Work-Life Balance Policies in the Federal Government: What Factors are Related to Use?

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This is dedicated to my mom, Donna Bowman. She never lets me forget how smart she thinks I am, and that means a great deal. She is easily one of the most intelligent people I know.

Also to my dad, Greg Bowman, who selflessly spent many a late night reacquainting himself with high school algebra in the service of helping me get where I am today. He is one of the strongest people I know.

And to my tenacious and hilarious sister, Ashley Bowman Tubb. She is my eternal best friend, and always believes in me despite knowing me well.

Your love and support means more to me than you can ever know.

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ABBREVIATIONS

OPM   Office of Personnel Management

SUMMARY

Work-life balance policies are those intended to provide organizationally-based support for care of one's dependents, flexible work options, and leave for family or personal reasons (Estes and Michael, 2005). Though use of work-life balance policies has been studied in the private context and by public sector-oriented researchers in other countries, there is a considerable gap in the research concerning employee use of work-life balance policies in the United States Federal Government. Ezra and Deckman (1996) call for exactly this type of research, lamenting the lack of research focusing specifically on the federal government. Multiple presidents have shown strong support for making the federal government a model employer via programs such as work-life balance policies. The formal availability of a variety of work-life balance policies makes the federal government an uncommon employer. This exceptional, extensive and public support makes the federal government a prime candidate for a supportive work-life culture. This research will attempt to examine how supervisor support and senior leader support relate to three types of work-life balance policies: flexible working conditions, child and dependent care, and information policies and personnel services. The data employed for the study derives from an executive branch-wide survey of public workers conducted in 2011. Senior leader support and supervisor support relate to increased likelihood of policy use for all three types of work-life balance policies examined, with the exception of supervisor support and child and dependent care. The initial quantitative analysis informs the questions employed in follow-up qualitative interviews with federal employees, a design based on Creswell's (2009) 'embedding' concept in sequential mixed-methods research. This approach provided support for the initial quantitative findings, and in this research, offered entirely separate and new insights into what factors are related to use.

I. INTRODUCTION

A.   **Motivation for Study**

Work-life balance policies play an important role in mediating the relationship between personal life and the modern workplace. However, the efficacy of such policies for employers and employees faces a variety of barriers including that which serves as the subject of this dissertation: low uptake by the workers for whom the policies are intended. This research will specifically focus on the United States Federal Government context because the federal government is one of the most progressive employers in promoting work-life balance through the provision of formal work-life balance policies. This uniquely supportive environment for work-life balance is important from a practical perspective because, as more and more non-governmental employers adopt work-life balance policies, the federal government could provide a useful model for how to go about implementing these policies (Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein, 2001). From a theoretical perspective, research conducted in the context of an organization with strong, formal support of work-life balance policies can inform theory concerning the determinants of uptake within an environment where formal support is already established.

This research will focus on understanding whether senior leader and supervisor support for work-life balance relate to uptake of work-life balance policies, and if so, how. Specifically, this approach will contribute to the available academic literature by elucidating how distal (senior leader) and proximal (supervisor) support matter in organizations that have well-established formal policies (Daverth, Hyde, & Cassell, 2016; McCarthy, Cleveland, Hunter, Darcy, & Grady, 2013). McCarthy et al. (2013) reference human resources scholarly literature in their article establishing distal and proximal support as a frame for understanding organizational

support use of work-life balance policies. The focus on distal and proximal support has been used to structure research concerning a variety of employee behaviors and attitudes, including perceived stressful work, organizational citizenship behavior, and turnover intentions (Gillet, Gagné, Sauvagère, & Fouquereau, 2013; Kim, Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Johnson, 2013; Wahrendorf & Siegrist, 2014). Though previous research has used the framework of distal and proximal support with regard to work-life balance policy uptake, senior leader support has not been examined as the primary representation of distal support and the studies have not been conducted within organizations with expansive formal support. Establishing formal work-life balance policies is a relatively straightforward first step organizations can take to address work-life balance, so examining work-life balance policy uptake within an organization that has already effectively established these policies allows examination of the more complex underlying dynamics that affect use.

