

Perceptions of support trickle down: Effects on energetic resources via psychological empowerment

Yasin Rofcanin¹  | Siqi Wang¹ | Mireia Las Heras² | Didem Taser³ |
 Maria Jose Bosch⁴ | Mine Afacan Findıklı⁵  | Andres Salas Vallina⁶

¹School of Management, University of Bath, Bath, UK

²IESE Business School, Barcelona, Spain

³Brunel Business School, Uxbridge, UK

⁴ESE Business School, Las Condes - Santiago, Chile

⁵Istinye University, Istanbul, Turkey

⁶University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain

Correspondence

Didem Taser, Lecturer, Brunel Business School, Uxbridge, UK.

Email: didem.taser-erdogan@brunel.ac.uk

Abstract

Supervisor perceptions of support are key, as they can influence their subordinates' perceptions of support and well-being. Using a weekly diary data set of subordinates and their supervisors in Chile, we tested a trickle-down effect of perceived supervisor support across three hierarchical levels: upper managers, supervisors, and non-managerial employees. Drawing on the conservation of resources (COR) and social exchange theories as well as crossover research, we find that our model is largely supported. The findings revealed that supervisors' perceived support from managers (PMS) relates to subordinates' perceptions of support from their own supervisors (PSS). In turn, subordinates' PSS is positively associated with their emotional resource possession and sleep quality. Beyond these relationships, subordinates' psychological empowerment mediates the positive relationships between subordinates' PSS and their emotional resources as well as sleep quality. These findings suggest that supervisors who feel supported reciprocate with the more supportive treatment of subordinates, which likely enhances psychological empowerment, in turn driving the accumulation of emotional and physical resources.

KEYWORDS

conservation of resources (COR), emotional resources, perceived supervisor support (PSS), psychological empowerment, sleep quality

INTRODUCTION

As key agents of the organization, supervisors play an influential role in shaping employee well-being. In effect, their support to subordinates is key to achieving and sustaining employee desirable outcomes. In this respect, instilling high perceptions of supervisor support is an important mechanism for achieving optimum functioning in organizations. Supervisor support can manifest itself in a variety of forms such as supporting employees in their work and family domains and building a friendly relationship with them (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Extant literature has shown that perceived supervisor support is associated with various positive employee outcomes, including enhanced job performance (Shanock &

Eisenberger, 2006), job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Frear et al., 2018; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), lower turnover intention (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010), and promotability (Yang et al., 2018).

While most of the research has focused on the outcomes of perceived supervisor support, little attention has been given to the empirical and theoretical considerations of factors which lead to higher extents of perceived supervisor support (Vandenberghe et al., 2019). A small yet growing number of studies have examined the effects of supervisor perceptions of support, specifically in relation to perceived fair treatment (Ambrose et al., 2013) and organizational support (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006), indicating the role of contextual characteristics as triggers of perceived supervisor support. However, limited research exists regarding the dyadic relations between supervisors and their own managers and how support

Mireia Las Heras and Didem Taser contributed equally to this study.

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perceptions cascades down to influence the work outcomes of subordinates. Our main objective is to extend this line of research by exploring how high-level manager support trickles down to non-managerial employees (i.e., supervisors and their subordinates), fostering higher levels of health and well-being (i.e., emotional resources and sleep quality). We introduce psychological empowerment as a mechanism which acts as a mediator in explaining this trickle-down process. Our focus is on psychological empowerment which it is a key motivational construct that results from supportive and trusting relationships with supervisors (Spreitzer et al., 2010).

Supervisors are key agents of organizations as they can create conditions for their employees to be motivated and feel well. Furthermore, they can serve as primary sources of support and also represent those in leadership, acting as bridges between the organization as a whole and employees (Maertz et al., 2007). Thus, employees often perceive supervisor support as a reflection of upper management's views of what is acceptable and desired, as well as upper management's views toward their own supervisors as well as themselves (Eisenberger et al., 2002). For a more complete understanding of sources of support mechanisms within organizations, it is important to examine perceptions of support across multiple hierarchical levels and explore how support is "generated and sustained," leading us to study the trickle-down model of perceived support.

The central tenet of trickle-down models is that perceptions, attitudes, or behaviors of one individual (typically a manager) influence the perceptions, attitudes, or behaviors of a transmitter (typically a supervisor), which in turn influence the behaviors of subordinates or other individuals. Studies on supervisor support find that this support influences employees' work and non-work attitudes, including psychological well-being, job attitude, and job performance (Chen & Chiu, 2008; Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Wu et al., 2014). Our study takes one step further and extends this line of research by exploring how higher-level support transmits to employees and may influence their sleep quality and emotional resource possession (two important yet under-researched antecedents of physical and mental well-being) (Ilies et al., 2020; Schmitt et al., 2017). Specifically, our research seeks to explore whether supervisors' perception of support from

their managers associates with higher perceived support from their subordinates and whether this association facilitates subordinates' emotional resource acquisition and enhanced sleep quality.

