
POS		0.66**	0.65**	0.48**
POS x CWW			0.01	-0.01
COM				0.31**
	Changes to Multiple R^2			
ΔR^2	.04	.40	.00	.06
ΔF	31.66**	551.60**	.25	173.74**
R^2	.04	.44	.44	.50
Adjusted R^2	.04	.44	.44	.50
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537	6, 1536
Overall F	31.66**	302.95**	242.30**	253.56**

Note. N = 1,543. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS and Communication are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01.

Table 11

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and PSS with Desire to quit as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Desire to quit		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	β Values		
Tenure	0.17**	0.04	0.04*
Workgroup Size	-0.09**	-0.01	-0.01
CWW		0.05*	0.05*
PSS		0.63**	0.64**
PSS x CWW			-0.02
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.04	.37	.00
ΔF	31.66**	482.08**	.40
R^2	.04	.41	.41
Adjusted R^2	.04	.41	.41
Df	2, 1540	4, 1537	5, 1537
Overall F	31.66**	266.77**	213.41**

Note. N = 1,543. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. PSS is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01.

Table 12

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and Communication with Desire to quit as the Dependent Variable

	Desire to quit		
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	β Values		
Tenure	0.17**	0.05*	0.05*
Workgroup Size	-0.09**	-0.01	-0.01
CWW		0.05*	0.05*
COM		0.59**	0.60**
COM x CWW			-0.02
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.04	.32	.00
ΔF	31.66**	381.11**	.42
R^2	.04	.36	.36
Adjusted R^2	.04	.36	.36
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537
Overall F	31.66**	214.20**	171.38*

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. COM is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 13

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, PSS, and Communication with Desire to quit as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
		Desire to quit	
		β Values	
Tenure	0.17**	-0.02	-0.02
Workgroup Size	-0.09**	-0.00	-0.00
CWW		0.04*	0.04*
POS		0.43**	0.41**
PSS		0.22**	0.26**
COM		0.13**	0.13*
POS x CWW			0.05
PSS x CWW			-0.06
COM x CWW			0.01
		Changes to Multiple R^2	
ΔR^2	.04	.47	.00
ΔF	31.66**	360.49**	.86
R^2	.04	.51	.51
Adjusted R^2	.04	.50	.50
Df	2, 1540	6, 1536	9, 1533
Overall F	31.66**	260.74**	174.06**

Note. N = 1543. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS, PSS, and Communication are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 14

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, and Communication with Job Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable

Variables	Job Satisfaction			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	β Values			
Tenure	0.17**	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03
Workgroup Size	-0.08**	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01
CWW		0.05**	0.05**	0.06**
POS		0.71**	0.66**	0.47**
POS x CWW			0.07**	0.07**
COM				0.32**
	Changes to Multiple R^2			
ΔR^2	.04	.46	.00	.06
ΔF	32.35**	712.75**	7.28**	227.04**
R^2	.04	.50	.50	.57
Adjusted R^2	.04	.50	.50	.57
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537	6, 1536
Overall F	32.35**	387.51**	312.73**	336.77 **