Mastracci (2012) outlines the federal government's long history of striving to be a model employer, beginning with President Theodore Roosevelt's public pronouncements that the federal government should act as an example for other employers. This tradition continues, most recently with President Barack Obama's Presidential Memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies titled 'Enhancing Workplace Flexibilities and Work-Life Programs (The White House, 2014). This memorandum promotes federal work-life balance policies in a variety of ways, including directing federal agencies to make their employees aware that they can request to use 'workplace schedule flexibilities', and encouraging agency heads to make work-life balance policies as available and usable as possible within the bounds of the agency's needs and mission.

Comprehensive work-life balance policies are arguably an outgrowth of the federal government's model employer-based orientation. Because the federal government has presented itself as model for other organizations, including those in the private sector, it is important to understand whether its human resources policies are useful for employees and, in the case of work-life balance policies, what determines use. This knowledge can help both the federal government and the organizations that follow its lead to implement work-life balance policies in a way that facilitates the greatest possible uptake and that allows an organization and its employees to benefit as a result.

The available literature indicates that formal support for work-life balance in an organization should result in higher rates of uptake in that implementation of these policies contributes to a change in the workplace culture that rests on a uniform divide between work and personal life (Ryan & Kossek, 2008). However, certain aspects of the federal government such as size and the variety of agency missions may confound the positive effect of formal support because uniform implementation is harder in such a large organization (Wise, 2005). The formal support for work-life balance policies makes the federal government a useful setting for research on work-life balance policy uptake. Before examining the literature concerning work-life balance policy use, a brief review of background information on the current state of work-life balance policies is necessary in order to provide the relevant groundwork for understanding the dynamics that determine policy use in the modern workplace.

Work-life balance policies were initially introduced after women began to enter the workplace in large numbers (Scheibl & Dex, 1998). With women who had previously been the primary adult in charge of what were often full-time household and child rearing responsibilities now working full time, families struggled to adequately attend to both their work and home lives.

Women continued to bear the bulk of home responsibilities at that time, interfering with their ability to fully dedicate themselves to their jobs at a level comparable to their male counterparts. Though some headway has been made in creating a more equal division of labor in modern American families since that time, the progress has been slow (Gershuny, 2000). Fathers continue to lag behind mothers in terms of time spent with children or managing the care of children, and women continue to spend more time on housework than their male partners (Bianchi, 2012; Craig, 2006). Williams (1999) connects this failure to share home and care responsibilities with the concept of domesticity, a societal view that men are, by their very nature, meant to go out and work while women are natural caregivers and fill that role best. As a result, the very idea of a worker and the structure of paid work itself are based on a man who can focus entirely on his paid, market work while leaving all private, home-based work to the woman. Though Williams goes on to discuss the importance of dismantling these stifling roles and shifting to a model of paid work that more fully integrates home responsibilities, she does not discern that this transformation is underway.

The division of paid work and home responsibilities is also reflected in the government context, both the study and professionalized practice of public administration were initially based in a male model of efficiency. Stivers (2000) explains that women, "struggled with the question of how to accommodate themselves to organizational practices defined by men," (p. 37) upon entering the public sector workforce and found themselves unable to advance in the hierarchy or into certain, male-dominated positions. The problem of how to make then standard organizational policies, practices and structures patterned on the male worker function for women whose lives did not easily conform to this same framework was very much present in

public organizations as well as private. These pivotal, founding practices still reverberate in the character of the workplace today.

Beyond the introduction of women, other, more recent shifts in the characteristics of the American workplace have helped to create a need for work-life balance policies. Though workers are not necessarily working longer hours on average, they now have less job stability (Kambayashi & Kato, 2016). New technology facilitates and allows employers to require remote availability during non-work hours in order to conduct business whenever they deem it necessary, impinging on what were previously non-work hours (Galinsky, Kim, & Bond, 2001). Lastly, professionals and managers spend more hours on the job than those working in lower-level occupations that require less education. All of these trends have caused work to encroach on home life and many organizations introduced work-life balance policies to address these trends (Körner, Reitzle, & Silbereisen, 2012; Roberts, 2007).

For now, the negative effects of the American job format are addressed through work-life balance policies rather than a wholesale overhaul of how society approaches paid work. Developing an understanding of the mechanisms that determine the use of work-life policies is an important step in parsing out whether these policies act as a catalyst for true integration of work and home responsibilities or simply as a band-aid in a system that is tenacious in its resistance to change.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A.   **Evolving Definitions of Work-Life Balance Policies**

Initially, work-life balance policies were primarily aimed at women precisely because of their continuing responsibilities at home. This became a workplace norm that remains imprinted on many organizations even today, fostering the perception by many workers that these policies are meant for use exclusively by women (Daverth, Hyde, & Cassel, 2015; Smithson & Stokoe, 2005; Scheibl & Dex, 1998).

