COVID-19 and Remote Work: Experiences of Workers in New Zealand

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed by: Raghuvansh Kaushal

Dated: 31 Jan 2021

Abstract

Given the global prevalence of Covid-19, there is a large gap around our understanding of how firms and their employees operate in such times. The present study sought to understand what firm factors shaped the way firms support working from home and their effects on employee job satisfaction. The present study extends our understanding of Covid-19 conditions in New Zealand by exploring servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate as predictors of organisational support for working from home. Next, these factors predict work-life balance and job satisfaction, with work-life balance expecting to mediate the influence of leadership and climate. Finally, organisational support for working from home is included as a moderator, and combined, moderated mediation models are run. This is tested using a sample of 400 New Zealand employees across the lockdown period of April 2020. The findings show that servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate are both positively related to organisational support for working from home. Next, servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate are both positively related to work-life balance and job satisfaction, and work-life balance partially mediates the influence of leadership and climate on job satisfaction. Significant interaction effects from organisational support for working from home shows that firms providing better support for employees working from home reacted more positively to positive leadership and climate. Similarly, the significant moderated mediation effect showed the indirect effect of servant leadership, and psychosocial safety climate both strengthened as organisational support for working from home improved, indicating organisational support for working from home acted as a boundary condition. The implications for organisations and human resource managers are discussed.

Keywords: servant leadership; psychosocial safety climate; organisational support for working from home; work-life balance; job satisfaction; moderated-mediation.

Introduction

In late Dec 2019, 27 cases of a novel pneumonia were detected in Wuhan, China which quickly transformed into a genetically sequenced respiratory disease termed as Covid-19. Subsequently, the World Health Organisation declared it as a global health emergency on 30 Jan 2020 (Sohrabi et al., 2020). Six months after its emergence, the deadly virus had spread to 210 countries, infecting over 18 million people and resulting in 693,923 deaths worldwide, as on 31 Jul 2020 (Worldometers, 2020). The widespread impact and devastation caused by Covid-19 have led many researchers to draw comparisons with arguably the deadliest pandemic in human history, the Spanish Flu, killing an estimated 50 million people worldwide between 1918-20 (Diamond, 2013). Other authors who are investigating economic shocks from the recent past draw comparisons in the economic impact of Covid-19 with the burst of the dotcom bubble in 2000, or the global financial crisis in 2008 (Kniffin et al., 2020).

Interestingly, however, experts note that the negative impact of previous global recessions was restricted to specific industries, occupations, or worker groups, such as science and technology, engineering, financial services, whereas Covid-19 has had a much more profound and widespread impact on workers and workplaces throughout the world (Kniffin et al., 2020; Kramer & Kramer, 2020). Furthermore, the present day's highly integrated and globalised world, forebodes ominous global devastation due to the disruptions caused by the virus (Kniffin et al., 2020). Recent reports indicate a global demand-supply crisis due to reduced economic activity, unemployment and global recession (Fetzer et al., 2020; Fornaro & Wolf, 2020). A study by the United Nations has forecast that the world GDP will fall by 3.2% this year, and the global economy will shrink by $8.5 trillion between 2020-22 (Lederer, 2020).

Previous research has shown that economic shocks of such magnitude disproportionately impact the low-wage and low-skilled workers compared to highly skilled,

educated, top dollar earning employees (Artuç & McLaren, 2015; Autor et al., 2014). The current pandemic has most negatively impacted the hourly wage earners, operating in poor working conditions and high turnover industries (Berube & Bateman, 2020). Tourism, hospitality, airlines, amusement, gambling and recreation, motor vehicle and parts dealers, education, health, general trade, financial, banking and insurance services have been hit the hardest (Albulescu, 2020a, 2020b; Berube & Bateman, 2020). As per some estimates, the most vulnerable segment is the small and medium enterprise (SME) group, which lacks the necessary resources to overcome this crisis (Sułkowski, 2020). By contrast, sectors such as pharmaceutical, ICT, e-commerce, and medical equipment are likely to reverse the trend and show an increased growth rate (Albulescu, 2020a, 2020b). Overall, the pandemic is likely to widen the occupational divide between "good jobs "and "bad jobs" discussed by researchers in the past (Kalleberg, 2011). Indeed, the global fortune of entrepreneurs show that some like Elon Musk of Tesla and Jeff Bezos of Amazon have added tens of billions of dollars to their fortunes, as their business share prices surge in the Covid-19 world (Siddiqui, 2021)

More recently, an article titled "The pandemic will cleave America in two" highlights the contrasting experiences of workers in stable, high paying jobs, and the marginalised, daily wage earners (Pinsker, 2020). He notes that technological support and infrastructure to allow work from home was the key differentiator between the privileged few from the first group and the poor and working-class who cannot work from home. In the same vein, Sułkowski (2020) asserts that the pandemic will only exacerbate this virtualisation of economic and social life, and it will not be surprising to see entire sectors of the economy moving to digital platforms and remote working facilities. Such large-scale adoption of virtual teams re-emphasises retraining and development of soft skills for managers and employees (Chainey, 2020). These emergent changes in work practices due to Covid-19 have led to renewed interest from work and organisational psychologists to study job design and organisation policy implications.

The current knowledge in the field of remote work is based on voluntary participation according to the personal needs and preferences of employees (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). However, Covid-19 has transformed work from home from being an employee 'perk' to an enforced way of working (Kramer & Kramer, 2020). In the New Zealand setting, which is the context for this study, the New Zealand government enforced a stringent countrywide compulsory lockdown between March and May 2020, during which all non-essential workers were forced to work from home (Baker et al., 2020). Extended periods of lockdown meant that employees were transformed into either one of three categories – (a) work from home (WFH) employees, (b) essential workers (those who had to travel into work, such as medical doctors and nurses, and supermarket workers), or (c) staff who were laid off or granted a leave of absence (Kniffin et al., 2020). Understandably, this was a unique and novel experience for both employers and employees. Results from previous studies on remote working and job outcomes could no longer be generalised due to the scale and breadth of workers forced to operate from home across industry types and sectors.

Exploring how firms and employees adapt to these working styles due to external disruptions has become an urgent topic of concern for organisation research scholars. The present study seeks to address this gap in our understanding of organisation factors that aid employee well-being during global threats and crises. This research seeks to understand the role of leadership in influencing work-life balance and job satisfaction outcomes for employees working from home in New Zealand during the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, the key focus of this study is the influence of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on employee perceptions of their organisation's support for working from home, and towards job outcomes of work-life balance and job satisfaction. Finally, a complex model whereby the potential mediating effects of work-life balance are investigated, and the potential moderating effects of

organisational support for working from home on study relationships are examined in this research.

The present study makes several significant contributions. First, this research provides new insights into work from home literature as it is based on data collected during a unique lockdown situation (in April 2020) caused by a global pandemic. The historic scale and magnitude of workers forced to work from home necessitated empirical research to explore their experiences and job outcomes during this period since previous research based on voluntary work from home programs could not be applied to the changed context. Second, a within country sample of New Zealand full-time employees provides a detailed, more insightful analysis of the worker experiences during this time. Third, a major strength of this research is the size and quality of the sample size. Compared with previous studies on work-life balance within the New Zealand context, having sample sizes ranging from 123 to 165 participants (Haar & Brougham, 2020; Haar et al., 2017; Haar et al., 2018), the present study provides a relatively large sample of participants (N = 400). Moreover, the diverse sample and anonymous data collection in the current study offset the common method bias and social desirability limitations (Podsakoff, 2003).

This dissertation is organised in the following way. The first section outlines organisation support theory as the theoretical framework to explore the antecedents and consequences of organisation support for work from home. An overview of existing literature on the predictors and outcomes examined in the present study, and the development of the hypotheses follows next. The third chapter details the research design, including research methodology, data collection and analysis techniques. Chapter four presents the findings derived from the study. The section to follow includes a discussion that summarises the findings and notes the implications, limitations and areas for further research identified from

this research. Finally, the conclusion chapter summarises the research objectives and suggests the implications for the field.

Literature review

This section provides a critical review of the existing literature on flexible work arrangements, focusing on investigating the role of (1) leadership and (2) organisational climate, and (3) organisational support for work from home, towards determining the job and well-being outcomes for New Zealand employees. This dissertation uses organisation support theory to provide the theoretical basis of examining organisational behaviour and the influence on employee outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). Theoretically, good leadership, supportive organisational climate, and more generous organisational support for working from home should provide employees with resources that enable them to achieve superior outcomes. These arguments form the basis of the hypotheses investigated in the present study.

Theoretical framework

The organisation support theory (OST) posits that employees form global perceptions around the extent to which their contributions and well-being are valued by the organisation (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This is commonly referred to as perceived organisational support, or POS in organisation behaviour literature. Organisation support theory is fundamentally based on the social exchange theory (Blau, 2017), which prescribes the principles of reciprocation and voluntary actions of individuals motivated by expected returns. This is usually explored as support from the organisation, but could include the supervisor, or even co-worker. In other words, employees' efforts and loyalty are considered a trade-off for benefits and resources from the organisation in return (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Based upon this reciprocity, employees should experience increased obligation towards the organisation's objectives and welfare, while expecting a higher reward for performance in return (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Haar and Spell (2004) refer to this as a felt obligation, which reflects the

psychological encouragement that employees feel to reciprocate to positive action, such as rewards from their organisation. Consequently, employees with high perceived organisational support exert greater efforts on the job, thereby improving individual and organisational performance (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Organisation support theory thus explains why employees respond with favourable behaviour (e.g., higher job support perceptions) when their leader acts positively (e.g., exhibits higher servant leadership behaviours). This represents additional resources that can help shape positive job attitudes and workplace behaviours (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

In recent years, organisation support theory has gained significant importance in organisation research due to its focus on the employee's viewpoint on the employee-organisation relationship, and the association of perceived organisational support with job satisfaction and other attitudinal outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Fortune magazine's annual list of "The 100 best companies to work for" (Levering & Moskowitz, 2007), cites evidence of significant resources invested by top firms in organisation support programs. For instance, Google offers a global education leave program, free onsite gourmet meals, medical and fitness facilities, including swimming and spa. Other companies like Qualcomm encourage online networking among employees for new product development and offers catered dinner for employees working after-hours, while S.C. Johnson & Co offers subsidised hotel stays and childcare facilities to its employees. It is not uncommon to find significant investments into such employee support programs across a broad spectrum of companies worldwide (Colvin, 2006). Fundamentally, these 'best places to work' rankings reflect high levels of support perceptions and reciprocation from employees due to their employers' practices.

Whether these programs effectively drive healthy employee outcomes is a debate that has provided conflicting results in the past (Riggle et al., 2009). Some meta-analytic reviews have established a strong and positive link between perceived organisational support and job

satisfaction, and organisational commitment, and a weak to moderate positive effect on employee performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle et al., 2009); whereas other studies have reported the relationship as weak (Blau et al., 2001; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000), or even negative (Cropanzano et al., 1997). Furthermore, several studies have established the fundamental role played by supervisors in leadership positions in influencing work-family stress (Beehr et al., 2003) and implementing family-friendly policies at work (Hopkins, 2005). This study explores servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate as antecedents of organisation support for a typically viewed 'family-friendly' policy around working from home.