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS and Communication are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.
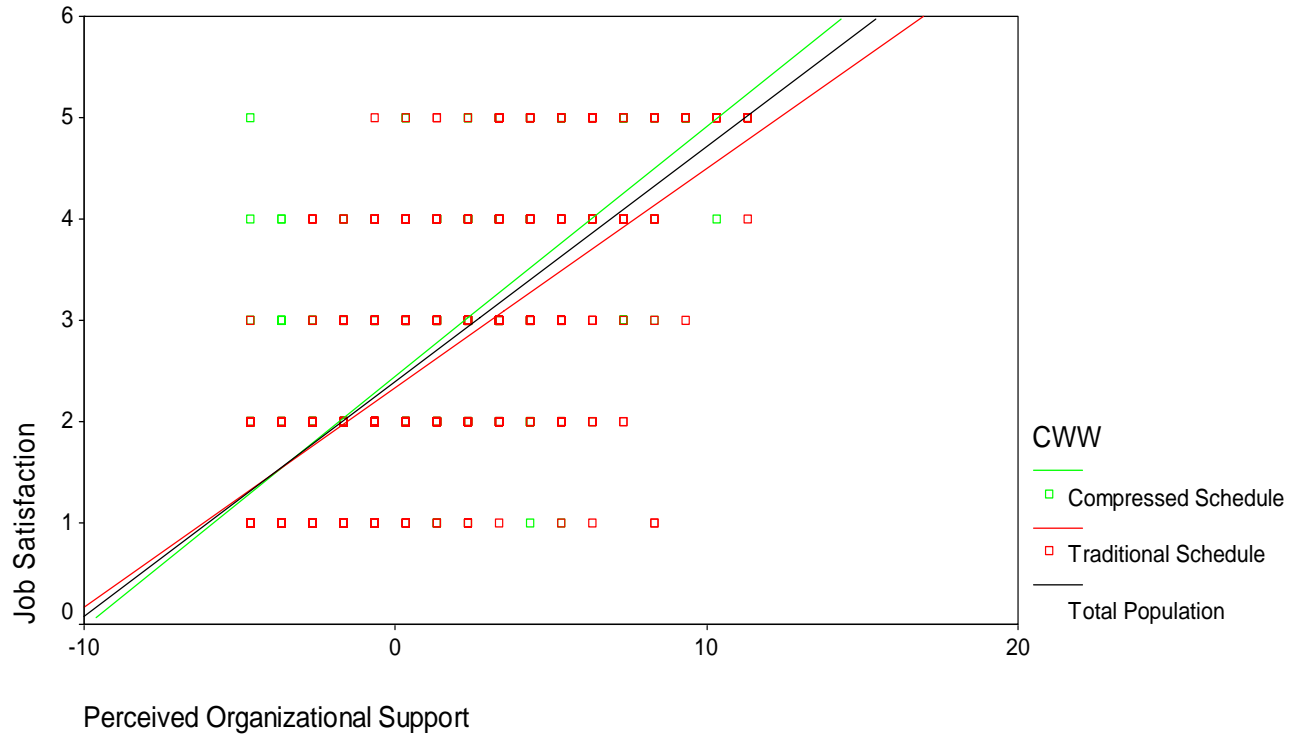
Figure 4. Interaction of POS and CWW on job satisfaction.

Table 15 *Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and PSS with Job Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable*

| | Job Satisfaction | | |
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
		β Values	
Tenure	0.17**	0.03	0.03
Workgroup Size	-0.08**	-0.00	0.00
CWW		0.07**	0.07**
PSS		0.71**	0.68**
PSS x CWW			-0.04
		Changes to Multiple R^2	
ΔR^2	.04	.46	.00
ΔF	32.35**	719.99**	2.24
R^2	.04	.50	.51
Adjusted R^2	.04	.50	.50
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537
Overall F	32.53**	391.27**	313.72**

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. PSS is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 16 *Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW and Communication with Job Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable*

	Job Satisfaction		
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	β Values		
Tenure	0.17**	0.05*	0.05*
Workgroup Size	-0.08**	-0.01	-0.01
CWW		0.07**	0.07**
COM		0.63**	0.60**
COM x CWW			0.04
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.04	.36	.00
ΔF	32.35**	470.49**	1.87
R^2	.04	.41	.41
Adjusted R^2	.04	.40	.40
Df	2, 1540	4, 1538	5, 1537
Overall F	32.35**	261.29**	209.52**

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. COM is a centered variable. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 17 *Hierarchical Regression Analysis for CWW, POS, PSS, and Communication with Job Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable*

	Job Satisfaction		
Variables	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	β Values		
Tenure	0.17**	-0.03	-0.03
Workgroup Size	-0.08**	-0.01	-0.01
CWW		0.06**	0.06**
POS		0.42**	0.38**
PSS		0.44**	0.47**
COM		-0.02	-0.04
POS x CWW			0.07*
PSS x CWW			-0.04
COM x CWW			0.03
	Changes to Multiple R^2		
ΔR^2	.04	.55	.00
ΔF	32.35**	523.20**	1.87
R^2	.04	.59	.60
Adjusted R^2	.04	.59	.59
Df	2, 1540	6, 1536	9, 1533
Overall F	32.35**	374.21**	250.52**

Note. $N = 1543$. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. Workgroup size was coded -1 for small, 0 for medium, and 1 for large. COM = Supervisor Communication. CWW = Work schedule. POS, PSS, and Communication are centered variables. CWW was coded 0 for a traditional schedule and 1 for a compressed work schedule. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Findings

Extending the work/life benefit research, this study looked at differences in employee's ratings of organizational support, supervisory support, and supervisory communication based on the presence or absence of a compressed work schedule. As in previous research, this study provided mixed results as to the impact of a compressed work schedule. Findings suggested that implementing a compressed work schedule versus a traditional work schedule is not the single best predictor of work/life integration.