At present, many work-life balance policies exist for use by those who do and do not have family-oriented responsibilities, such as alternative work schedules or paid paternity leave. The variety of work-life balance policies presents a problem for scholars wishing to investigate organizations that offer many policies in that the sheer number of policies results in an unwieldy scope of research. Thus, scholars have organized and consolidated policies that share similar traits and goals through categorization. Neal, Chapman, Ingersoll-Dayton and Emlen (1993) provide a parsimonious categorization of these policies, assigning work-life balance initiatives one of three labels: policies (such as the allowance to telework), services (availability of programs like health and wellness initiatives) and benefits (such as discounts on child or elder care). In a more recent effort to delineate types of policies, McDonald, Brown, and Bradley (2005) similarly list three categories, though their grouping is slightly different: flexible work options (policies permitting adjustable start and end times or telework), specialized leave policies (like paid or unpaid sabbaticals from work), and dependent care benefits (primarily for dependent care such as maternity or paternity leave). Bardoel, Tharenou and Moss (1999), created the most expansive categorization by canvassing other typologies; they list 'child and

dependent care', 'flexible working conditions', 'leave options', 'information services and personnel policies', and 'organizational cultural issues' as categories. Kossek (2005) acknowledges the utility of work-life balance policy typologies, specifically promoting future research that focuses on outcomes related to categories of work-life balance policies. Though there is no singular typology that is widely accepted, leave, flexible working conditions, information services, and care support are repeatedly included as types of work-life balance policies.

From an academic perspective, the idea of work-life balance policies has expanded beyond the rather narrow conception of aiding women or parents in finding equilibrium between home and work life for all employees. Early definitions of work-life balance policies (or family-friendly policies, another term for the same type of policies) focused primarily on combining work and family responsibilities rather than on more general personal responsibilities. The definition presented by Simkin and Hillages (1992, p. 13) is a good example of the focus on balancing family and work: "a formal or informal set of terms and conditions which are designed to enable an employee to combine family responsibilities with employment."

In a more recent article on work-life balance, Lewis and Campbell (2005) take care to note the difference between work-family balance policies and work-life balance policies, saying the latter, "imply extension beyond the recognition of care work to include, for example, leisure and crucially, to include everyone" (p. 5). Researchers have noted the problems that result from focusing only on family issues. Ransome (2007) pinpoints the focus on families with small children as a serious shortcoming in the study of work-life balance due to the narrow definition of 'life' as family and kids. He instead advances a more holistic view of what constitute the 'life' part of work-life balance, asserting other areas of one's personal life must also be balanced with

work. Ransome's approach also indicates that the knowledge generated by the majority of previous research, which focused on balancing family and kids with work, is incomplete because it overlooks other aspects of employees' lives that must be balanced with work. He makes a case for understanding work-life balance in other contexts such as in relation to seniors and for including all types of responsibilities, even the recreational, in the concept of balance.

Calls for a more inclusive view of work-life balance have increased greatly in recent years, with scholars embracing a more holistic conception of nonemployment-related responsibilities (Bonebright, Clay & Ankenmenn, 2000; Guest, 2002). Brown, Bradley, Lingard, Townsend and Ling (2010) provide an example of this perspective in their recent longitudinal case study of a large Australian construction project, which focuses on the issue of balancing work and recreational time. Though gender remains an important category for study due to the lingering association of work-life balance with women, work-life balance is now recognized as an issue that can affect any worker. Research into policy uptake is beginning to reflect this shift in perspective as well (Sayer, 2005; Coltrane, 2000).

B.   **Availability of Work-Life Balance Policies**

Organizations choose to adopt work-life balance policies for a variety of reasons. Ryan and Kossek (2008) review the motivations as outlined in the work-life balance literature, explaining that legal mandates, the desire to recruit and keep the best employees, and a genuine belief in the positive effects of achieving work-life balance for both employer and employee all spur organizations to adopt these policies. However, the initial motivation for the creation of work-life balance policies was clearly women entering the workforce in large numbers.