Our theoretical rationale builds on crossover research and the tenet of the conservation of resources theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001) that 'individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect those things they centrally value' (Hobfoll, 1989). The COR theory emphasizes the importance of resource possession and describes how resources co-travel in resource caravans, rather than piecemeal fields (Chen et al., 2015). In our study, we invoke the crossover model, which adds a dyadic angle to the COR theory. According to crossover research (Westman, 2001), experiences, emotions, and resources can be transmitted from one party to another. Most crossover studies have examined negative resource crossover, such as how psychological stress, burnout, and anxiety transit between individuals (e.g., Bakker et al., 2005; Westman et al., 2004; Westman, Etzion, & Gattenio, 2008). Yet, less is known about the positive crossover of the experiences (Hobfoll et al., 2018). In our study, we explore the possible crossover of perceived supervisor support insofar as its contributions to the care and well-being of subordinates. We posit that in dyadic relationships, supervisors' support from their own managers can influence the support they provide to their subordinates, thereby affecting their subordinates via crossover processes. Second, we examine mechanisms which link subordinate support to subordinate attainment of two key energetic resources: emotional resource possession and sleep quality. According to the COR theory, the transfer of positive experiences from dyadic relationships may generate further gain spirals, leading to greater resource reservoirs (Chen et al., 2015). With this in mind, we argue that subordinates who perceive high supervisor support are likely to feel confident in their perceptions of control and execution of work tasks, suggesting enhanced psychological empowerment. In the final step, we address resource-related consequences of the crossover process. We argue that psychologically empowered subordinates, because of their increased confidence, can invest more in emotional and physical resources (i.e., sleep quality). Our theoretical model is presented in Figure 1.

Week level

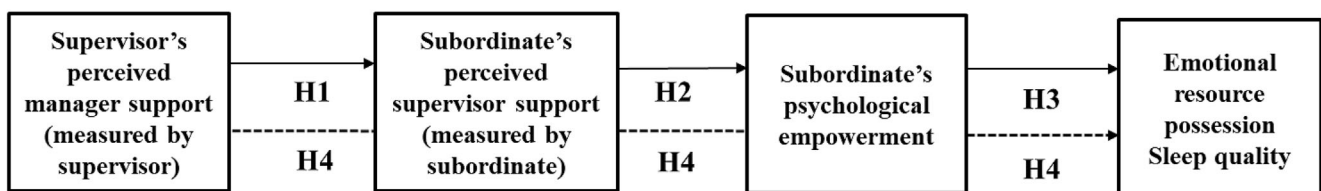


FIGURE 1 Conceptual model of the study.

Our study seeks to make several contributions. First, although perceived supervisor support has been recognized as an important antecedent of subordinate attitudes and behaviors, there has been little empirical consideration of the factors, which influence supervisors to provide supportive supervision to their subordinates. In contrast to most studies on supportive supervision that explore the effects of supportive supervisors on subordinates' work and non-work-related outcomes, we explore the role of supportive supervision at higher levels and how such perceived behavior may trickle down and positively impact subordinates' psychological and affective mechanisms. Given that organizations are overwhelmingly hierarchically structured bodies which contain systems of interpersonal relationships, a multi-level examination of supportive supervision is essential to generating and sustaining support across levels. Second, most of the studies on supervisor support have examined their effects on employees' work-related attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 2002) but have not examined key resource accumulation mechanisms of subordinates (Ilies et al., 2020). Due to increasing demands upon employees to manage both work and family care, work-family research predominantly focuses on empirical and theoretical research linked to resource exhaustion mechanisms. To address these calls, we introduce two key resource-generating mechanisms: emotional resources and sleep quality. By doing so, we contribute to the literature that explores the mechanisms which provide subordinates with the psychological (via psychological empowerment), physical (via sleep), and emotional (via ERP) energy to deal with stressful situations without becoming frustrated or experiencing exhaustion. Our focus on these outcomes is crucial, especially in these extraordinary times of health and economic uncertainty.

Second, the antecedents of subordinates' emotional resource possession and sleep quality have received little attention in work-family research despite their restorative and energizing benefits for all employees (Barnes, 2012; Ilies et al., 2020). Thus, this study sheds light on how supervisor support cascading down from high-level managers can translate to stronger psychological empowerment of non-managerial employees, which in turn may influence the accumulation of emotional resources and physical resources (i.e., sleep, in our study). Finally, by integrating a COR perspective into our conceptual model, we expand the literature on trickle-down effects and respond to calls to explore theoretical explanations that go beyond social learning and social exchange theory.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Crossover theory

The process whereby the psychological stress or well-being experienced by one person shapes and influences

the level of well-being of another person is referred to as crossover (Westman, 2001). Crossover theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009; Westman, 2001) encapsulates three broad perspectives (we should note that from now on we use the crossover to refer to the transmission of positive experiences instead of stress). The first is about the direct transmission of experiences between partners. The second relates to the indirect transmission of experiences shared between partners. The third and final one is about interpersonal interactions, such as social support that accounts for the transmission of positive experiences between partners (Westman, 2001).

Trickle-down of support between managers and supervisors

To develop our, we build on the crossover model, which adds an inter-individual angle to the COR theory (Chen et al., 2015). Consistent with crossover, we argue that there is a positive association between supervisors' perceived manager support and subordinates' perceived supervisor support, indicating the trickle-down perception of support between two parties in a hierarchically structured reporting relationship. We contend that supervisors who feel supported by their managers are likely to feel positive and motivated for a variety of reasons. First, the support received from higher levels may suggest that supervisors are appreciated, and their contributions are considered in a positive light. Second, it may suggest that high-level managers, who hold the most valuable decision-making resources in their hands, are likely to provide further resources for the development of supervisors, creating a chain of gain cycles.