The compressed workweek was not significantly correlated with work/life integration. Just adding a compressed work schedule did not predict higher perceptions of work/life integration. Analyses suggested there were other factors that influenced those relationships. Organizational support, supervisory support, and supervisor communication were significantly correlated with employees' perceived work/life integration. Findings were consistent with previous research that suggests that sources of support may provide a buffer for dealing with work/life conflict (Singh, 1998).

Employees that reported greater support also reported greater perceived work/life integration. While greater prediction was obtained when looking at the support variables and work schedule together, support variables were the best single predictor of employee perceived work/life integration.

Contrary to the hypotheses, no interactive effects were found on perceived work/life integration. Supervisory communication was a significant predictor of perceived work/life integration, and it increased the prediction of perceived work/life integration over and above that of compressed workweek and perceived organizational support or perceived supervisory support alone. Hierarchical regressions revealed that supervisory communication was the best single predictor of perceived work/life integration, though this relationship was not hypothesized. The most variance was accounted for when all support variables were considered.

Results for desire to quit and job satisfaction as dependent variables were similar to those for perceived work/life integration. Desire to quit was significantly correlated with all variables except work schedule. An independent t-test revealed no significant relationship between work schedule and desire to quit. When entered simultaneously, work schedule and supervisor communication were both significant, suggesting that supervisor communication could be an enhancer/suppressor variable, reducing the criterion irrelevant variance in the work schedule variable (Azen & Budescu, 2003). Perceived organizational support and perceived supervisory support showed significant main effects. No significant interaction effects were found. In the model with all variables entered, direct effects were found for all variables of interest. Perceived supervisory support was the best predictor of employee desire to quit.

The work schedule variable significantly predicted job satisfaction. Individually, both perceived organizational support and perceived supervisory support were very good predictors of job satisfaction. The interaction term of perceived organizational support and work schedule was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. There was a mean difference in job satisfaction between individuals on a compressed schedule and those on a traditional schedule, such that individuals who perceived the organization as supportive and had a compressed work schedule

reported the highest job satisfaction. The relationship between POS and work schedule in predicting job satisfaction was stronger for the compressed work schedule than the traditional schedule, suggesting that work schedule may moderate the POS Job satisfaction relationship. Supervisor communication predicted job satisfaction over and beyond organizational support. When all variables were entered into the regression equations, all main effects were significant, but no interaction effects were significant.

The significant models for direct effects suggest that organizational support, supervisory support, and communication account for a significant proportion of the variance in perception of work/life integration, job satisfaction, and employee desire to quit. Each support variable accounted for between 35% and 45% of the variance in predicting perceived work/life integration, job satisfaction, and desire to quit. Combined, the variables accounted for up to 60% of the variance.

<div align="center">Limitations and Implications</div>

Previous research has indicated the importance of communicating support for family friendly human resource policies. This study argues that it is necessary to approach alternative work arrangements from a different perspective. It broadens the literature, by applying the previously studied theories of work/family balance to all employees, not just working parents. The significant findings in this study highlight several areas of research that should be explored through the social exchange lens.

While support accounted for a large part of the variance, there may be other variables that predict the relationship between perceived work/life integration and human resource policies. For example, demographic data may add to the prediction of perceived work/life integration. Due to the nature of this field study, limited demographic information was gathered to promote candor

in employee responses and insure anonymity. Gender, age, and number of children have been shown to be important factors in individuals' attraction to alternative work arrangements (Haas & Hwang, 1995; Lewis, 1997; Parker & Allen, 2001). Research has shown that compressed schedules have a negative effect on perceived work/life integration for single mothers and parents of small children, as the longer working days rarely coincide with available child care options (Thornthwaite & Sheldon, 2002). Future research should examine gender, age, and number of young children as potential predictors of perceived work/life integration.