2.1 Study outcomes

The present study focuses on two outcomes: (1) work-life balance and (2) job satisfaction. While job satisfaction is the final criterion variable, work-life balance is included as a mediator. These two outcomes are briefly detailed below.

2.1.1 Work-life balance

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to the fit between work and non-work roles examined from the perspective of an individual's values, aspirations and overall goals (Casper et al., 2018). Haar (2013) defined work-life balance as an internal and personal assessment of

> "the extent to which an individual is able to adequately manage the multiple roles in their life, including work, family and other major responsibilities. For some employees, this will be work and family only, while for others, this will be work and sports, or community, church, etc. Balance is not conceptualized as a 50/50 split between two major roles, as employees may not view this distinction as universally desirable or realistically attainable" (p. 3308).

Thus, work-life balance may be expressed as an individual's ability to successfully manage multiple roles at work, home, and other vital responsibilities (Haar, 2013). Incompatibility of work and family demands, wherein participation in one role (work) makes the performance of the other (family) suffer is noted as work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Frone (2003) suggests that this conflict can arise in two directions: work-to-family (WFC), i.e., when work interferes with family; and family-to-work (FWC), i.e., when family interferes with work. Other researchers have concluded that these two measures are unique and different in their mechanisms and relationship with other variables (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005). Moreover, work-family conflict is more prevalent than family-work conflict (Eagle et al., 1997).

2.1.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most frequently researched variables in organisation behaviour literature (Judge et al., 2001). Different authors have adopted alternative approaches to define job satisfaction. Hoppock (1935) argued that internal feelings determine employee job satisfaction levels, while Vroom (1964) identified the affective orientations towards work roles to measure job satisfaction. Some authors (Porter, 1962; Wolf, 1970) examined job satisfaction from the perspective of needs fulfilment, i.e. whether the job met the employee's physical and psychological needs. However, one of the most cited definitions of job satisfaction was given by Spector (1997), who described it as an attitudinal variable that determines how employees feel about their jobs and its various aspects. In other words, job satisfaction indicates whether workers like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1997).

A number of factors are used to predict these outcomes. These are addressed presently.

2.2 Organisation support for working from home

In recent decades, human resource management best practices offer employees the option of flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, shortened hours, flexible rosters, and compressed work duration (Alis et al., 2006; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). This study focuses on one such arrangement, i.e., remote work, or work away from the traditional office; generally referred to as working from home or work from home.

The origin of remote working can be traced back to the 1970s when this option to work from home was offered to employees as an emergency response to the oil crisis (Torten et al., 2016). Recent times have seen widespread adoption of this facility across industries and work setups due to rapid advancements in ICT and web connectivity (Hooker et al., 2007), as well as popular opinion among employees that this is a choice rather than a compulsion (Alis et al., 2006; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). The second argument was recently brought into question when entire nations were forced to work from home during the various Covid-19 lockdown/s, and employees were denied the freedom to choose whether they wanted to work remotely (Baker et al., 2020). Indeed, while some workers were offered to work from home, others were not (e.g., some in the tourism sector), and might have subsequently lost their jobs.

To date, several studies have reported the benefits associated with work from home as a human resource best practice. Turetken et al. (2010) reported significant cost benefits, along with improvements in employee motivation and work culture. Others noted higher job satisfaction due to lesser interruptions and increased self-reported performance (Baruch, 2000) and greater autonomy (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008) among remote workers. This view is supported by Hooker et al. (2007), who reported higher job satisfaction scores for flexible workers vs non-flexible workers. Additionally, the deploying organisation accrues many benefits from offering work from home arrangements to its employees including operational

cost savings and being seen as an environment and employee-friendly workplace (Nissinen, 2003; Pyöriä, 2011).

Notwithstanding the benefits detailed above, a conclusive relationship between work from home and job performance, specifically productivity, has not been established in prior studies (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). While some authors reported a positive relationship (Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Hill et al., 1998), others found inconsistencies between actual and perceived performance scores (Hill et al., 2003). Subsequent studies attempted to address the self-reporting bias by using two distinct variables (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007) or factoring in the impact of previous teleworking experience on performance ratings (Kossek et al., 2006). Thus, the benefits of working from home might not extend to positively shaping job performance.

Besides, work from home is also associated with many potential negative side-effects such as increased isolation (Cooper & Kurland, 2002), difficulty in switching off from work (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010), higher work-family conflict (Tietze & Musson, 2005), and more significant mental illness (Mann & Holdsworth, 2003). Cooper and Kurland (2002) attributed the absence of social interaction from the physical workplace as the leading cause of loneliness among remote workers. Other studies investigating the relationship between work and non-work roles noted that work from home increases work-family conflict (Hammer et al., 2009). Inconclusive evidence has led many critics to frequently challenge any arguments favouring work from home as a predictor of work-life balance (Higgins et al., 2000).

Overall, the changing nature and composition of the workforce, including a greater proportion of women and caregivers joining the organisations, pushed the demand for flexible work arrangements (Romer, 2011). Recent trends, such as the rise of digital labour platforms, allowing for work to be performed anywhere, anytime, has further revolutionised the concept

of work from home (Rani & Furrer, 2020). A study conducted by Meinert (2011) estimated between 2.9 million to 33.7 million teleworkers operating from remote or virtual offices worldwide. In New Zealand, the 2012 Survey of Working Life showed that roughly one-third of all New Zealand workers had worked from home for at least few hours every week during the survey (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). More recent data from 2018 notes that only 2.8% of New Zealand employees 'mainly work from home', with 29.2% reported they had worked from home in the 'last four weeks' (Statistics New Zealand, 2019b). Thus, comparing the 2012 and 2018 data shows that the proportion of the New Zealand workforce doing some work from home has remained consistent at around 30-33%.

Elsewhere, the percentage of companies offering work from home arrangements in the United States of America, increased three-fold from 20% in 1996 to 60% in 2016 (SHRM, 2016). In the European Union, one out of every eight workers works from home several times in a month (Chung, 2019). The numbers have since been growing every year, and this is certainly not a passing fad (Calvasina et al., 2012). Further, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in millions of workers operating from home. This study expects significant variations in the work from home experiences of employees during this period.

The present study sought to understand whether firm size or type had a role to play in supporting their employees. Here it is suggested that larger sized firms will have more resources, and there is empirical evidence to support this (Haar & Spell, 2007, 2008). Haar and Spell (2007) argued that large-sized New Zealand firms are more likely to have access to superior resources, such as more financial resources, and specifically here in the working from home arena, more technology and support for workers (e.g., IT departments). Hence, it is expected that large-sized New Zealand firms will have superior organisational support for working from home.

In addition, there are some issues around whether private sector firms will provide inferior or better organisational support for working from home. The present study argues that organisations in the not-for-profit sector and the public sector – which typically pay less than the private sector (Statistics New Zealand, 2019a) – might outperform private sector firms by providing additional levels of support. Accordingly, this study examines the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organisational support for working from home will be higher in larger sized firms

Hypothesis 2: Perceived organisational support for working from home will be higher in organisations in the not-for-profit and public sector

Furthermore, higher perceptions of organisational support towards working from home should provide additional resources that enable better management of work and non-work roles. Such support should trigger felt obligations under social exchange theory and positively shape work-life balance and job satisfaction (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Hence, it is expected that employees who perceive their employer as providing greater support for working from home will report higher work-life balance and job satisfaction. These claims are supported by previous meta-analytic evidence between social exchange theory and reciprocation norm in employer-employee relationships (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This leads to the next hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a: Perceived organisational support for working from home will be positively related to work-life balance.

Hypothesis 3b: Perceived organisational support for working from home will be positively related to job satisfaction.

2.3 Servant leadership

Greenleaf (2002) had proposed this idea of the servant being the leader for the first time in 1970. He noted that the servant leader is genuinely interested in serving his followers and places their interest above his own, thereby garnering broad appreciation and support from his subordinates in return. Leadership is increasingly attributed as a critical factor in determining organisation-wide priorities and goals (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Many authors investigating organisational behaviour suggest that employee engagement and organisation culture are driven by leadership (Luthans, 2002; Macik-Frey et al., 2009). Studies explore the leader's behaviour, including how they encourage harmony between work and family (Hammer et al., 2009; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Recent studies indicate a greater emphasis on reciprocated, interactive and shared leader-follower relationships than the traditional focus on the transformational leadership model (Avolio et al., 2009).

In theory, servant leadership shares its characteristics with other leadership theories, such as transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005). However, none of these theories incorporate all the characteristics of servant leadership, making it unique (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Definitions of servant leadership include the willingness by the leader to “serve others” (Parris & Peachey, 2013, p. 380), and “going beyond one’s self-interest” (Greenleaf, 2002). Haar et al. (2017) summarised this by stating "In this context, leadership thus becomes the possibility to serve others and as such, serving and leading become almost interchangeable" (p. 57). Finally, Liden et al. (2014) stated that "servant leadership is based on the premise that leaders who are best able to motivate followers are those who focus least on satisfying their personal needs and most on prioritising the fulfilment of followers' needs" (p. 1434).

For a long time, servant leadership has found many academic supporters due to its explicit focus on followers' needs (Patterson, 2003). Conversely, critics have frequently

challenged the theory's empirical validity and unclear framework, resulting in varied interpretations and servant leadership behavioural outcomes (Russell & Stone, 2002; Spears, 1995). A vast majority of the extant literature on servant leadership has also been criticised for merely prescribing the ideal situation, rather than describing how the theory is used in practice (Van Dierendonck, 2011).

Correspondingly, many researchers have investigated the relationship between servant leadership and organisational outcomes. Mayer et al. (2008) note that servant leaders are more likely to satisfy their followers' needs, ultimately improving their job satisfaction levels. Other researchers have established a negative relationship between servant leadership and withdrawal outcomes, such as turnover intentions and employee disengagement from work (Hunter et al., 2013). Besides, meta-analytic evidence suggests that servant leaders enjoy high-quality relationships that positively influence their followers' attitudes, job performance, and personal growth (Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Gerstner & Day, 1997).

Overall, it may be argued that servant leaders display an inherent need to serve, combined with an intrinsic motivation to lead (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Empowerment and development of subordinates is a crucial characteristic demonstrated by servant leaders. In theory, this should mean that servant leaders are more empathetic towards employee needs and will be more supportive of resource allocation to ensure employee well-being. This is likely to be beneficial and be positively linked to organisational support perceptions around working from home. Therefore, servant leadership aligns well with social exchange theory. Here, a leader who acts as a servant and has the best interests of their employee will psychologically encourage employees to react positively, with Haar and Spell (2004) noting this can trigger felt obligations to reciprocate. Thus, employees are more likely to view their leaders positively and respond with higher work-life balance and job satisfaction. Further, it is expected that servant leaders will also be more structurally aligned with aiding their employees in their working from

home challenges, and thus organisations will be seen as positive and supportive of working from home under servant leaders. Thus, the present study will examine the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4a: Servant leadership will be positively related to perceived organisational support for working from home.