The gender balance in the workplace itself has changed a great deal since women began to enter the workforce during the 1970s. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009),

59.2 percent of women in the civilian, non-incarcerated population were in the labor force in 2009 compared to 43 percent in 1970. The percent of women in the federal workforce increased even more quickly than in the private sector (Guy, 1993). For the most part, women are now routine members of the American workforce. Although many organizations continue on an informal level to retain the notion that work-life balance policies are intended for use by women, the availability of such policies has not uniformly expanded along with the increased representation of women in the workplace. For example, according to Matos and Galinsky's (2012) study of 1,126 U.S. for-profit and non-profit employers, though flexibility-based policies generally increased in prevalence between 2005 and 2012, other work-life balance policies became less popular. The number of employers that allowed adjustments in work hours (moving from part-time to full time or vice versa) by employees decreased from 54 percent to 41 percent, and the number of employers who provided personal or family leave decreased from 73 percent to 52 percent (Matos & Galinsky, 2012). Even provision of caregiving leave has lessened: "the average job-guaranteed leaves for spouses/partners of women following the birth of their child, for employees who have adopted a child and for employees caring for seriously ill family members have all declined between 2005 and 2012" (Matos & Galinsky, 2012). If the availability of policies is decreasing in the private sector, use likely is as well if only as a reflection of the winnowed options. Although non-profit organizations were included in the referenced reports, they account for less than 25 percent of the organizations surveyed and the findings show that non-profits are generally more likely to offer work-life balance policies than are private organizations.

The reduction in the provision of certain work-life balance policies is somewhat surprising because there is a considerable amount of research supporting the benefits of these

policies for both employer and employees. Employees experience increased job satisfaction and reduced work-family conflict, while employers benefit from increased job commitment, intentions to stay and a competitive edge in recruiting new employees (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright & Neuman, 1999; Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2013; Casper & Buffardi, 2004; Fikesenbaum, 2013; Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, Kim & Giuntoli, 2008; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Lazar, Osoian & Ratiu, 2010; Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein, 2001). Employers may choose to cut back on or end certain policies because the policies are costly to administer and are not being widely used by employees. Employees may also forgo use of policies due to economic reasons (unpaid leave is, for example, costly for employees to access). Simply implementing policies does not ensure that they will actually be used and hence benefit the organization and its employees. This is one reason it is important to develop an understanding of what factors determine use (Lambert & Haley-Lock. 2004).

The type of organization matters in predicting the implementation of work-life balance policies as well. Nonprofit organizations, organizations that are larger and those that are older are more likely to make such policies available, though the basis for these relationships is unclear (Matos & Galinsky, 2012). In the American context, the federal government is one of the most progressive employers in promoting work-life balance through the implementation of formal policies (Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein, 2001). Bruce and Reed (1994) connect the federal government's development of such policies to the adoption of work-life balance policies in the private sector, saying that the government's policies acted as the model.

1. **Use of work-life balance policies: Comparing sectors**

In the American context, the federal government ranks as one of the most progressive employers in promoting work-life balance through the implementation of formal

policies, making it a unique context for investigating work-life balance policy uptake. Because the federal government has taken the step of implementing what are now well-established formal work-life balance policies, the organization provides an exceptionally useful venue for understanding what other informal factors relate to use. Putting formal policies in place is arguably the easiest and least ambiguous step in the process of facilitating and promoting work-life balance policy use, but it is only an initial step. Examining work-life balance policy use in the federal government context provides insight into what factors matter for uptake after generous policies have already been established. A study that examined state government workers found uptake did not vary based on gender, possibly indicating that public sector organizations are overcoming norms regarding gender and work-life balance policy use (Feeney & Stritch, 2017; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003). Even in terms of other public sector organizations (such as state and local agencies), the federal government provides more generous work-life balance policies (Durst, 1999). However, the bulk of available research on policy uptake has been conducted in the private context and many of the models of uptake have consequently been based in that context as well. In order to understand whether findings from private sector-based work-life balance research are useful for informing public sector-based research, it is helpful to elucidate the state of work-life balance policies in both. This will both clarify that the federal government is somewhat exceptional in terms of work-life balance policy use and validate that the differences between the two sectors are not so extreme as to preclude the use of private sector-based research to support and inform this research.

Some aspects of work-life balance are comparable across sectors. For example, Saltzstein, Ting and Saltzstein (2001) note that the private sector was close to catching up with the federal government in the provision of work-life balance policies by the early 1990s.