Tenure was significantly correlated with perceived work/life integration and all other dependent variables. Employees working with the organization for shorter time, reported greater PWLI. Future research should examine the relationship between tenure and perceived work/life integration to see if employees who work for the company longer perceive work/life integration more positively, or if perceived work/life integration causes employees to remain at the organization.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Flexible schedules: Full-time wage and salary workers by sex, occupation, and industry, 2004), flexible schedules are most common among management, professional, and other related occupations. However, research has also suggested that compressed workweeks are used commonly in manufacturing settings, healthcare, and public safety industries (Vega & Gilbert, 1997). Future research should also examine the compressed work schedule-support relationships for various industries.

Although perceived work/life integration may be predicted by perceived organizational support, perceived supervisory support, and supervisor communication, it is important to note that the measure of perceived work/life integration in the current study included only three

questions, and this variable may be better assessed using a different scale. Future research should consider using an established work/life integration scale that examines the facets of work/life integration in greater depth.

It is important to remember that there was no grand roll-out for the compressed work schedule. While this may have reduced backlash from those that were not given the option for the schedule, employees who were on the compressed workweek were not given the publicity that should have accompanied such a major change. The lack of fanfare for the implementation of the compressed schedules may have appeared as a lack of support by the organization for this schedule, thus reducing its potential impact on perceived work/life integration. Also, employees may not have been aware that the program was implemented as a new policy to improve perceived work/life integration. When work/life policies are to be implemented, they need to be marketed to the workforce so employees know that the policies exist, and that it is okay to use them without fear that doing so will slow down their careers (Rose, 2000).

Organizations pilot testing a compressed work schedule should make the plans clear to all employees, regardless of whether they will receive the alternative schedule or not. Employees should be made aware that while only a limited number of people will be able to participate in the test, everyone will get the option to utilize the benefit if implemented. Fear of backlash should not hinder a grand roll-out, as it can help demonstrate organizational support. However to reduce potential backlash, employees should be aware that pending the results of the pilot, everyone will have the same scheduling option available to them.

As the compressed schedule was not a company-wide policy, employees may not have perceived this change as a show of support by the organization, but as a reflection of a supervisor who already had high/low ratings. Supervisors were given the opportunity to try the compressed

work schedule. Supervisors with higher ratings, or who were already perceived as supportive, may have been more likely to try the alternative schedule, while less supportive supervisors may have passed on the opportunity.

The positive relationship between perceived work/life integration and perceived organizational support could be a reflection of having supervisors that have always shown concern for employee work/life conflict. Future research should look at random assignment of groups to compressed or traditional work schedules, as well as examining satisfaction for different schedules under the same supervisor.

Workgroup size was significantly related to all of the dependent variables, such that employees in larger workgroups reported more positive ratings than employees in smaller workgroups. Supervisors with larger workgroups were also more likely to implement the alternative schedule. Future research should examine the reasons why some organizations, supervisors, or managers don't believe compressed work scheduling will work for them, looking particularly at workgroup size. Organizations considering a compressed work schedule should investigate the feasibility of implementation for smaller workgroups. Supervisors with smaller workgroups should be open to considering alternative staffing procedures, such as combining workgroups or hiring more personnel, to facilitate implementation.

Measuring perceived work/life integration could be used as a method to assess the effectiveness of newly implemented work/life programs. Future research should also look at supervisory and organizational ratings before and after the implementation of work/life benefits, to ascertain whether perceived organizational support or perceived work/life integration increase with the introduction of compressed workweeks.

Social exchange research has suggested that favorable treatment from the employer motivates employees to reciprocate with increased effort and greater performance (Hochwarter, Witt, Treadway, & Ferris, 2006). Organizations with a greater range of work-family policies have been shown to have higher levels of organizational performance, market performance, profit sales growth (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2002) and superior short-term financial performance gains (Schneider, Hanges, Smith, & Salvaggio, 2003). Future research should look at the impact of compressed workweeks and support on individual and group performance outcomes. If employees attribute the effort to integrate work/life roles to the organization's care and concern for their well being, then they are likely to feel an obligation to reciprocate with commitment (Aryee et al., 2005).