Hypothesis 4b: Servant leadership will be positively related to work-life balance.

Hypothesis 4c: Servant leadership will be positively related to job satisfaction.

2.4 Psychosocial safety climate

Recent developments in work psychology have identified a novel construct called psychosocial safety climate (PSC) which influences the working conditions, mental health and engagement levels in the organisation (Dollard & Bakker, 2010). Psychosocial safety climate is defined as "policies, practices and procedures for the protection of worker psychological health and safety" (Dollard & Bakker, 2010, p. 580). Through their actions and communications, management outlines the organisation's tolerance and commitment towards the workers' psychological health (Dollard et al., 2012). It is argued that low psychosocial safety climate points towards hazardous working conditions and the likelihood of emotional harm for employees (Law et al., 2011). Depending upon the priorities of senior management, psychosocial safety climate scores vary across organisations, departments, and work teams (Dollard & Bakker, 2010; Hall et al., 2010). Psychosocial safety climate focuses on the extent to which management does things and responds to individuals in capturing the 'reality' of the workplace around protecting and safeguarding workers' psychological health (Dollard et al., 2012).

While it shares the safety climate's theoretical ideology, psychosocial safety climate focuses more on psychological hazards and mental health (Dollard et al., 2012). Notably, safety climate literature over the past few decades has emphasised safety procedures and practices to prevent industrial accidents (Neal & Griffin, 2006) and physical injury (Zohar & Luria, 2005). Psychosocial safety climate builds on previous occupational health and safety research as it considers the influence of organisation climate on job design and overall morale (Glendon et al., 2006; Wilson et al., 2004). Psychosocial safety climate extends the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework (Demerouti et al., 2001) to argue that organisational psychosocial safety climate influences work conditions, psychological health issues and work engagement levels (Law et al., 2011). Given this strong theoretical link, employees are likely to react to a high psychosocial safety climate with improved job attitudes.

Previous research on work stress has established that stress is caused when job demands are high along with low control (Karasek, 1979), lack of support (Johnson & Hall, 1988), or inadequate resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). Job demands may be quantitative, such as workload or work pressure (Karasek, 1979), or qualitative, such as emotional demands (Karasek et al., 1998). Work-related resources include procedural justice related to performance evaluation, pay, promotion (Lind & Tyler, 1988), organisational rewards and resource allocation (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), and emotional and social support from supervisors (Siegrist, 1996). Lack of resources, such as social support while dealing with chronic job demands leads to psychological strain (Karasek et al., 1998) and managers have a pivotal role in correcting this imbalance in job design (Yukl & Fu, 1999). In conclusion, psychosocial safety climate captures the organisation's resources and can aid worker health (Dollard et al., 2012).

Accordingly, it is expected that in high psychosocial safety climate organisations, managers will be more vigilant and empathetic towards employee well-being, and shall

therefore allocate enough resources for the employees to mitigate job demands (Dollard et al., 2012). This is particularly relevant in the present study investigating the supervisor's role in channelling organisational support for working from home. Brown and Leigh (1996) note that supportive managers offer their subordinates more flexibility in timing and task control, besides the opportunity to develop new skills. Similarly, Law et al. (2011) suggest that supervisors in high psychosocial safety climate contexts establish healthy interpersonal relationships to enjoy broad-based organisational support from co-workers and subordinates. Therefore, psychosocial safety climate is expected to influence organisation support for policies such as work from home, and positively influence job and well-being outcomes. Thus, the present study will examine the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5a: Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to perceived organisational support for working from home.

Hypothesis 5b: Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to work-life balance.

Hypothesis 5c: Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to job satisfaction.

2.5 Mediating effects of work-life balance

It can be argued that the absence of conflict signifies balance (Clark, 2001). Accordingly, it is expected that employees with low conflict scores report better work-life balance in comparison to those with high conflict levels (Haar, 2013). Frone (2003) argues that balance can also be achieved through enrichment (Casper et al., 2018), which negates conflict's detrimental effect. According to the perceived work-family fit and balance perspective (Voydanoff, 2005), balance occurs when resources are sufficient to meet demands. Several studies (Byron, 2005; Hammer et al., 2009) have established that work demands, number of hours worked and

overtime cause role conflicts. Conversely, supervisor support and work autonomy have been reported to facilitate work-life balance (Russo et al., 2018; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012).

The present study has previously argued that servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate are predictors of organisation support for working from home. Theoretically, when employees perceive availability of greater support and reward from superiors, they are more likely to report higher work-life balance and job satisfaction scores (Kurtessis et al., 2017). The links between work-life balance and job satisfaction have been reported in previous studies (Haar, Roche, et al., 2019; Haar, Schmitz, et al., 2019; Haar et al., 2014). Haar (2013) argued that employees with greater work-life balance manage multiple roles better and are more satisfied in their jobs. Previously, a study by Diener et al. (2009) on subjective well-being (happiness) notes that organisation support fulfils socioemotional needs and enhances self-efficacy among employees, thereby increasing job satisfaction and overall work-life balance. More recently, Haar, Sune, et al. (2019) established a positive relationship between supervisor support and the employee's ability to balance job and family demands. Past evidence has shown that work-life balance can act as a mediator of influence of enrichment and conflict on job outcomes (Haar, 2013; Haar et al., 2014). This mediating effect has also been supported with work-family balance (Carlson et al., 2009). This study suggests the following:

Hypothesis 6a: Work-life balance will be positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6b: Work-life balance will mediate the influence of servant leadership on job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6c: Work-life balance will mediate the influence of psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction.

2.6. Moderating effects of organisational support for work from home

Finally, the present study adds to the many relationships explored here and includes organisation support for work from home as having both direct effects (towards work-life balance and job satisfaction) and suggests its influence might be better captured when operating as a moderator. Here, it is expected that servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate are positively related to job satisfaction – because employees reciprocate with more significant job attitudes when they perceive more generous support. These factors can also positively shape work-life balance because such support perceptions mean that employees feel that support for work-life emergencies will be available. However, it is the additional context of organisation support for work from home that is now added. Here it is argued that organisation support for working from home will moderate the positive relationships between servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate; and work-life balance and job satisfaction, leading to more positive outcomes. Haar and Roche (2008) have previously noted an additive benefit of having additional support, in line with social exchange principles. Theoretically, employees were found to react to multiple sources of support, and here, it is expected that employees who perceive strong servant leadership or strong psychosocial safety climate, besides healthy levels of organisation support for work from home, will reciprocate with the highest levels of work-life balance and job satisfaction. As noted earlier, organisational support for working from home is expected to positively shape job satisfaction and work-life balance. Accordingly, the hypotheses explored in this study are:

Hypothesis 7a: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership to influence work-life balance.

Hypothesis 7b: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate to influence work-life balance.

Hypothesis 8a: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership to influence job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8b: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate to influence job satisfaction.

Finally, the present study combines these hypotheses and tests a moderated mediation model. Hayes (2018) defines moderated mediation as "an analytical strategy focused on quantifying the boundary conditions of mechanisms and testing hypotheses about the contingent nature of processes, meaning whether mediation is moderated" (p. 5). Specifically, the moderated mediation is a statistical approach whereby, analytically, it "addresses whether an indirect effect (mediation) is dependent on another variable (moderation)" (Hayes, 2018, p. 5). In the present study, that means the influences of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction – mediated by work-life balance – and moderated by organisation support for work from home. Such approaches are becoming more popular (e.g., Ghafoor and Haar, 2020) and provide useful insights whereby boundary conditions are found. For example, finding that an indirect effect of a key variable through the mediator to the outcome is attenuated by moderator (here organisation support for work from home), might provide useful insights into the significance of the indirect effect, or changes in strength across the range of the moderator (Haar, Di Fabio, et al., 2019). This leads to the final set of hypotheses.

Hypothesis 9a: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership towards job satisfaction (with work-life balance mediating), with the indirect effect strengthening as support increases (moderated mediation).

Hypothesis 9b: Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate towards job satisfaction (with work-life balance mediating), with the indirect effect strengthening as support increases (moderated mediation).

Methods

Overall, the study models are shown in Figures 1 and 2 (below). Figure 1 suggests that servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate influence organisation support for working from home. Figure 2 suggests that servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate will, in turn, predict job outcomes, including job satisfaction and overall work-life balance, with organisation support for working from home expected to have a moderating effect. These models are based on a sample of 400 New Zealand employees.