Thus, supervisors who have a strong perception of their managers' support should feel motivated to pass these resources on to others. This is a type of indirect reciprocity labelled as *chain-generalized reciprocity*. Chain-generalized reciprocity binds those who have received support to provide similar support to other (third) party individuals (Molm et al., 2007). As such, feeling supported by a supervisor may fuel support for subordinates because the supervisor has experienced the subsequent motivation and energy first-hand. As a result, these subordinates are likely to be filled with positive affectivity and energy, experiencing the same feeling of "perceived supportiveness" (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009). To illustrate with an example, imagine a supervisor who works with a supportive and resourceful manager (i.e., a manager who provides constant and continual support, along with the right degree of autonomy in required tasks). The recipient of such support and autonomy would consequently feel equipped with motivation and resources, fueling their drive to transmit these resources to their own subordinates.

From an affect-emotion perspective, the crossover of perceived support is likely to result from subordinates' conscious efforts to "tune in" to the support reservoirs of

their supervisors and, consequently, experience the same feelings and attitudes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009). This may indicate that feeling supported by higher-level managers, supervisors may fuel the same level of resourcefulness and support to their own subordinates to ensure the gain cycle and transmission of positive experiences continue (Rofcanin et al., 2018).

Prior research offered indirect evidence to support the crossover of perceived support from managers to their subordinates. The findings of Wu et al. (2014) demonstrate how supervisors' perceived non-work support mediates the associations between high-level managers' perceived non-work support and their citizenship behaviors. Turning our attention to leadership styles and support between leaders and their followers and focusing on service industries, research conducted by Li et al. (2017) offer support for the transmission of positive experiences between leaders and their subordinates (broadly speaking). Adopting a crossover theory perspective, Rofcanin et al. (2018) focused on the work engagement of supervisors and explicated how this state of well-being transfers to their subordinates. Extending these findings with a focus on perceived supervisor support, we propose that acting as a linchpin and aiming to convey similar positive experiences, a supervisor's perceived level of support from their higher-level managers is likely to cascade down to their subordinates, impacting on their perceptions of perceived support in a positive manner.

H1. There is a positive association between supervisors' perceived manager support and subordinates' perceived supervisor support.

Subordinates' PSS and psychological empowerment

We further argue that there is a positive association between subordinates' perceived supervisor support and their psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment, in its essence, refers to an individual's intrinsic motivation at work, reflecting a sense of control and autonomy (Spreitzer, 1995). According to Spreitzer (1995), psychological empowerment manifests itself in four cognitions: meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact. As a result, psychological empowerment strengthens the perception and meaning one has of their work, competence, and impact in operational and strategic activities (Seibert et al., 2011). The support mechanisms available to employees are key contributing factors to their perception of psychological empowerment (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Sparrowe, 1994). In their meta-analytic study, Seibert et al. (2011) found that socio-political support and leadership are strongly associated with employees' levels of psychological empowerment. COR theory argues that social support is key in that it not only enriches

individuals' reservoir of resources but insofar as it also helps them replenish missing resources (Hobfoll, 1988). Higher perceptions of support from supervisors denote that supervisors care for the well-being of subordinates and are willing to help them with their tasks and progress at work. Perceived support from supervisors may signal to employees that they are valued and that it is acceptable for them to set their own work goals. This perception may also enhance their feeling of impact and task competence, as well as their perception of meaning. By giving employees a sense of direction autonomy and energy, we thus expect supervisor support to be associated with an enhanced sense of psychological empowerment among subordinates. Hobfoll (1989) has suggested that support is a valuable resource that influences individuals' perceptions and emotions. Our arguments echo Hobfoll's (1989) earlier work, as well as more recent research on gain spirals between managers and their subordinates.

H2. There is a positive association between subordinates' perceived supervisor support and their sense of psychological empowerment.

Subordinates' psychological empowerment, emotional resources, and sleep quality

Drawing on the above arguments, we posit a positive association between subordinates' psychological empowerment and two key well-being-related outcomes: emotional resource possession and sleep quality. The former refers to emotional energies that people can invest or mobilize for goal attainment. As such, the possession of these resources emotionally enables individuals to offer emotional support or help them deal with adverse events that can potentially have emotional consequences (Ilies et al., 2020). The latter is an indication of the quality and demanding nature of the work environment. It refers to an overall evaluation of the sufficiency and effectiveness of sleep, in addition to difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep at night, both of which have sometimes been referred to as insomnia symptoms (e.g., Harvey et al., 2008). Exploring sleep quality in the context of our research is crucial as research has shown that work environments with demanding work conditions or lack of support mechanisms lead employees to report sleep quality problems (de Lange et al., 2009).

Psychological empowerment relates to the extent to which people feel competent, motivated, and capable of pursuing their work. In line with the COR theory, we expect that when employees feel higher levels of psychological empowerment, they also feel that they have more emotional resources that will allow them to deal with emotionally and physically draining situations. Emotional resources represent a type of possession that people can invest in to achieve meaningful goals or to navigate tough complex situations (Ilies et al., 2020). The possession of these resources ensures that individuals deal with

unexpected and uncertain events at work (Hobfoll et al., 2018). An important aspect of these resources is that they especially equip individuals to be able to address emotionally demanding situations. The COR theory suggests that employees are wired to accumulate, maintain, and protect valued resources. Thus, we argue that when individuals feel empowered at work, they feel more at ease and energized to accrue the relevant necessary resources to cope with draining and unexpected situations. This leads us to expect a positive association between subordinates' perceptions of psychological empowerment at work and their possession of emotional resources.