Communication was originally developed as a subscale of PSS, using established PSS items, specifically related to communication. Based on the items in this scale, organizations could identify specific areas managers can address to improve the supervisor-subordinate relationship, and increase management support.

Findings suggest that communicating support, as measured by all the independent variables, are very good predictors of employee attitudes. This is expected, as previous research has found job satisfaction and employee retention to be related to work/life integration (Fox & Fallon, 2003; Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007). The compressed work schedule had a more moderate effect in predicting perceived work/life integration than in predicting job satisfaction and desire to quit.

This study looked at compressed workweeks as an alternative work arrangement. The finding of better employee attitudes with compressed workweeks compared to the traditional work schedule suggests that future research should look at how variables affect the acceptance

and implementation of other human resource benefits, such as telecommuting and job sharing. Organizational support, supervisory support, and supervisory communication should be examined, in addition to other variables — particularly demographic variables.

It is important to note that while all of the communication variables significantly predicted perceived work/life integration, desire to quit, and job satisfaction, the best predictor for each variable differed. Supervisor communication best predicted perceived work/life integration; perceived supervisory support best predicted desire to quit; and perceived organization and supervisory support both were good predictors of job satisfaction. When researching the utility and measuring the success of an alternative work arrangement or any human resource benefit, it may be important to assess all means of communicating support, as different measures may better predict different outcomes, illuminating information about a job description, its best practices, as well as identifying potential areas for training.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Results of this study support research showing that implementation of a work/life human resource benefit alone does not improve employee attitudes. Instead, the key factor is the support that organizations give to such benefits. The communication predictor variables of perceived organizational support, perceived supervisory support, and supervisory communication, explained a significant amount of variance in perceived work/life integration regardless of work schedule. As suggested by Masterson and Stamper (2003), employees can still feel valued regardless of work schedule when they perceive that there is support in the organization. Thus the perception of work/life integration was improved just by increasing the perception of general support given to employees in various areas of the organization.

Many organizations consider implementing programs that vary in size and cost to increase perceived work/life integration. These programs can range from relatively little implementation costs, to costly interventions, such as creating an at-home office for telecommuting. Before implementing work/life integration programs, organizations should focus their efforts on training management. Organizational leaders spend a significant amount of their time communicating to subordinates by providing information, instructing, directing, coordinating, giving feedback, and listening (Riggio, Riggio, Salinas, & Cole, 2003). Leadership development programs should train individuals in leadership positions how to use these skills to demonstrate subordinate support. After improving workplace communication of support, adding a compressed work schedule (or other work/life initiative), may increase positive attitudes.

This study combines the social exchange literature with the work/life literature to explain the impact of the work/life based benefit of a compressed workweek. Social exchange theory states that if employees feel the organization cares for them, they will reciprocate with positive behaviors, such as commitment, retention, and productivity, which can lead to financial gains (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The explicit benefit of a compressed work schedule, combined with the implicit and explicit support by management and organizational leadership, are displays of favorable treatment. The favorable treatment intended by programs and interventions may be minimized by the perception of negative treatment by direct managers or by the organization as a whole. Increased retention, job satisfaction, perceived work/life integration, etc. may not occur if employees do not perceive the organizational leaders positively. Organizational leaders with positive ratings can help alleviate negative attitudes in the absence of new benefits. As employees feel compelled to reciprocate with positive behaviors, business outcomes such as retention and productivity can increase profit.

The current findings highlighted the importance of communicating support for compressed workweeks. Organizations cannot rely solely on changing their benefits to make changes in employee attitudes; they must also change the corporate culture to reflect support of the usage of the benefits. Organizations must create an environment that openly supports new benefits to be implemented. If the organizational culture or management does not demonstrate support for employees' work and personal responsibilities, perceived work/life integration will not be improved, regardless of programs implemented. Organizational leaders are tasked with the job of creating a "balance supportive" environment (Murphy & Zagorski, 2005). When used in a climate of support, compressed workweeks can significantly improve the organizational environment.

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