Figure 1

Study Model towards Organisational Support for Working from Home

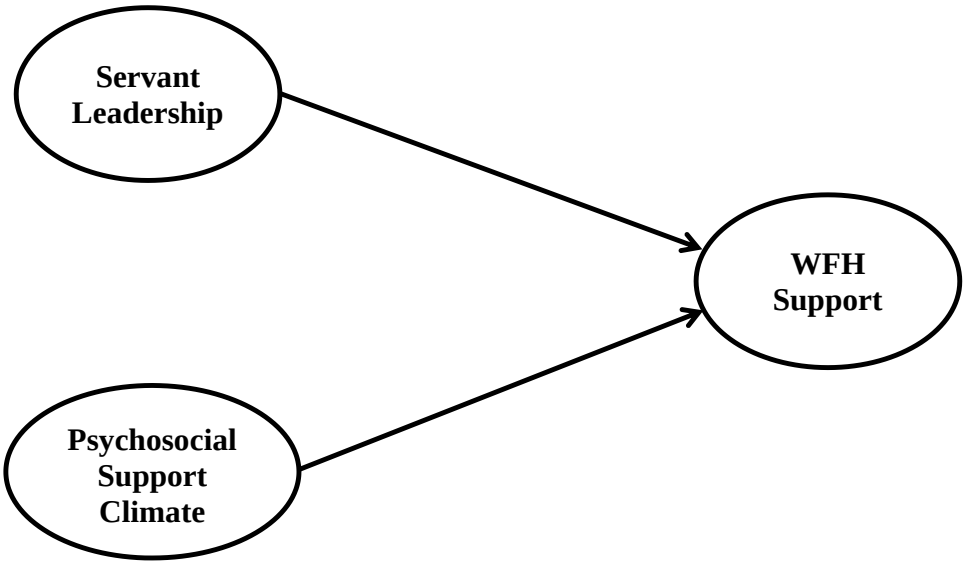
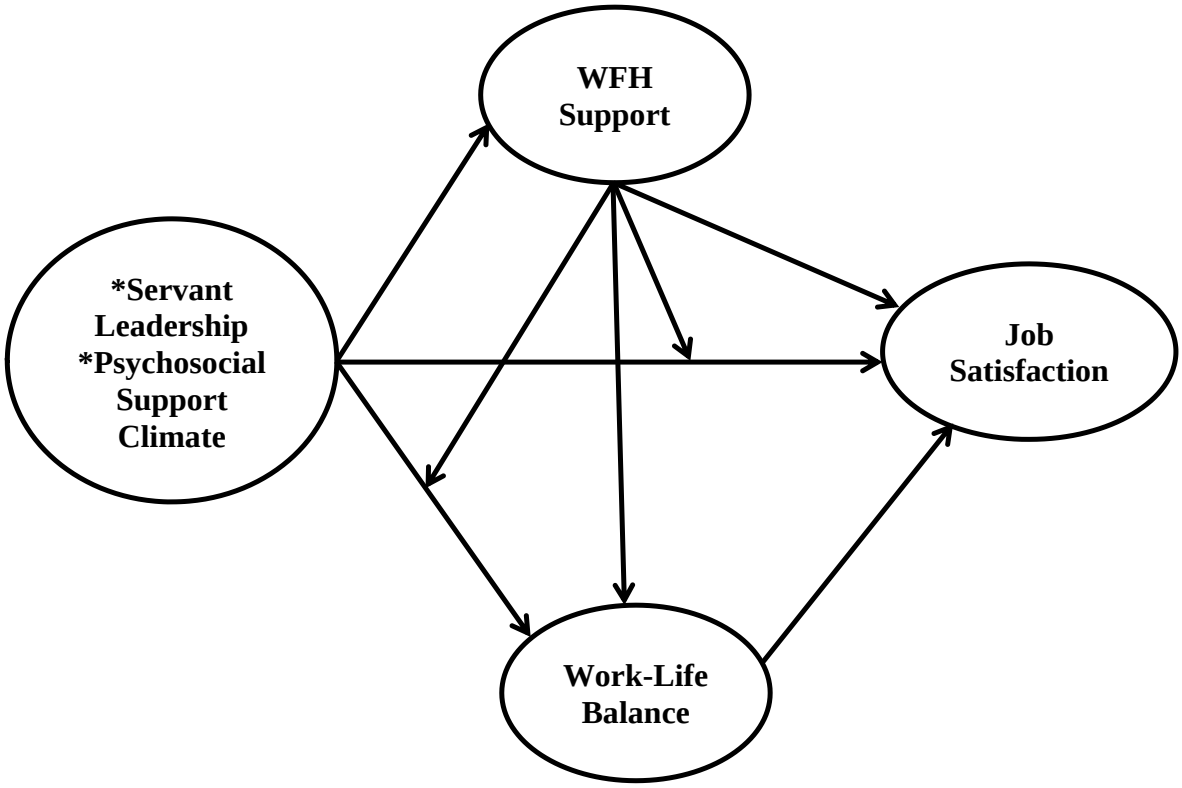


Figure 2

Study Model of Effects of Organisational Support for Working from Home towards Job Satisfaction



Participants and sample

A total of 400 participants were recruited in 2020 via a Qualtrics survey panel of New Zealand employees. Respondents had to be employed in paid work for at least 20 hours/week and be 18 years of age or over. Data were collected in April during the first lockdown in New Zealand, which was nation-wide. The Qualtrics system has an extensive database of potential participants who are confidential, anonymous, quality assured and paid, and such panels have provided useful employee samples (Haar, Schmitz, et al., 2019). They tend to come from a broad range of industries and are geographically spread. Recent meta-analysis by Walter et al.

(2019) compared conventionally sourced data and data from such panels and found no significant differences.

Overall, respondents were evenly spread by gender: 49.8% male, 49.8% female, and 2 reported their gender as ‘other’. Age ranged from 19 to 71 years, with an average age of 40.8 years (SD=14.7 years). Average tenure was 6.4 years (SD=6.0 years), and on average, they worked 33.0 hours per week (SD= 11.1 hours). By sector, the majority came from the private sector (64.3%), followed by the public/government sector (31.0%) and then the not-for-profit sector (4.8%). By firm size, the majority came from large-sized firms with 250 or more employees (36.5%), followed by medium-sized firms (51-250 employees) at 23.5%, and then micro-sized firms (up to 10 employees) at 20.0% and small-sized firms (11-50 employees) also with 20.0%. Respondents worked across various industries, including information, media and telecommunications, education and training, healthcare, and manufacturing.

Measures

Servant leadership was measured using the six-item scale by Haar et al. (2017) and coded 1=to a very small extent and 5=to a very large extent. Questions followed the stem “My immediate manager/supervisor", and sample items are "Spends the time to form quality relationships with his/her employees" and "Tries to reach consensus among his/her employees on important decisions". These items are based on the original 16-item scale by Ehrhart (2004), which is well validated (e.g., (Jaramillo et al., 2009a, 2009b)). As this short construct is still relatively new, factor analysis was conducted (principal components, direct oblimin rotation) to establish the measure. The data loaded onto a single factor, with eigenvalues greater than 1 (4.486), accounting for a robust amount of variance (74.772%) and having strong reliability ($\alpha = .93$). Further, a factor loading of over 0.80 was obtained with all items.

Psychosocial Safety Climate was measured using the 4-item scale by Dollard and Bakker (2010), coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Sample items are "Senior management show support for stress prevention through involvement and commitment" and "My contributions to resolving occupational health and safety concerns in the organisation are listened to". The construct had very good reliability (α = .82).

Organisational Support for Working from Home was measured using three items created for this study, coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Most studies on working from home test it as a dichotomous variable (yes/no). However, during the lockdown, most employees had to work from home. Thus, it was decided that examining this approach as the way an organisation supports working from home was a better option. The items followed the stem "My organisation…" and the items were: "Allows workers to work from home", "Provides help setting up employees to be able to work from home (e.g., internet, laptop)", and "Understands working from home might be needed in special situations (e.g., health emergencies)". Factor analysis to establish the measure was undertaken (principal components, direct oblimin rotation). The data loaded onto a single factor, with eigenvalues greater than 1 (2.347), accounted for a robust amount of variance (78. 262%) and had very good reliability (α = .86). Finally, including all items provided a factor loading of over 0.80.

Work-Life Balance was measured using the three-item scale by Haar (2013), coded 1=strongly disagree, and 5=strongly agree. Sample items are “Nowadays, I seem to enjoy every part of my life equally well”. The construct has been well validated (e.g., (Haar, Roche, et al., 2019; Haar et al., 2017; Haar et al., 2018; Haar et al., 2014)). The construct had very good reliability (α= .85).

Job Satisfaction was measured using three-items from Judge et al. (2005), coded 1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. Sample items are “Most days I am enthusiastic about my work” and “I feel fairly satisfied with my present job”. This measure has been well

validated in New Zealand (e.g., (Haar, 2013)) and across cultures (e.g., Haar et al., 2014). The measure had excellent reliability (α= .91).

Contextual variables

Firm Size was calculated by asking respondents the size of their organisation, coded 1=micro-sized (up to 10 employees), small-sized (11-50 employees), medium-sized (51-250), large-sized (251-1000 employees), and very large-sized (1001 or more employees).

Sector was calculated by asking respondents the sector their organisation worked in, coded 1=private, 2=public, 3=not-for-profit.

Control variables

Several demographic variables typical of the work-life balance and job satisfaction literature were controlled for. These were Age (in years), Job Tenure (years) and Hours Worked (in number of hours per week on average). There is meta-analytic evidence that older workers will report better job and well-being outcomes (Ng & Feldman, 2010b) and similar meta-analytic support for work tenure (Ng & Feldman, 2010a). Further, longer work hours have meta-analytic support for influencing work and well-being outcomes (Ng & Feldman, 2008).

Analysis

Analyses were conducted in IBM® SPSS® Statistics version 25. To examine external characteristics of organisational support for working from home, the present study conducted ANOVA and followed Haar et al. (2014) using the Fisher's Least Significant Difference and Student–Newman–Keuls tests for post-hoc analyses. This was with firm size (Hypothesis 1) and organisational sector (Hypothesis 2). To examine the direct effects of servant leadership on organisational support for working from home (Hypotheses 4a), and psychosocial safety climate on organisational support for working from home (Hypotheses 5a), regression analysis was conducted. Control variables (age, tenure, hours worked) were entered in Step 1, and

servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate were entered in Step 2. Organisational support for working from home was entered as the dependent variable.

The other sets of hypotheses were conducted using the PROCESS 3.4 (Hayes, 2017) macron in SPSS. This approach is superior for testing mediation effects because it allows confirmation of effect sizes using the Monte Carlo method using bootstrapping (5,000 repetitions) (Hayes, 2017). It also provides indirect effect sizes. There is strong support for PROCESS as an analytic tool (Hayes, 2018; Hayes & Preacher, 2013). Ultimately, model 8 was selected for testing the moderated mediation effects, with job satisfaction as the dependent variable and work-life balance as the mediator. This research also used model 4 to fully test the mediation effects, because this provides the initial effects of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on organisational support for working from home, before the mediator is included.

Hypotheses tested are as follows: servant leadership (Hypothesis 4b) and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 5b) predicting work-life balance, and servant leadership (Hypothesis 4c) and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 5c) predicting job satisfaction. The models also include the direct effect of organisational support on work-life balance (Hypothesis 3a) and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 3b), and work-life balance predicting job satisfaction (Hypothesis 6a). Further, mediation effects from work-life balance on effects towards job satisfaction from servant leadership (Hypothesis 6b) and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 6c) are explored. The moderating effects of organisational support for working from home by servant leadership (Hypothesis 7a) and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 7b) towards work-life balance, and the moderating effects of organisational support for working from home by servant leadership (Hypothesis 8a) and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 8b) towards job satisfaction are tested. Finally, the moderated mediation effect towards job satisfaction with the indirect effect of servant leadership (Hypothesis 9a)

and psychosocial safety climate (Hypothesis 9b) are investigated. The results report the confidence intervals Lower Limits (LL) and Upper Limits (UL).

Measurement models

The study constructs were confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS version 25, using three recommended goodness-of-fit indices (Williams et al., 2009): (1) the comparative fit index (CFI ≥.95), (2) the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA ≤.08), and (3) the standardised root mean residual (SRMR ≤.10). Table 1 shows the CFA and comparison models.

Table 1

Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Model Fit Indices					Model Differences			
Model	**c^2**	**df**	**CFI**	**RMSEA**	**SRMR**	**c^2**	**Ddf**	**P**	**Details**
Model 1	257.6	142	.98	.05	.04				
Model 2	848.6	146	.85	.11	.14	591.0	4	.001	Model 1 to 2
Model 3	843.0	146	.91	.11	.12	585.4	4	.001	Model 1 to 3
Model 4	556.6	146	.91	.08	.06	299.0	4	.001	Model 1 to 4

Note. Model 1=Hypothesized 5-factor model: Servant Leadership, Psychosocial Safety Climate, Organisational Support for Working from Home, Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction.

Model 2=Alternative 4-factor model: Servant Leadership and Psychosocial Safety Climate combined, Organisational Support for Working from Home, Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction.

Model 3=Alternative 4-factor model: Servant Leadership, Psychosocial Safety Climate, Organisational Support for Working from Home and Work-Life Balance combined and Job Satisfaction.

Model 4=Alternative 4-factor model: Servant Leadership, Psychosocial Safety Climate, Organisational Support for Working from Home, Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction combined.