However, this general statement does not provide specific information about how close the two sectors have come in terms of use of work-life balance policies. This can only be determined by a comparison of actual uptake of these policies by employees in the different sectors. Understanding whether the state of work-life balance policies in the public and private sectors is similar is difficult because little comparative research has been done on the topic of work-life balance and there appears to be no work clarifying whether uptake rates are comparable. Making a properly designed comparison would be fairly complicated due to the extreme variety of work done across the sectors and the variation in available policies in the private sector across different organizations. Instead, a rough comparison using separate data sources will have to suffice.

According to the United States Office of Personnel Management (United State OPM, 2011), 54 percent of the federal employees surveyed make use of at least one work-life balance policy. As discussed previously, there are multiple definitions of what constitutes a work-life balance policy and no one definition is widely employed in academic literature. While Simkin and Hillages' (1992) definition emphasizes integration of work and family. It is not particularly detailed, and fails to explain the mechanisms for integration. Estes and Michael (2005) provide more specific parameters for what constitutes a work-life balance policy, characterizing work-life balance policies as being directed toward providing organizationally-based support for care of one's dependents, flexible work options, and leave for family or personal reasons. Organizations provide their own individual policies within these parameters. Care for dependents (children or elders) is addressed in a variety of ways, including support groups, provider lists, and facilities within or outside the workplace. Flexible work options can refer to the timing of work (alternative work schedules) and the location of work (telework). Leave for family or

personal reasons includes policies regarding maternity and paternity leave and personal time off.

Some scholars would include vacation leave in that category (Brown, Bradley, Lingard,

Townsend and Ling, 2010). The federal survey findings indicate that 33 percent of respondents

have used alternative work schedules, 29 percent have been enrolled in a health and wellness

program, 13 percent have taken part in an employee assistance program, 3 percent have used

child care programs and 2 percent have used elder care programs (United States Office of

Personnel Management, 2011).

Blair-Loy and Wharton (2002) conducted a study of professionals and managers in a

large, international, and decentralized finance company. Although the data was collected in

1999, this organization still acts as a useful point of comparison because it is large and

decentralized like the federal government. The authors found that 41 percent of the sample had

used or was at the time of the survey using at least one work-life balance policy. Unfortunately,

while questions concerning satisfaction with work-life balance policies have been included in

federal human resources surveys for many years, questions concerning actual use across the

federal government were not included until 2011 hindering the accuracy of the comparison. It is

important to also note that the finance company is a single, albeit international, organization

engaging in one particular type of work. The federal government engages in many diverse types

of work in the service of many missions, and is made of many different agencies. However, the

2011 federal employee percent of use, 54 percent, is slightly higher than the use rate reported by

the private finance company, suggesting that public sector employees may use work-life balance

policies at higher rates than those in the private sector.

According to Mastracci (2012), working mothers at the federal level spend less time on

caregiving than their private-sector counterparts, possibly indicating that these women's jobs

allow less non-work time for caregiving purposes. The federal government may have adopted expansive policies as a response to an issue that is more problematic among its workers than it is among workers in the private sector. The slightly higher use rate in the federal government, though small, is indicative that something about the federal government context for work-life balance policy use is exceptional. Understanding what mechanisms influence federal employees to use work-life balance policies at a higher rate has the potential to both inform academic theory and also spur practical changes in public and private organizations, creating more effective implementation strategies that can help to increase use.

2. **Organizational advantages of work-life balance policies**

In order for work-life balance policies to find wide support and adoption, employers must perceive the policies as beneficial to their interests, and there is a considerable amount of academic research that supports the idea that these policies are indeed beneficial for employers that choose to adopt them. Lambert (2000) finds that simply having a work-life benefits package makes workers view their organization as more supportive. These employees are more likely to provide their employer with suggestions for improvement and help other employees with their work. In a comprehensive literature review on this subject, Kossek and Ozeki (1999) conducted a meta-analysis of research concerning work-life balance policies and six work outcomes: performance, turnover, absenteeism, organizational commitment, job involvement and burnout. The authors conclude that, though the results were not uniformly in favor of work-life balance policy efficacy, they are, "cautiously optimistic that policies do make a difference" (1999, p. 25). Kossek and Ozeki encourage employers to innovate in order to create a workplace that better facilitates addressing both work and family needs, particularly

because failure to do so can have negative consequences in the form of increased turnover

intentions, care-oriented absences, and lower commitment to the organization or career (1999).

In their review of the literature on the effects of work-life balance policies on

organizational outcomes, Lazar et al. (2010) found some support for increases in productivity, a

heightened ability to attract highly qualified job candidates, and better retention rates.