Furthermore, and with a focus on sleep quality, we expect that employees who feel empowered at work are likely to experience an enhanced quality of sleep. Experiencing high-quality sleep is an important resource for overall health and well-being. Good quality of sleep underpins gained chances of resources that can be reinvested and reinvigorated in the future (Park & Sprung, 2015). High quality of sleep indicates that individuals are less likely to feel frustrated, stressed, or insecure about the contextual conditions surrounding them. We thus argue that subordinates perceived psychological empowerment will also positively relate to their sleep quality.

H3. There is a positive association between subordinates' perceptions of psychological empowerment and emotional resource possession (H3a), as well as their sleep quality (H3b).

Integrating the points discussed above, we posit a trickle-down model where supervisors' perceived manager support goes down on to affect their subordinates' perceptions of support positively, shaping their sense of psychological empowerment and outcomes in a positive manner. We build on the gain spiral concept of the COR theory to support this processual model. Gain spirals are based on two key assumptions. The first assumption is that resources may accumulate and create further resource gains over time (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000). The second assumption is that resource gain spirals may take the form of reciprocal investment relationships between employees, such as co-workers or supervisor-subordinate dyads (e.g., Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2012).

We posit that supervisors who feel equipped with support from their managers are likely to reciprocate this behavior by providing a "similar" type of resource to their subordinates (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Informed by the COR theory, we contend that resources do not occur in isolation, but instead tend to aggregate and sustain each other in a mutually reinforcing and enriching way (Hobfoll, 1989). Hence, supervisors who are supported by their high-level managers will be best capable of

developing their subordinates by providing them with the support they received from their managers.

Supervisors, by passing on support from managers to their subordinates, create potential "caravan passageways." Caravan passageways (an extension of Hobfoll's theory of the COR) are the environmental conditions that support, foster, enrich, and protect the resources of individuals, families, and organizations. In the context of our research, high-level managerial support is the main "resources passageway" to flow through to the employees at relatively lower levels. To illustrate this point, imagine a workplace in which a supervisor feels the need to attend to several work and personal responsibilities. If they receive support from their manager that allows them to fulfill those responsibilities, they are likely to offer similar support to their subordinates with the hope of helping them grow, achieve their true potential, and further invest in the resources they may have. Subsequently, employees working with this supervisor are likely to develop additional personal resources such as physical health (e.g., energy and health; Graves et al., 2007), affective (e.g., feelings of support and trust; Rothbard, 2001), and psychological resources that may contribute not only to their functioning in the work domain but also to their emotional and health outcomes.

Indirectly offering support to our arguments, research from support literature argues that received support from others positively associates with support given (and thus, perceived by others). For example, the findings in Wu et al. (2014) reveal that managers' nonwork support from the organization and their bosses trickled down to influence supervisors' nonwork support toward their subordinates' perceived support. Research by Shanock & Eisenberger (2006) integrates two aspects of support literature: perceived organization support (POS) and perceived supervisor support (PSS). Shanock and Eisenberger's (2006) findings underpin that supervisors' POS trickles down to influence subordinates' POS through subordinates' perceived supervisor support (PSS). Their findings indicate that support cascades from higher to lower hierarchical levels. The majority of research on trickle-down models has explored the impact on subordinates' organizational citizenship behaviors, performance, and/or aggression (Wo et al., 2019). In this study, we explore how perceived high-level manager support cascades down to two important yet under-researched employee outcomes: emotional resources possession (ERP) and sleep quality. By exploring the mediating role of perceived support in transferring the impact of perceived manager support to subordinate key outcomes, we expand the knowledge on antecedents to sleep quality and emotional resource possession. Our fourth hypothesis is as follows:

H4. Supervisors' perceived manager support is indirectly and serially related to emotional resource possession and sleep quality of

subordinates via (a) influencing subordinates' perceived supervisor support and secondly (b) their sense of psychological empowerment.

METHOD

Sample and data collection

The data of this study come from matched employee-supervisor dyads from a hospital located in Chile. This was part of an intervention project which aimed to understand emotional resources, resilience, and empowerment in hospital employees working in non-managerial positions in Chile. The underlying aim is to enable employees to accumulate and develop further resources that are instrumental to tackling the dynamics of work in their demanding work situations. Our project can be considered one of "organizations as processes" in the field of organization studies (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013).

To capture the dynamic nature of the relationships explored among our study hypotheses, we conducted a weekly diary study for five consecutive weeks. First, we contacted the managers in the HR department to explain the purpose of the study. Following this, we coordinated the selection of participants, including the manager responsible for the running of all services. The HR department ultimately granted us access to all morning and afternoon employee workers in the basic food and cleaning services for their voluntary participation. Consequently, as many of the participants have little writing and reading literacy, the HR department requested the survey be short in length and easy to understand. In return for allowing us access to these employees for the purpose of our study, we offered the hospital a final report of our findings at the aggregate level, ensuring no individual responses could be identified.

Prior to the data collection of our project, we met with the HR executive responsible for the food and cleaning services unit division. We had certain criteria to ensure the final sample would be representative of the population. Our criteria included (a) a minimum number of years for both the supervisor and the subordinate in the unit (a minimum of 4 years of having worked together in the same division) and (b) willingness to participate in the study. There were 195 employees and 18 supervisors who met the set of initial criteria and were invited to participate in the study. Due to dropout, we had a final sample of 158 employees and 12 supervisors, representing 81% and 67%. Due to missing data, we retained 147 employees nested in 11 supervisors. Among the employees, 41% were females. The average age of the employees was 36.64 years ($SD = 11.28$). The supervisors' average age was 51.40 years ($SD = 11.55$), three of them were females (27%), and eight of them were males (73%).