Overall, the hypothesised measurement model was the best fit for the data: χ^2(df)= 257.6 (142), CFI=.98, RMSEA=.05, and SRMR=.04. This was confirmed by testing three alternative CFA models, and these were all significantly poorer fit (all p< .001) to the data (Hair et al., 2010).

Results

Descriptive statistics for the study variables are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	40.8	14.7	--							
2. Job Tenure	6.36	5.99	.51**	--						
3. Hours Worked	33.0	11.1	-.11*	.07	--					
4. Servant Leadership	3.91	1.31	.23**	.17**	-.21**	--				
5. Psychosocial Safety Climate	3.45	.80	.10	.07	.03	.24**	--			
6. Org Support for Working from Home	3.36	1.11	.05	.06	.18**	.15**	.37**	--		
7. Work-Life Balance	3.68	.88	.26**	.19**	.01	.18**	.40**	.28**	--	
8. Job Satisfaction	3.72	.98	.20**	.14**	.03	.18**	.43**	.18**	.56**	--

Note. N=400. *p<.05, **p<.01

Table 2 shows that organisational support for working from home is significantly correlated with servant leadership (r= .15, p<.001), psychosocial safety climate (r= .37, p< .001), work-life balance (r= .28, p< .001), job satisfaction (r= .18, p< .001), hours worked (r= .18, p< .001); although it is not significantly correlated to age (r= .05, p= .286) and tenure (r= .06, p= .222). Servant leadership is significantly correlated with psychosocial safety climate (r= .24, p< .001), work-life balance (r= .18, p< .001), job satisfaction (r= .18, p< .01), age (r= .23, p< .001), tenure (r= .17, p< .001), and hours worked (r= -.21, p< .001). Psychosocial safety climate is significantly correlated with work-life balance (r= .40, p< .001) and job satisfaction (r= .43, p< .01), although it is not significantly correlated to age (r= .10, p= .053), tenure (r= .07, p= .172), and hours worked (r= .03, p= .589). Work-life balance correlates significantly with job satisfaction (r= .56, p< .001), age (r= .26, p< .001), tenure (r= .19, p< .001), although not hours worked (r= .01, p= .861). Finally, job satisfaction correlates significantly with age (r= .20, p< .001), tenure (r= .14, p= .004), although not hours worked (r= .03, p= .530).

ANOVA

The results of the ANOVA towards organisational support for working from home show that there is a significant effect from firm size: F= 2.766, p= .027. Post hoc analysis showed that very large firms scored the highest (M= 3.6789), significantly higher than all other firm sizes. The next highest score (M= 3.3958) is micro-sized firms, followed by large-sized firms (M= 3.3333), then medium-sized firms (M= 3.2624) with small-sized firms the lowest (M= 3.1333). This supports **Hypothesis 1**. However, towards sector, there is not a significant difference: F= 1.186, p= .307, failing to support **Hypothesis 2**.

Direct effects to working from home

The results of the regression analysis for predicting organisational support for working from home are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Results of Regression Analysis for Organisational Support for Working from Home

	Organisational Support for Working from Home		
Variables	B (SE)	Confidence Intervals	p-value
Age	.01(.00)	LL= -.00, UL= .01	.263
Job Tenure	.00(.01)	LL= -.02, UL= .02	.788
Hours Worked	.02(.01)	LL= .01, UL= .03	.000
R^2 change	.04		.001
Predictors:			
Servant Leadership	.09(.04)	LL= .01, UL= .17	.032
Psychosocial Safety Climate	.48(.07)	LL= .35, UL= .61	.000
R^2 change	.14		.000
Total R^2	.18		
Total Adjusted R^2	.17		
F Statistic	17.306 (p= .000)		

Note. β = unstandardized regression coefficients, SE= standard error.
All significance tests were two-tailed.

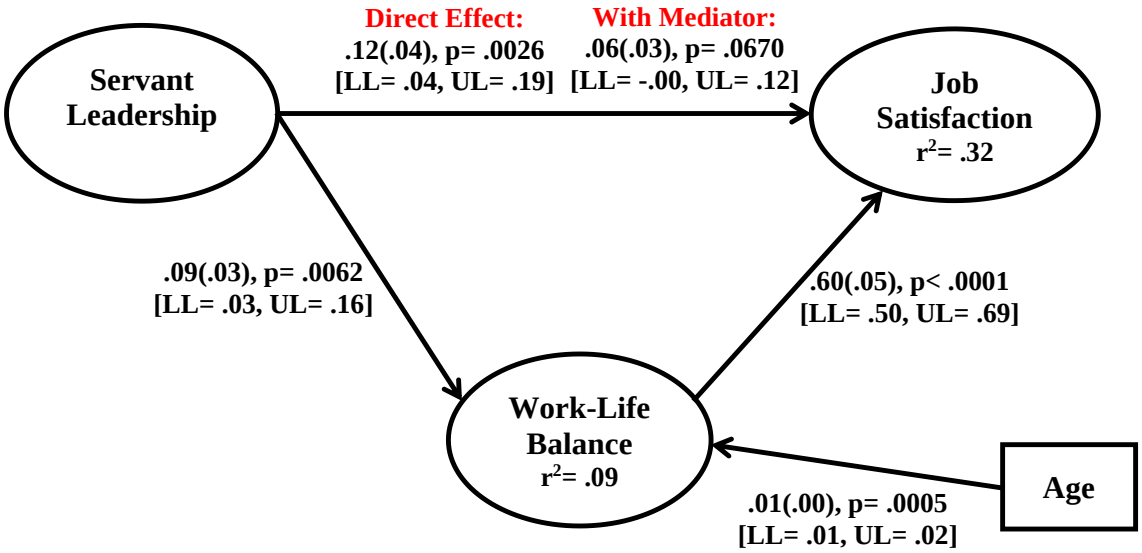
Table 3 shows that servant leadership is significantly related to organisational support for working from home (β= .09(.04), p= .032 [LL= .01, UL= .17]), supporting **Hypothesis 4a**. Psychosocial safety climate is also significantly related to organisational support for working from home (β= .48(.07), p< .001 [LL= .35, UL= .61]) supporting **Hypothesis 5a**. Finally, a significant control variable towards organisational support for working from home is hours worked (β=.02(.01), p< .001 [LL= .01, UL= .01]. Overall, the model for organisational support for working from home is significant (F Statistic= 17.306, p< .001) and accounts for modest amounts of variance (Total R^2= .18).

Direct and mediation effects

The results of the mediation analysis predicting job satisfaction are shown in Figures 3 and 4. This analysis shows the PROCESS model 4 for mediation and Figure 3 has servant leadership as the independent variable and Figure 4 has psychosocial safety climate as the independent variable. In PROCESS, only one independent variable can be included at a time.

Figure 3

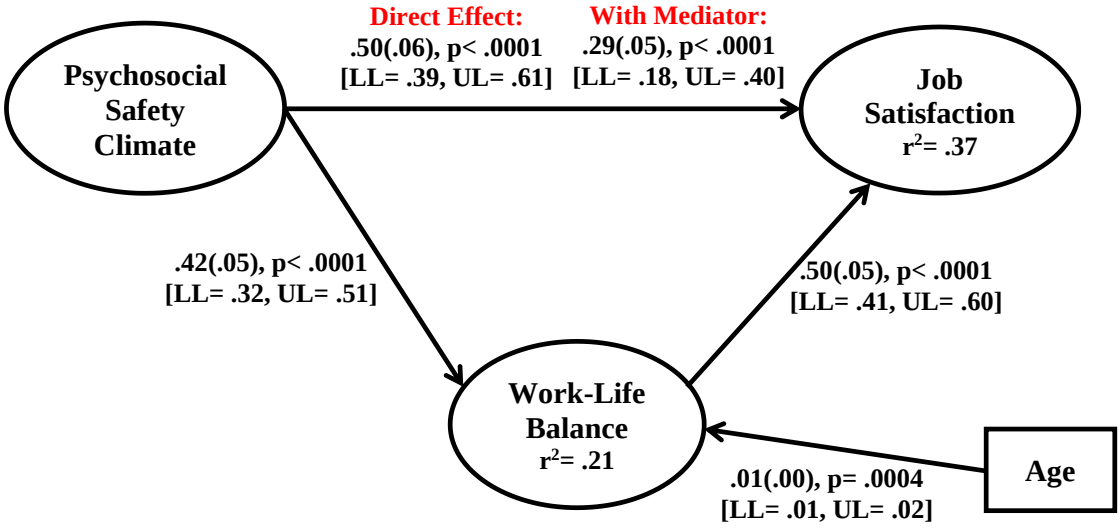
Study Model Effects of Servant Leadership to Job Satisfaction



Note: only significant control variable effects shown.

Figure 4.

Study Model Effects of Psychosocial Safety Climate to Job Satisfaction



Note: only significant control variable effects shown.

Figure 3 shows that servant leadership is significantly related to work-life balance (β= .09(.03), p= .0062 [LL= .03, UL= .16]) and job satisfaction (β= .12(.04), p= .0026 [LL= .04, UL= .19]), supporting **Hypotheses 4b and 4c**. Figure 4 shows that psychosocial safety climate is significantly related to work-life balance (β= .42(.05), p< .0001 [LL= .32, UL= .51]) and job satisfaction (β= .50(.06), p< .0001 [LL= .39, UL= .61]), supporting **Hypotheses 5b and 5c**. Both models show that work-life balance is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, although the effect is stronger when servant leadership is the independent variable (β= .60(.05), p< .0001 [LL= .50, UL= .69]) compared to psychosocial safety climate (β= .50(.05), p< .0001 [LL= .41, UL= .60]). This supports **Hypothesis 6a**, and there is support for **Hypotheses 6b and 6c**, as the inclusion of work-life balance fully mediates the direct effects of servant leadership, dropping to non-significance (β= .06(.03), p= .0670 [LL= -.00, UL= .12]). The effects on psychosocial safety climate show partial mediation effects (β= .29(.05), p< .0001 [LL= .18, UL= .40]). In examining the indirect effects, servant leadership is significant (β= .06(.02), p= .0087 [LL= .01, UL= .11]) as is psychosocial safety climate (β= .21(.04), p< .0001 [LL= .14, UL= .29])

Moderation and moderated mediation effects

The results of the analysis for the direct and moderating effects of organisational support for working from home towards work-life balance and job satisfaction, and the moderated mediation effects are shown in Table 4. This analysis used the PROCESS model 8.