Beauregard and Henry (2009), however, found that there is insufficient support in the literature

for claims of increased productivity and suggest that the case for implementing such policies

should be reframed. The relationship between work-life balance policies and productivity

appears to be one of the more prominent unsettled questions in work-life balance research.

3.   **Work-life balance policies in the federal government**

The first work-life balance initiatives were introduced into the federal government

during the late 1970s. In their article concerning barriers to implementation of such policies in

the federal workplace, Newman and Mathews (1999) name the 1978 Federal Employees Flexible

and Compressed Work Schedule Act and the 1978 Federal Employees Part-time Career

Employment Act as the formal introduction of work-life balance policies at the federal level.

Ezra and Deckman (1996) provide a more detailed look at early efforts to implement work-life

balance policies, highlighting the experimental use of flextime in the Bureau of Indian Affairs

and the Social Security Administration during the early 1970's. The authors also note the

importance of the Trible amendment, which allowed appropriated funds to be used for childcare

facilities for federal employees.[1] As part of the National Performance Review, President Clinton

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[1] The Trible Amendment permits the General Services Administration to use space in federal
buildings for childcare facilities, and dictated that these facilities have at least 50% enrollment by
children of federal employees. The Trible Amendment specifically referred to use of existing
available space in federal buildings for childcare facilities. The Comptroller General later
expanded the definition of 'available space' to include acquiring or building space.

asked agencies to update old policies and establish new ones in order to better support work-life balance (Ernita & Park, 2009). More recently, the Obama administration publicly encouraged private employers to adopt work-life balance policies. President Obama also addressed work-life balance within the federal government by asking the Office of Personnel Management to expand government-wide work-life balance policies and to experiment with new work-life balance efforts within their particular agency. The American Association of University Women (2011) identifies this promotion of work-life balance policies as fitting within the larger goal of making the federal government a model employer (Marquez, 2009). The federal government has a relatively long and sustained history of supporting work-life balance through formal policies and has continued with that position in recent years (The White House, 2014).

4. **Factors accounting for use of work-life balance policies**

a. **Supervisor support**

Within organizations, supervisors play a meaningful role in mediating employee perceptions and behavior. From organizational commitment to career satisfaction, a considerable amount of research has suggested a relationship between supervisors and a variety of employee's work-related attitudes that impact organizations (Kidd and Smewing, 2001; Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell & Allen, 2007; Smith & Gardner, 2007). This applies to formal organizational policies as well. Though formal policies may be enacted at the organizational level, what actually happens when those policies are implemented and used at the employee level can be very different from the processes or intentions outlined in the formal policy framework (Legge, 1995). Lower-level supervisors can help to effect successful implementation of new organizational policies and strategies, or alternatively obstruct implementation (Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). Work-life balance policy use is no exception.

Even with formal policies present, less tangible dynamics like "work group" norms or behaviors contribute to whether these policies are viewed as being available for use without fear of reprisals (Nippert –Eng, 1995; Lambert, A.D., Marler, J.H., Gueutal, H.G., 2008).

The supervisor is an important component to take into consideration when examining the determinants of work-life balance policy use. Considerable previous research has found that supervisors can act as gatekeepers for work-life balance policy availability and that supervisor support is instrumental in facilitating the use of such policies by employees (Cramer & Pearce, 1990; Daverth, Hyde, & Cassell, 2015; Maxwell, 2005; Mcdonald, Brown, & Bradley, 2005; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Vincola, 1998). Hyman and Summers (2004) identify supervisory discretion over employees' use of work-life balance policies as a problem in the United Kingdom, primarily because managers have not been trained with regard to how the policies should be implemented, suggesting a target for improvement of work-life balance policy uptake.