In our invitation e-mail, we detailed the study goals and purposes, underlining that the data would be

confidential and that only researchers would have access to individual records and responses. To incentivize participation, we raffled off a \$30 CLP gift card among participants in the study each week. Eligible employees for the study worked across different non-medical departments of the hospital. All these departments are related to the provision of basic services such as cleaning, food processing, patient care, and the general call center. Since some of these employees had limited computer access, we offered them to option of responding via their personal or work e-mail addresses (where applicable). Otherwise, they had the option of completing a paper-based version of the survey. Ultimately, most employees participated via the online version of the survey. Our analyses reveal that data collection form (i.e., online versus hard copy) has no impact on the significance of the findings (Simsek & Veiga, 2001).

The original survey was carried out in Spanish. We used back-translation procedures to ensure the translation between the two languages was accurate (Brislin, 1980). Throughout the five consecutive weeks, we administered different surveys versions to employees and supervisors to explore different aspects of the supervisor-subordinate relationship.

Analytical strategy

We employed multi-level analyses using Mplus 8.3 software to test our hypotheses (Preacher et al., 2010) because of the nested nature of the data (i.e., weekly responses were nested within participants). To decide whether the multilevel analysis was applicable in this study, we computed intraclass correlation (ICC) for week-level variables, including the supervisor's perceived manager support (60%), subordinate's perceived manager support (31%), subordinate's psychological empowerment (73%), emotional resources possession (64%), and sleep quality (60%). The results showed that the use of multilevel analyses was appropriate in this study. We group-mean centered the weekly level predictors following the recommendations by Ohly et al. (2010). We conducted a multilevel regression analysis to test all direct relationships. For the serial mediation effects, we follow the recommendation by Preacher et al. (2010) and employed Bayesian estimation. If the confidence interval (CI) does not include zero mean the indirect relationship is supported. According to Yuan and MacKinnon (2009), the Bayesian approach is useful and efficient to test multilevel mediation effects.

Measures

At the end of each week, (Friday afternoon or evening, depending on whether participants worked the morning or afternoon shift), we asked participants to respond to

our questionnaire that referred to that same week's experiences. The response scale was 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Perceived support

We used a three-item scale developed by Spence et al. (2014) to measure subordinate's perceptions of support received by their supervisors. An example item included: "This past week, I have benefited from the help of my supervisor" ($\alpha = 0.96$). Utilizing the same scale, supervisors evaluated their perceptions of manager support. One example item included: "This past week, my manager has gone out of his/her way to help me" ($\alpha = 0.97$).

Psychological empowerment

Subordinates measured their perceptions of psychological empowerment with three items from Spreitzer (1995). An example item included: "My job activities are personally meaningful to me" ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Employee outcomes

We measured *subordinates' perceptions of sleep quality* using two items from Yi et al. (2006). An example item included: "I feel refreshed after sleep" ($\alpha = 0.95$). We measured *employee perceptions of emotional resource*

possession with three items from the scale developed by Ilies et al. (2020). An example item included: "From an emotional standpoint, I feel like I am ready for anything today" ($\alpha = 0.95$).

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal reliability values of our study variables.

Unstandardized coefficient estimates of our models are presented in Figure 2 and Table 2. Hypothesis 1 proposed a positive association between supervisors' perceived manager support and subordinates' perceived supervisor support. Results of multilevel analyses supported this positive association ($\gamma = 0.20$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2 posited a positive association between subordinates' perceived supervisor support and their psychological empowerment. Results supported this hypothesis ($\gamma = 0.30$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 posited a positive association between psychological empowerment and the employment outcomes of emotional resources and sleep quality. This hypothesis also received support, as feelings of psychological empowerment related positively to both sleep quality ($\gamma = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$) and emotional resource possession ($\gamma = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$). Finally, Hypothesis 4 proposed a serial mediation in which subordinates' perceived support from supervisors and their psychological empowerment serially and sequentially mediated the association between supervisors' perceived

TABLE 1 Means, standard deviation, internal reliability, and correlation values among study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Supervisor's perceived manager support	6.06	0.69	(0.97)				
2 Subordinate's perceived supervisor support	5.06	1.27	0.08*	(0.96)			
3 Subordinate's psychological empowerment	5.89	1.35	0.12*	0.37***	(0.96)		
4 Emotional resource possession	5.12	1.55	0.32	0.18***	0.20***	(0.95)	
5 Sleep quality	5.02	1.38	0.41	0.39***	0.46***	0.25***	(0.95)

Note: Reliabilities are along the diagonal in parentheses, where applicable. Five weeks of weekly diary data nested in 147 employees and 11 supervisors.