Table 4

Results of Moderated and Moderated Mediation Analysis for Job Satisfaction

Variables	β(SE)	Confidence Intervals	p-value
Moderator Direct Effects:			
OSfWfH à work-life balance	.19(.04)	LL= .12, UL= .27	.000
OSfWfH à job satisfaction	.01(.04)	LL= -.07, UL= .08	.887
2-way Interactions:			
OSfWfH x Servant Leadership àwork-life balance	.05(.03)	LL= .01, UL= .15	.047
OSfWfH x Servant Leadership à job satisfaction	.02(.03)	LL= -.03, UL= .08	.434
OSfWfH x Psychosocial Safety Climate à work-life balance	.10(.04)	LL= .02, UL= .17	.010
OSfWfH x Psychosocial Safety Climate à job satisfaction	-.05(.04)	LL= -.12, UL= .03	.219
Index of Moderated-Mediation:			
Servant Leadership à work-life balance à job satisfaction x OSfWfH	.03(.02)	LL= .00, UL= .07	.047
Psychosocial Safety Climate à work-life balance à job satisfaction x OSfWfH	.05(.02)	LL= .01, UL= .10	.013

Note. β= unstandardised regression coefficients, SE= standard error.
All significance tests were two-tailed.
OSfWfH= Org Support for Working from Home

Table 4 shows the direct effects of organisational support for working from home, and this was significant towards work-life balance (β= .19(.04), p< .001 [LL= .12, UL= .27]) but non-significant towards job satisfaction (β= .01(.04), p= .887 [LL= -.07, UL= .08]). This supports **Hypothesis 3a** but not **Hypothesis 3b**. Table 4 also shows there is a significant interaction effect between organisational support for working from home and servant leadership towards work-life balance (β= .05(.03), p= .047 [LL= .01, UL= .15]) but not towards job satisfaction (β= .02(.03), p= .434 [LL= -.03, UL= .08]). This supports **Hypothesis 7a** but not **Hypothesis 8a**. Organisational support for working from home also interacted significantly with psychosocial safety climate towards work-life balance (β= .10(.04), p= .010 [LL= .02, UL=

.17]) but not towards job satisfaction (β= -.05(.04), p= .219 [LL= -.12, UL= .03]), supporting **Hypothesis 7b** but not **Hypothesis 8b**.

Finally, Table 4 shows the results of the index of moderated mediation which were found to be significant towards job satisfaction with servant leadership as the predictor (Index= .03(.02), p= .047 [LL= .00, UL= .07]) and with psychosocial safety climate as the predictor (Index= .05(.02), p= .013 [LL= .01, UL= .10]). Because the confidence intervals do not cross zero in the models with either predictor, these findings are significant (Hayes, 2018), supporting **Hypotheses 9a and 9b**. According to Hayes (2018), interpreting these findings means the indirect effect of (a) servant leadership and (b) psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction (with work-life balance mediating) differs significantly between respondents with different levels of organisational support for working from home. The graphed 2-way interactions (Figures 5 and 6) and moderated mediated interactions (Figures 7 and 8) illustrate these effects.

Figure 5

Interaction between servant Leadership x Organisational Support for Working from Home with Work-Life Balance as Dependent Variable

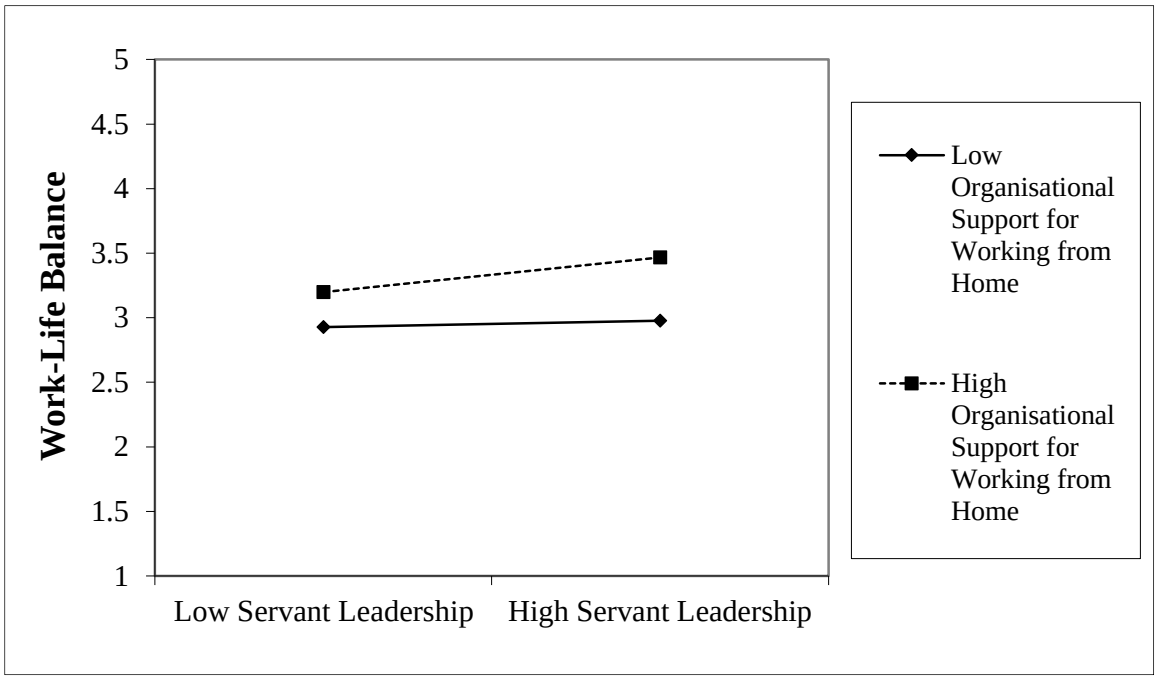


Figure 6

Interaction between Psychosocial Safety Climate x Organisational Support for Working from Home with Work-Life Balance as Dependent Variable

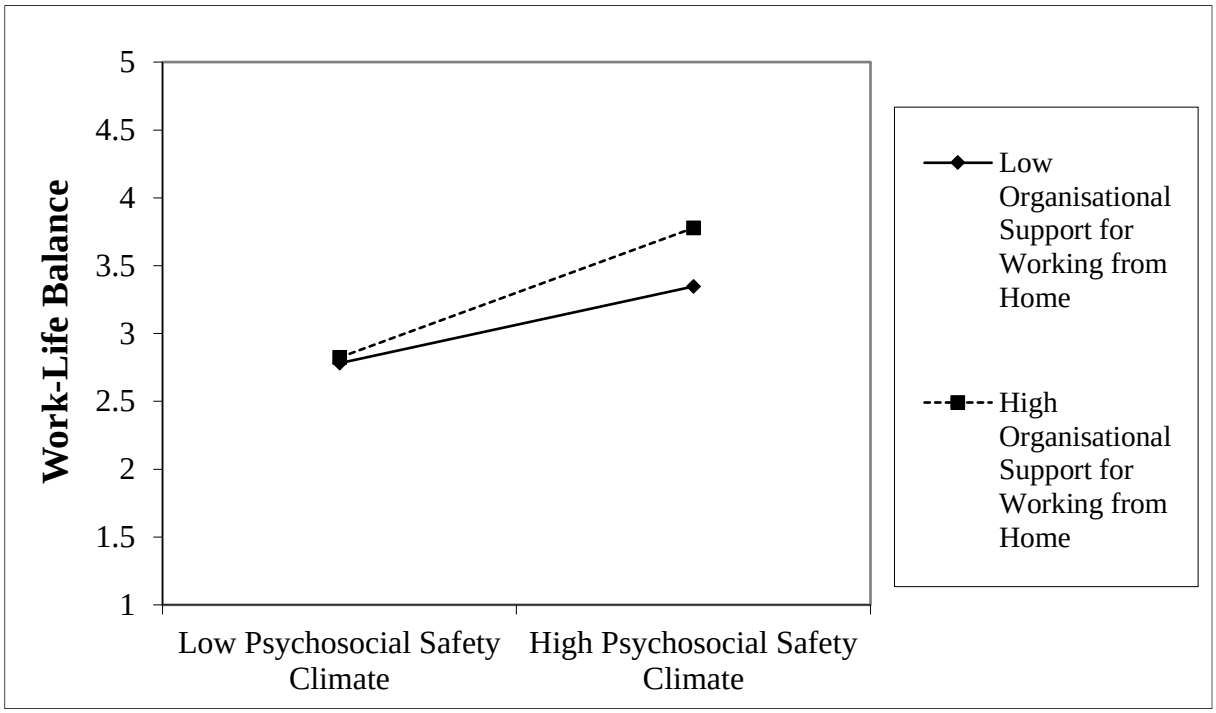


Figure 7

Indirect Effects of Servant Leadership on Job Satisfaction through Work-Life Balance Conditional on Organisational Support for Working from Home

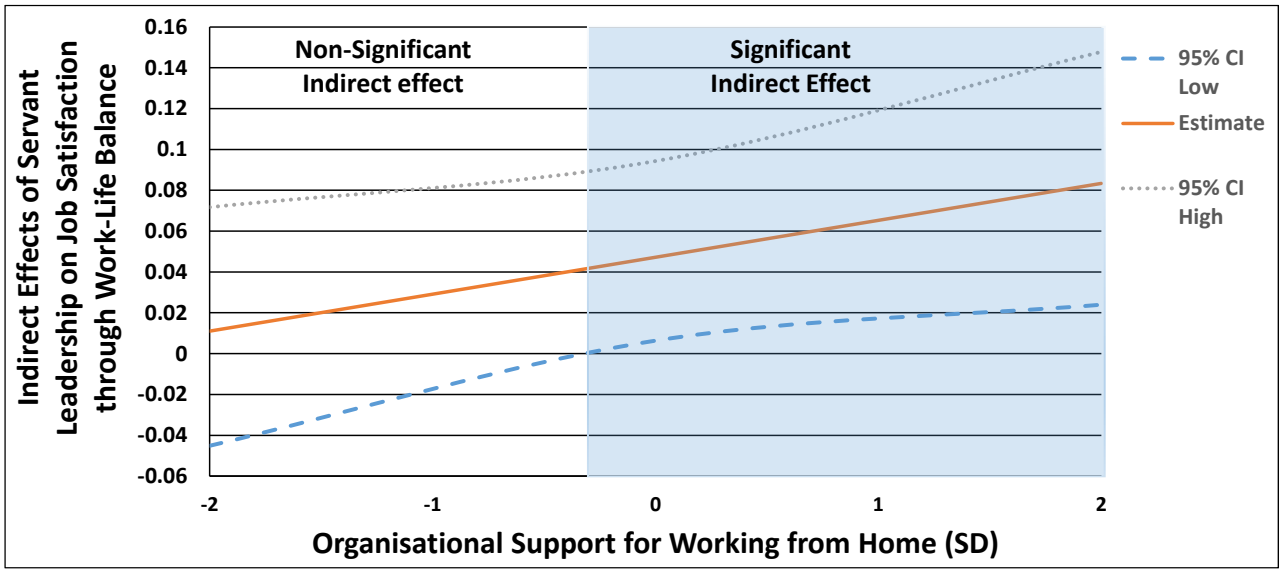


Figure 8

Indirect Effects of Psychosocial Safety Climate on Job Satisfaction through Work-Life Balance Conditional on Organisational Support for Working from Home

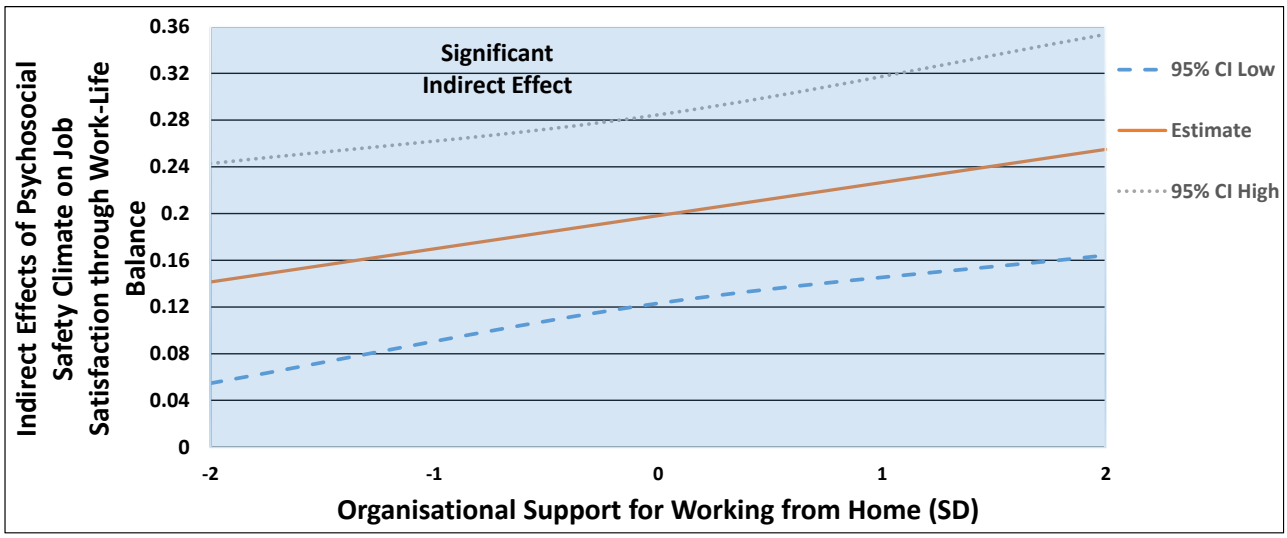


Figure 5 shows that, at low levels of servant leadership, the influence on work-life balance is significantly higher for respondents reporting high organisational support for working from home compared to respondents with low organisational support for working from home. When compared to respondents with high servant leadership, low organisational support for working from home report a flat level of work-life balance. However, those with high organisational support for working from home report a significant increase in work-life balance, supporting the intensification hypothesis towards work-life balance.

Figure 6 shows that, at low levels of psychosocial safety climate, the influence on work-life balance is not significantly different for respondents reporting high or low organisational support for working from home. When compared to respondents with high psychosocial safety climate, all respondents reported higher work-life balance. Those with high organisational support for working from home report a significantly more substantial increase in work-life balance, supporting the intensification hypothesis towards work-life balance.

Regarding the moderated-mediation effect, this study follows the approach of Wayne et al. (2017) to probe the conditional indirect effect by examining the magnitude and significance of the indirect effect of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction, with work-life balance mediating, at various levels of organisational support for working from home. Figures 7 and 8 show the significant indirect effect of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climateàwork-life balanceàjob satisfaction, conditional on the effects of organisational support for working from home (at -2SD, mean, and +2SD).

The analysis in Figure 7 shows that, for those respondents with low organisational support for working from home, the indirect effect of servant leadership on job satisfaction vis-à-vis work-life balance was non-significant (estimate= -.01(.03), p= .3551; LL= -.05, UL= .07). Alternatively, for respondents with modest levels of organisational support for working from home (Mean score), the indirect effect of servant leadership on job satisfaction vis-à-vis work-life balance was positive and significant (estimate= .05(.02), p= .0164; LL= .01; UL= .09). At high levels of organisational support for working from home (+2SD), the indirect effects are positive, significant, and stronger (estimate= .08(.03), p= .0047; LL= .02; UL= .15).

The analysis in Figure 8 shows that, for those respondents with low organisational support for working from home, the indirect effect of psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction vis-à-vis work-life balance was positive and significant (estimate= .14(.05), p= .0015; LL= .05, UL= .24). Alternatively, for respondents with modest levels of organisational support for working from home (Mean score), the indirect effect of psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction vis-à-vis work-life balance was positive and significant (estimate= .19(.04), p< .0001; LL= .12; UL= .28). At high levels of organisational support for working from home (+2SD), the indirect effects are positive, significant, and stronger (estimate= .26(.05), p< .0001; LL= .16; UL= .35).

These effects show that high organisational support for working from home is associated with a stronger indirect effect from psychosocial safety climate to job satisfaction through work-life balance. This occurs at all levels of organisational support for working from home and the indirect effect of organisation climate strengthens as working from home support increases. However, the indirect effect towards job satisfaction from servant leadership was only significant when organisational support for working from home was at levels higher than -.30 standard deviations from the mean. Overall, the moderation and moderated mediation effects support the hypotheses.

A summary of all hypotheses and findings is provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of Hypotheses and Results

Hypothesis	**Relationships**	**Result**
Hypothesis 1	Perceived organisational support for working from home will be higher in larger sized firms.	Hypothesis 1 **supported.**
Hypothesis 2	Perceived organisational support for working from home will be higher in organisations in the not-for-profit and public sector.	Hypothesis 2 not supported.
Hypotheses 3a-3b	(a) Perceived organisational support for working from home will be positively related to work-life balance. (b) Perceived organisational support for working from home will be positively related to job satisfaction.	Hypothesis 3a **supported.** Hypothesis 3b not supported.
Hypothesis 4a-4c	(a) Servant leadership will be positively related to perceived organisational support for working from home. (b) Servant leadership will be positively related to work-life balance. (c) Servant leadership will be positively related to job satisfaction.	Hypothesis 4a **supported.** Hypothesis 4b **supported.** Hypothesis 4c **supported.**
Hypothesis 5a-5c	(a) Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to perceived organisational support for working from home. (b) Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to work-life balance.	Hypothesis 5a **supported.** Hypothesis 5b **supported.** Hypothesis 5c **supported.**

	(c) Psychosocial safety climate will be positively related to job satisfaction.	
Hypotheses 6a-6c	(a) Work-life balance will be positively related to job satisfaction. (b) Work-life balance will mediate the influence of servant leadership on job satisfaction. (c) Work-life balance will mediate the influence of psychosocial safety climate on job satisfaction.	Hypothesis 6a **supported.** Hypothesis 6b **supported.** Hypothesis 6c **supported.**
Hypotheses 7a-7b	(a) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership to influence work-life balance. (b) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate to influence work-life balance.	Hypothesis 7a **supported.** Hypothesis 7b **supported.**
Hypotheses 8a-8b	(a) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership to influence job satisfaction. (b) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate to influence job satisfaction.	Hypothesis 8a not supported. Hypothesis 8b not supported.
Hypotheses 9a-9b	(a) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with servant leadership towards job satisfaction (with work-life balance mediating), with the indirect effect strengthening as support increases (moderated mediation) (b) Perceived organisational support for working from home will interact with psychosocial safety climate towards job satisfaction (with work-life balance mediating), with the indirect effect strengthening as support increases (moderated mediation)	Hypothesis 9a **supported.** Hypothesis 9b **supported.**

Overall, there is strong support for the majority of hypotheses. Only the moderating and moderated-mediating effects towards well-being outcomes were universally not supported, although the majority were supported towards job outcomes. The implications of these findings are discussed next.

Discussion

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we work (Kramer & Kramer, 2020). Global lockdowns forced hundreds of millions of global workers to work from home, thereby accelerating an emergent trend towards remote work (Kniffin et al., 2020). Previously, work from home was based on voluntary participation (Bailey & Kurland, 2002), whereas it became largely mandatory during the Covid-19 period, especially lockdowns (Kniffin et al., 2020). Therefore, the findings from previous research on work from home is not likely to be generalised for this unique situation. The present study sought to address this gap through empirical research on the experiences of remote workers during the Covid-19 lockdown. This project used organisation support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) to understand the role of organisational climate and leadership in influencing job outcomes, specifically work-life balance and job satisfaction. Servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate were explored as antecedent variables to predict organisation support for work from home and job outcomes. Furthermore, moderation effects of organisation support for working from home towards the key study variables, that is, work-life balance and job satisfaction, were explored in this study.

The findings of this research support previous studies that have reported a positive relationship between perceived organisational support and work-life balance (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Furthermore, Kurtessis et al. (2017) found that leadership styles contribute substantially to perceived organisational support, which is consistent with the present study's finding of a positive relationship between servant leadership and organisation support for working from home. Further, psychosocial safety climate was found to positively influence organisation support for working from home, and work-life balance and job satisfaction, in line with Eisenberger and Stinglhamber (2011), who suggested that organisational climate and

leadership behaviours determines organisation policy towards resource allocation for greater employee well-being.

Thus, the worker experience of a strong servant leadership style triggers the felt obligation under social exchange theory (Haar & Spell, 2004), leading to higher perceptions of organisational support for working from home. Similarly, an organisational climate focused on psychosocial safety, where the senior management of a firm are seen to care about employee mental health and well-being (Dollard et al., 2012), also triggers this psychological felt obligation. Thus, employees are more likely to report their organisation provides strong support for working from home when they have direct leadership experiences that are servant leadership-based, and when they see the organisations' climate as focused on psychosocial safety.

Contrary to expectations, the present study reported some unanticipated findings. First, organisation support for working from home by industry sector (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) reported no significant difference between private sector, public sector, or not-for-profit sectors in our sample. It was expected that non-private sector organisations might do a better job at supporting working from home, with organisations in the not-for-profit sector being expected to have a greater focus on the well-being of employees. However, the perceptions around organisational support for working from home might be focused on the resources that organisations have at their disposal, to help aid employees manage the transition to working from home suddenly. Here perhaps, the additional financial resources more likely to exist in the private sector makes up for any potential difference, and hence why no sector differences were found.

Second, the analyses showed that organisation support for working from home to be a poor predictor of job satisfaction. While it was significantly correlated it had no significant

direct effect on job satisfaction (in models with psychosocial safety climate or servant leadership included). While this is somewhat contrary to previous studies in the broader perceived organisational support construct (Kurtessis et al., 2017), it does suggest that as a factor to elicit strong felt obligations (Haar & Spell, 2004), it may be limited in the presence of other stronger factors.

Theoretical and practical implications

Overall, the current findings support previous research on perceived organisational support as a strong predictor of work and well-being outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle et al., 2009). OST suggests that leadership personifies the organisation and determines organisation policies and behaviour. Perceptions of family-supportive supervisor behaviours are reciprocated by employees through increased job outcomes. During the Covid-19 lockdown, it was expected that organisations through their leadership teams should provide adequate support for their employees working from home. Investigations by firm size showed that very large organisations (1001 plus employees) provided better support for work from home compared to firms of all sizes. Overall, small-sized firms (10-50 employees) brought up the rear end with the lowest levels of employee perceptions of organisational support for working from home. While bigger corporations are expected to have policies and procedures around flexible work arrangements and contingency plans to deal with disruptions in regular workflow, the positive support shown by the micro-sized firms (<10 employees) is an unexpected result. A further study with more focus on firm factors that influence organisation support for work from home is, therefore, suggested.