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

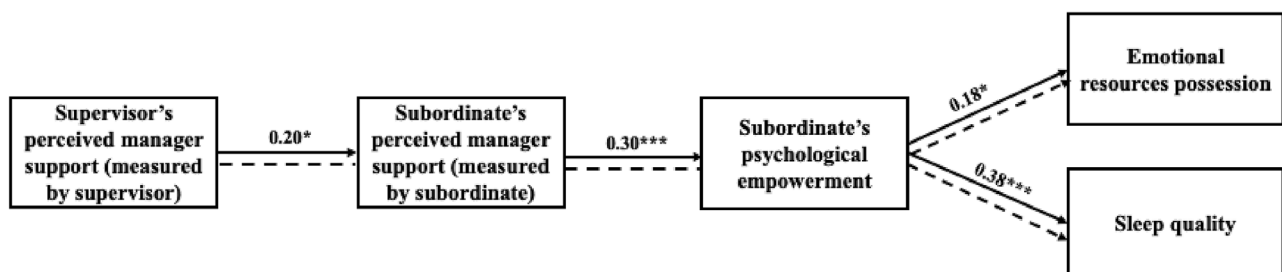


FIGURE 2 Results of hypotheses testing. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

TABLE 2 Multilevel analysis results.

Names of the variables	Subordinate's perceived supervisor support			Subordinate's psychological empowerment			Emotional resource possession			Sleep quality		
	Estimates	SE	t	Estimates	SE	t	Estimates	SE	t	Estimates	SE	t
Intercept	5.05	0.10	50.50***	5.92	0.10	50.20***	5.03	0.10	50.30***	5.66	0.10	56.60***
Supervisor's perceived manager support	0.20	0.09	2.22*	0.20	0.07	2.86**	0.22	0.08	2.75**	0.21	0.07	3.00**
Subordinate's perceived supervisor support				0.30	0.04	7.50***	-0.01	0.11	-0.09	-0.02	0.10	-0.2
Subordinate's psychological empowerment				0.89	0.08	11.13***	0.18	0.03	6.00*	0.38	0.06	6.33***
Level 1 variance	0.71	0.06	11.83***	0.82	0.13	6.31***	1.20	0.10	12.00***	0.93	0.08	11.63***
Level 2 variance	0.96	0.17	5.65***	0.82	0.13	6.31***	0.62	0.13	4.77***	0.68	0.14	4.86***

Note: Five weeks of weekly diary data nested in 147 employees and 11 supervisors.

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p > 0.001$.

support from managers and the employee outcomes of sleep quality and emotional resources. For sleep quality, as the confidence intervals did not include the value of zero, this serial mediation hypothesis was supported (95% CI [0.004, 0.046]). For emotional resource possession, as the confidence intervals did include the value of zero, this serial mediation hypothesis was not supported (95% CI [-0.005, 0.020]). This hypothesis offers support to the notion that supervisors' perceived support trickles down to shape employee outcomes (e.g., sleep quality), combining three layers of hierarchy.

DISCUSSION

This research explores how supervisors' perceived support from their managers trickles down to influence subordinates' energetic resources (emotional resources and sleep quality) via their sense of psychological empowerment. We found support for our model. These findings offer important contributions to research on the crossover, trickle-down models, and well-being as well as health-related outcomes. We discuss these contributions below. Moreover, it is crucial to remember that this study included blue-collar participants, which tend to be an understudied population.

A key contribution of our study relates to the testing of one of the assumptions of the crossover theory using an experience sampling approach (e.g., weekly diary design). A main assumption of this theory is that the shared experiences between two individuals or couples constitute a mechanism through which either negative or positive aspects relating to life are shared between the two (Westman, Keinan, et al., 2008). The underlying mechanism here is that sharing occurs in a dynamic fashion and usually between individuals of equal standing and authority (e.g., between co-workers or partners). However, in organizations, the ways of conduct are mostly organized across hierarchical levels, with higher-level managers, by the nature of these positions, delivering and distributing tasks to be carried out down in the hierarchy (Stollberger et al., 2019). Our perspective on trickle-down models adds to this literature by emphasizing the importance of supervisors as linking pins between higher-level managers and their subordinates (McDermott et al., 2013). Our emphasis on the crossover in the top-down transmission process from high-level managers to subordinates adds to a growing body of research; Bakker et al. (2009) revealed that work engagement, as a positive state of well-being, is one mechanism which accounts for crossover from the top to lower levels in the hierarchy. Similarly, building on this body of research, Rofcanin et al. (2018) revealed how subordinates' sense of work engagement is a linking mechanism between supervisors' work engagement and subordinates' work performance. We contribute to these debates by introducing perceived support, which

cascades down from managers to their supervisors, ultimately shaping subordinate perceptions and outcomes. By adopting a “support perspective,” we address calls for research in crossover theory to (a) delineate a top-down approach among the embedded hierarchical levels in organizations and (b) strengthen debates on the crossover of positive experiences, a body of research which used to be dominated by negative experiences such as stress and exhaustion (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Westman, 2001).

Specifically, our findings regarding the crossover of perceived support add to debates that expand crossover research from a leadership angle. The study by Lin and Ling (2022) investigates a complex trickle-down model of leadership support across selected companies operating in the service industry of China. The focus of this research is on group cohesion and top-level supportive leadership with a focus on service quality across dyadic-level interactions. The study by Li et al. (2017) draws on LMX research to explicate and discuss the trickle-down effect on employees’ turnover intentions. Furthermore, our research adds to the debates of the findings of Nienaber et al. (2022) in showing and strengthening the notion that positive support mechanisms cascade down from employees to their subordinates. This approach also aligns with the findings of Patel et al. (2022) who call for the need to emphasize the power of positive leadership. The collective focus of these studies is the integration and utilization of a leadership angle with a selected sample of employees working in service industries in China. The cross-sectional nature of the data and self-reported sample limit the contributions and thus opens a new platform for novel methodological approaches with experiential diary designs.