The findings of this study on the positive influence of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on organisation support for working from home, job satisfaction and work-life balance, are consistent with previous studies (Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Law et al., 2011). However, the observed moderating effects of organisation

support for working from home towards job satisfaction and moderated mediation effects in this study were found to be non-significant. This outcome is contrary to that of Kurtessis et al. (2017) who reported a strong relation between support perceptions and job satisfaction. A possible explanation of this result might be the significant direct effects of servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate on organisation support for working from home. Simultaneously, the significant effect on work-life balance scores suggests that supervisor support is strongly related to well-being outcomes, including overall work-life balance, whereas it is not a significant predictor of overall job satisfaction.

The findings of the present study have important implications for human resource practitioners and managers responsible for overall organisation strategy. First, the mandatory switch to work from home across industries including sectors traditionally believed to be unsuitable for work from home, such as primary and secondary education, underlines the adaptability and acceptance of work from home as a universal work practice going forward. Second, such systemic shocks offer a litmus test on the role of leadership in providing support and vision to the employees. Managers need to consider financial implications of providing necessary resources including IT infrastructure, systems training besides ensuring strict adherence to health and safety standards. Third, the results will help the management decide which leadership style is best suited to deliver employee, as well as overall organisation outcomes in times of future pandemics.

There are also researcher implications. Further study of the dynamics around organisational support for working from home to determine not only direct effects (here specifically on work-life balance but not job satisfaction) needs replication. Further, directly exploring other outcomes including well-being (e.g., anxiety, depression, job stress) would aid our understanding. Exploring different antecedents than those tested here are also encouraged. For example, what role does organisational support for working from home play in the context

of high-performance work systems (Datta et al., 2005)? High performance work systems are defined by Harley et al. (2007) as "the systematic use of mutually reinforcing human resource management (HRM) practices which have an emphasis on selecting the 'right' employees, developing their skills, organising work so that employees have the discretion to solve problems creatively" (pp. 608-9). Hence, exploring these systems of HR practices with organisational support for working from home might be needed to draw that research field into the present context.

Contributions

The present study contributes to the literature on work-life balance and job satisfaction in three ways. First, the study is focused on New Zealand workers in full-time employment. Extant research on work and family outcomes has been commonly reported for US or European studies. Singular focus on New Zealand in the present study helped to gain deeper insights into the country's response to the Covid-19 crisis. This is especially relevant since New Zealand leadership has been widely hailed for its tackling of the virus resulting in the country's passport obtaining the top spot in global passport power rankings (Granville, 2020). Elsewhere, some reports suggest that mass infections and subsequent deaths could have been avoided through decisive and scientific action by political leaders in countries including USA, UK, Japan, and Brazil (Mason, 2020; Phillips, 2020; Telford & Kindy, 2020; Walker, 2020). The directives of the government were strictly followed by the New Zealand employers and this study sought to capture the experiences of the working from home population during lockdown and ultimately the influence of these actions on employee job satisfaction.

Second, the present study makes an important contribution to existing work-life balance and job satisfaction literatures. Previous findings were based upon voluntary participation of employees in flexible working programs (Bailey & Kurland, 2002), which could not be generalised to the mandatory work from home experience during the Covid-19 lockdown

period. Hence, purposeful, empirical investigation was required to outline the unique experiences of employees in a crisis situation. Finding how working from home shapes particularly work-life balance and to a lesser extent, job satisfaction – more through moderating other factors – aids our understanding of these influences.

Third, the main strength of this research is the quality of sample selected. A relatively large sample size with 400 participants provided better average values, with lower margin of error, and therefore, more reliability (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Moreover, the sample consisted of an almost equal split between male-female employees, aged between 19 to 71 years with an average tenure of 6.4 years. Almost two-thirds belonged to the private sector, with a minimum 20% representation across small and large firms. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a diverse sample improves generalisability and transferability of results. Furthermore, the anonymous and confidential research methodology employed in this study reduced common method bias and potential impact of social desirability (Podsakoff, 2003).

Limitations

Nevertheless, the present study has several limitations. First, the use of data from a single source i.e., online survey, may result in common method variance (Podsakoff, 2003). Second, another limitation of this study is the use of self-reported data collected at a single point of time, even though use of cross-sectional data is a common approach in work-family studies (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Higher-order statistical approaches including CFA and moderation effects were conducted in the present study to offset this limitation. Moreover, Haar (2013) suggests that the perception-based nature of work-life balance lends itself to self-report approach for accurate results.

Future research

The current study advances extant work-family literature using OST as the theoretical framework to predict well-being outcomes. A study by Haar and Brougham (2020) used conservation of resources (CoR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to determine the effects of work demands on resources and overall work-life balance. Previously, role balance theory (Haar, 2013) has been used to establish the mediation effect of work-life balance on conflict and enrichment outcomes. Therefore, a study similar to this one should be carried out using an alternative theoretical basis as outlined above, in order to gain a better understanding of the antecedents and consequences of work-life balance, which has been applied towards job satisfaction (Haar, 2013; Haar et al., 2014; Haar & Brougham, 2020), making this a useful alternative theoretical approach to utilise.

Further investigation into the role of firm size as a control variable predicting organisation support for well-being initiatives is recommended to determine firm-specific antecedents of supervisor support. In particular, HR practitioners will be interested to know these findings to design effective leadership and well-being programs. Future studies might look to firm size as a moderator, to understand if it plays a significant effect on organisational support for working from home.

Moreover, the cross-sectional data collection in the present study can be critiqued further via longitudinal research. It would be interesting to know whether the relationships reported in the current study are similar or different during the next round of lockdown. Alternatively, having partner data around well-being outcomes; or co-working data on team cohesion; or supervisor data on job performance, would all aid this issue.

Finally, the common method variance may be reduced using multiple research methodologies including face-to-face interviews or panel interviews. Secondary source data

(e.g., supervisor, partner) may be used to test crossover effects (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999) and offset the self-reported survey bias.

Conclusion

The present study sought to investigate the work from home experiences of workers in full time employment in New Zealand during the Covid-19 lockdown. The pandemic presented an unusual situation that forced millions of workers globally to perform their work responsibilities directly from their homes. Arguably, previous research on work-life balance and employee job satisfaction were not likely to correspond to the novel experiences of workers during the crisis. The purpose of the current study was to determine the organisational factors that aid better job satisfaction in times of global threats or disruptions. This project builds our understanding of organisational support for working from home, using a combination of new antecedents (i.e., servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate), and consequences (i.e., work-life balance and job satisfaction). The study was conducted on a relatively large sample of 400 full-time employees in New Zealand in the month of April 2020.

The findings confirm that leadership, organisational climate, and supervisor support are beneficial to overall work-life balance. However, organisational support for working from home was a poor predictor of job satisfaction, even when interacting with servant leadership and psychosocial safety climate. However, it was found to be important as a moderator of the mediation effect, strengthening the indirect effects of leadership and organisational climate. Further testing of these effects is encouraged to check for consistency and reliability. Overall, the results suggest that firms that offer higher support for work from home, have superior leadership behaviours, and more supportive organisational climate, thereby showing stronger job satisfaction scores from employees.

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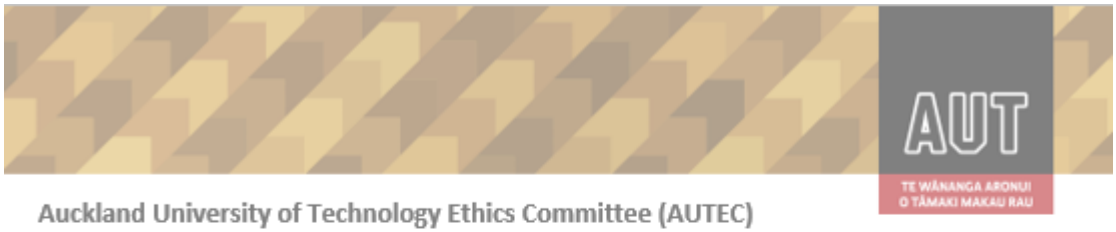
Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

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16 April 2020

Jarrod Haar
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Jarrod

Re: Ethics Application: **18/326 Ethical Work Project**

Thank you for your request for approval of amendments to your ethics application.

The amendment to the data collection protocol allowing additional questions is approved.

I remind you of the **Standard Conditions of Approval**.

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted. When the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all ethical, legal, and locality obligations or requirements for those jurisdictions.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

1 March 2020

Project Title

Ethical Work Project.

An Invitation

Kia ora. My name is Professor Jarrod Haar, and I am conducting a study of New Zealand employees and their work experiences. This involves completing the attached survey, which is expected to take most people 15-20 minutes to complete. Your participation in the research is completely voluntary. We are NOT collecting your personal name or workplace, so you will never be personally identified.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will contribute to understanding ways that people achieve better work outcomes including personal and organisational factors due to the practices and behaviours of their organisations. Findings from the research may also be used in conference presentations and may be published in one or more journal articles. A research student may also use some of the data for their thesis research and result in an advanced academic qualification. As we are not collecting individual identifying data (no names) no one will be able to identify you.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You were identified because you are a Qualtrics New Zealand panel member. To be included in this research you need to be in paid employment, over the age of 18, and working 20 hours per week (minimum).

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You do not need to complete a Consent Form – completing the online questionnaire will be taken as consent to participate. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study by simply stopping your responses. Because you are anonymous, completed data cannot be removed because it will not be able to be identified.

What will happen in this research?

The questionnaire will take around 15-20 minutes to complete. You can choose to not answer any question and you are free to discontinue the survey at any time.

What are the discomforts and risks?

Nil.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

This process should not pose any discomfort or risk to you. We are not collecting your personal name or workplace, so you will never be personally identified – so you will be totally anonymous - and your anonymity will not be compromised. Overall, your responses will be added to several hundred other employees across New Zealand and be analysed at the aggregate level only.

What are the benefits?

This research will contribute to understanding of the ways that employees achieve certain outcomes like better job performance and work-life balance. It will also evaluate the role of organizational and supervisor actions. A research student may also use some of the data for their thesis research and result in an advanced academic qualification.

How will my privacy be protected?

Due to the nature of the Qualtrics data collection, your responses are anonymous and confidential. You will not be known to the researchers and no data will be used to identify any individual.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The survey will require 15-20 minutes of the participant's time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

The invitation from Qualtrics remains until the data collection is full. You will approximately have one week to decide to start and complete the survey.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

No – because of the anonymous nature of participants, it is impossible to identify you to provide any feedback.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Professor Jarrod Haar, jarrod.haar@aut.ac.nz, and (09) 921-9999 ext 5034*.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Research Leader Contact Details: Professor Jarrod Haar, jarrod.haar@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 5034.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *16 April 2020*, AUTEC Reference number *18/326 Ethical Work Project*.