Furthermore, crossover research has also investigated the implications for the work-family domain. Braun and Peus (2018) demonstrated that managers’ servant leadership is positively associated with subordinates’ job satisfaction via contributing to subordinates’ work-life balance satisfaction. The findings in Ten Brummelhuis et al. (2014) revealed that supervisors’ family-to-work conflict (FWC) and enrichment (FWE) influence subordinates’ work engagement/burnout via influencing first supervisors’ and then, consequently, subordinates’ emotions (both positive and negative). It is one of the few studies that offer support for the crossover of affective resources between parties. Finally, the findings of Carlson et al. (2010) exhibited that by showing outward-oriented support and radiating positive energy, supervisors facilitate better work outcomes in their subordinates. Implicit in these studies, yet never tested, is perceived support, which is fundamental in understanding how positive experiences are shaped and shared in a top-down approach. Our focus and results, therefore, go above and beyond prior research that has exclusively focused on leadership traits and characteristics to explain the positive work outcomes of subordinates. Perceived support is

part and parcel of our everyday working lives, and without being confined to leadership, our results carry an important practical implication for developing interventions and eliciting work cultures of supportiveness. While sleep quality and emotional resource possession constitute important reservoirs of resources within the home domain, future research should explicitly explore the crossover of perceived support in subordinates’ family lives (e.g., family engagement or exhaustion). Drawing on the importance of perceived support and positive leadership, the findings in Luring and Kubovcikova (2022) also underscore the importance of relational dynamics in a dyadic pattern of relationship between leaders and their followers.

We expand crossover theory by exploring a new mechanism, psychological empowerment to explain how and why perceived support cascades down to shape subordinates’ positive outcomes. Prior research has shown that support is an important antecedent to the psychological empowerment of employees because of its role in instilling and embedding a sense of security with regard to the future. To this end, perceived organizational support has been shown to be a key indicator of empowerment experiences. In explaining how perceived support trickles down to subordinates, the findings in Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) emphasize the role of emotional and instrumental support perceptions to account for why support is transmitted between employees. It is plausible to contend that with the help of relational and motivational aspects emanating from perceptions of support, subordinates feel psychologically empowered and fully-absorbed in their tasks (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). By feeling competent and realizing the significant impact one has on their job (Spreitzer, 1995), employees may accrue valuable resources, and thus invest in those resources that relate to their well-being and energy. This is an important assumption of the COR theory (Halbesleben et al., 2014). This understanding of psychological empowerment emanating from a trickle-down effect is a novel addition to crossover literature, where the focus has been entirely on work engagement, flow, and affective states (Bakker et al., 2011; Westman et al., 2009) or on different mechanisms within work and home domains (Rofcanin et al., 2018). In this respect, our focus on a triadic pattern of relationships among managers, supervisors, and their subordinates responds to calls for extending the crossover research beyond a dyadic relationship (Bakker & Demerouti, 2013) with a focus on a novel psychological mechanism (Wo et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2014).

Another major contribution of our research is our focus on two novel and important outcomes of subordinates which involve energetic resources: emotional resource possession and sleep quality. The former is a newly developed concept by Ilies et al. (2020) which underlines emotions as positive affective states and energies that people mobilize and invest in order to obtain

further resources. By adopting and extending this concept, our findings offer a novel angle through which a trickle-down effect of support can be maximized within the work domain. Secondly, by focusing on sleep quality, a key indicator of well-being and stress, the findings of this study offer important concrete indicators for managers and organizations to help employees tackle work-family related problems (Barnes, 2012), and will thus help researchers to integrate this important outcome in their future lines of inquiry (Crain et al., 2014). Future studies could explore the consequential outcomes of sleep quality on work and home well-being, including a focus on refreshment, recovery, and recharging mechanisms (Park & Sprung, 2015).

A further strength of our study is the data collection context of Chile and our focus on blue-collar workers. At the micro level, Chile is among the Latin American countries, which suffers from lengthy typical working hours, making work-family and resource possession a chronic problem of the country's economy. This effect is even more acute among blue-collar workers, who oftentimes depend on public transportation and infrastructures. Still largely underdeveloped, commuting times tend to be long and unpleasant for these workers, contributing to work-family imbalances. On the other hand, Chilean society is characterized by enduring traditionalist religious and family-centered values (UN, 2014), which are likely to lead to clashes between work-family interests and values. It can thus be argued that such a context, including the intra-organizational crossover process from supervisors to their subordinates, carries particular importance in contributing to debates on resource theories (e.g., Schneider, 2009).

Finally, our model extends recent studies that have adopted a diary approach in testing the COR and crossover theories, and specifically the exchange of resources among employees. The findings in Du et al. (2018), Reina-Tamayo et al. (2017), and Petrou et al. (2017) highlight that resources are transient and dynamic, changing over relatively shorter periods of time. The dynamic fluctuations observed in our explored construct highlight the need to devise and develop interventions to keep employee energetic resources high and intact at the weekly level, which requires the implementation of shorter-term interventions. This is especially important for organizational contexts in which employees carry out basic service jobs (i.e., non-managerial employees) and are still required to work with a motivated and energized spirit despite the emotionally taxing and demanding nature of such jobs (e.g., Xanthopoulou et al., 2018). In essence, our study is one of the few to represent the cross-over of perceived among non-managerial (blue-collared employees), which is important to extend theories in underrepresented samples. Our model overall responds to the call for studies to extend and test new mechanisms as well as outcomes of the crossover theory (e.g., Wo et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2014).

Limitations and future research directions

Together with its many strengths, we also acknowledge the limitations of this research. The first limitation is that we have not included a boundary condition to explore how our conceptual model unfolds. It could be that in some organizations that offer higher family supportiveness or general supportiveness, support from managers to subordinates is able to trickle down easily and effectively. Bearing in mind that our associations may not be linear, future studies should explore the possible roles of certain boundary conditions on our associations. One possible example of this could be to explore team or supervisor-level fairness perceptions; while perceived support is valuable and important, perceptions of fair implementation of policies and practices within the work environment (e.g., interaction, procedural, and distributive justice elements; Colquitt & Zipay, 2015) are equally important.

Another limitation relates to the sample size for supervisors ($n = 11$) which can be small. To ensure the statistical power of our study, we adopted the Bayesian Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) estimation to overcome this limitation. According to McNeish and Stapleton (2016), Bayesian Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) estimation is very useful for models with small sample size (please also see Baldwin & Fellingham, 2013, with the same argument). With the Bayesian Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) estimation methods, our results still hold and are significant (the results can be provided by the corresponding author upon request). Hence, we believe that our sample size is acceptable in this study. Nonetheless, we suggest and encourage future research to enrich our work with a larger sample size.

Another fruitful avenue of research could be related to exploring the non-work and family domain-related outcomes of perceptions of support trickle-down effects. Related research has indicated that supportive relationships at work spillover influence family functioning and engagement positively (e.g., Rofcanin et al., 2018). A new avenue of research could be to explore the darker side of trickle-down models to identify under which conditions family engagement and exhaustion occurs. In a related line of research, the dyadic exploration of supervisor-subordinate dyads can be extended to focal employees and their partners at home to capture a fuller and bigger picture of the support dynamics between and within domains. Further research could also explore the cyclical relationship between sleep quality and employee work and non-work outcomes with a particular focus on behavioral consequences that matter for organizations (e.g., work performance and productivity of subordinates). From a methodological perspective, using diary data with shorter time periods and with the dynamic nature of these patterns in mind, other family outcomes such as family engagement and family support could constitute further avenues of study. Finally, future research should extend this triadic pattern of cross-over to

consider the role of family and leisure life (Demerouti et al., 2019).

Practical implications

Our findings imply that high levels of supervisor support serve as a necessary condition for subordinates' accumulation of critical physical and mental resources. To facilitate the trickle-down between managers and subordinates, we suggest that HR managers, together with line managers, to develop and implement behavioral modeling techniques which would involve viewing an appropriate model (e.g., a manager), determining how the behavior is accomplished (i.e., the discussions concerning how support is provided), discussing the effectiveness of the behavior, and practising the behavior, for example through simultaneous role plays (Gibson, 2004). Furthermore, our findings demonstrated the crucial role played by achieving positive resources and enjoying better sleep. In encouraging a resourceful and supportive work environment, the emphasis of training and development interventions can be placed on sleep and well-being, all of which aim to facilitate a better work–family and work–life balance. Interventions on family-supportive supervisor behaviors (e.g., Rofcanin et al., 2017) could be a good starting point to equip leaders with these intervention resources.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data of this manuscript are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author Didem Taser. The data are not made publicly available.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The manuscript does not have human subjects or patients.

ORCID

Yasin Rofcanin  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9945-1770>
Mine Afacan Findikli  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1021-6641>

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Yasin Rofcanin is a Professor in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at University of Bath. His research focuses on hr differentiation and relational job designs focusing on ideals and job crafting. His research has been published in *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* and *Human Resource Management Journal* among others. Role: Conceptualization and writing.

Siqi Wang explores the topics of sharing, support, and proactivity with a focus on diary method approach. Role: Analyses.

Dr. Mireia Las Heras is an Associate Professor at IESE Business School and holds a Doctorate in Business Administration from Boston University and an MBA degree from IESE Business School. She is the head of an international project of career management and also works on projects related to career management, dynamics of career success, and its interplay with work and family integration. Her research has been published in leading journals including the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. Role: Data collection and writing.

Dr. Didem Taser is a Lecturer in Human Resources Management at Brunel Business School. She holds a Doctorate in Human Resource Management and Organisational Behavior from King's College London. Her research interest relates to employee well-being, work-family conciliation, and gender and employment. Role: Data collection, writing, and analyses.

Dr. Maria Jose Bosch is a Professor at ESE Business School and holds a Doctorate in Business Management from IESE Business School. Her research interests include work and family conciliation, leadership, employee performance, and employee well-being. Role: Data collection and writing.

Dr. Afacan Findikli is an Associate Professor at Beykent University and holds a Doctorate in Business Administration from Istanbul University. She has worked as the vice dean at Beykent between 2016–2020. Currently she is a visiting fellow at University of Bath, School of Management, Future of Work Research Centre and funded by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey under the scheme “2219”. She continues her research within the framework of human resources management, organizational behavior, and social entrepreneurship. Email: mine.findikli@istinye.edu.tr Role: Data collection and writing.

Dr. Andres Salas explores the values of sharing, knowledge exchange, support and other dynamics of organizational behavior with a focus on employees drawn from the healthcare industry. Role: Data curation, analyses, and writing.