Various studies posit the importance of organizational environment or work-life balance culture for individual worker's policy use. Both constructs include a variety of constituent components such as human resources managers' beliefs and organizational time demands. Supervisor support is the one component of these constructs that is repeatedly positively linked to work-life balance policy use (McCarthy, Cleveland, Hunter, Darcy & Grady, 2012; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Bruce and Reed (1994) echo the belief that supervisors play a key role in work-life balance policy use specifically in the public sector context and suggest that supervisors are a central mechanism for facilitating employee's work-life balance program use. This research will test Bruce and Reed's assertion, and build on the existing scholarly literature by examining supervisor support alongside senior leader support, and

exploring how supervisor support may or may not vary depending on the agency using multi-level modeling.

      b.   **<u>Senior leader support</u>**

Senior leader support is a less-examined factor within work-life balance policy uptake research. Previous studies have discussed the idea of proximal versus distal organizational support, proximal support being support provided by a direct manager/supervisor, and distal support represented by support from human resources managers or communication of what policies are formally available (Daverth, Hyde, & Cassell, 2016; McCarthy, Cleveland, Hunter, Darcy, & Grady, 2013). Though senior leader support has not been examined as the representation of distal support, some of the currently available research does suggest that senior leader support can have an important role in influencing managers' handling of organizational policies. Specifically, senior leaders can influence how lower-level managers handle and relate information about new strategies (Berson & Avolia, 2004). In a study examining how managers are affected by as well as affect human resource policy implementation, McConville and Holden (1999) found that the implementation of new policies was stressful for managers due to the fact that the managers lacked adequate time and the support necessary to implement these human resource policies effectively. This suggests managers' experiences implementing human resource policies may be improved through increased support from senior leaders. While this research concerning senior leaders and policy implementation suggests the possibility of a similar relationship between senior leaders and work-life balance policy uptake, there is limited research specifically examining this topic.

In a study of senior managers (those managers located within the top 3 levels of employment directly beneath Executive Director), Drew and Murtagh (2005) found that

participants thought that senior manager support for the use of work-life balance policies (leading by example) would play an important role in making these policies usable for lower-level managers and employees. The participants emphasized the importance of senior managers as role models in work-life balance policy use, a perspective echoed in other research concerning the topic of senior leaders and use of these policies (Todd & Binns, 2013).

Support of work-life balance policy use by managers who are not direct supervisors (in this case, human resource managers), conceptualized as an aspect of "organizational level support," has also been linked to employee work-life balance policy use, supporting the assertion that direct supervisor support is not the only form of support that matters (McCarthy et. al, 2016). In an extensive, qualitative study of work-life balance conducted within 6 organizations located in the United Kingdom for the Institute for Employment Studies, Kodz, Harper and Dench (2002) found that employees were aware of and affected by senior leaders' lack of genuine support for work-life balance. They concluded:

> Senior managers themselves are possibly unaware of, or under-estimate, the influence of their behaviour in shaping subordinates' understanding of their working environment and the values of the organisation. Senior staff are associated with role models of success. Thus their disregard for, or lack of interest in work-life balance principles 'sets the standard' (p. 76).

Understanding the extent to which senior leader support plays a role in work-life balance uptake for federal government employees will contribute to the understanding of work-life balance uptake in the context of the American public sector more generally.

c.   **Types of work-life balance policies**

Though the existing research suggests supervisor and senior leader support may be related to work-life balance policy uptake, there is little empirical evidence available examining variation in uptake of particular types of work-life balance policies. Previous research has instead mainly examined individual policies or individual policy types in relation to work-life conflict or balance (Julien, Somerville, & Culp; 2011). Work-life balance policies are not a monolith and from a practical perspective these policies have very different characteristics. For example, telework involves an employee being physically absent from the office, while health and wellness programs might involve formally-organized group walks during lunch periods. Leave policies (such as maternity or paternity leave) involve an employee being absent from the workplace for a period of time. This makes use of leave policies highly visible to coworkers and supervisors because the user is physically absent and other employees may be required to take on extra work to compensate for the user's absence. Kirby and Krone (2002) found in their interview-based research that participants focused primarily on family leave (maternity and paternity) and part-time work when discussing work-life balance policies, despite the presence of flexible work schedules and dependent care. In these interviews, some participants who did not use family leave resented those who used the policies because the time away was perceived as a type of non-merit based reward.

As noted in the literature review, scholars have developed a variety of classification schemes based on the different characteristics of work-life balance policies (McDonald, Brown, and Bradley, 2005; Neal, Chapman, Ingersoll-Dayton & Emlen, 1993). As a result of these varied characteristics, supervisor support and senior leader support may interact with different types of policies in different ways or may matter more or less in the uptake of the different types

of policies. In an effort to recognize and account for the diverse policies and the potential for differing relationships between supervisor/senior leader support and use of the policies while still maintaining a degree of parsimony in this research, the work-life balance policies examined will be grouped according to Bardoel, Tharenou and Moss' (1999) system of classification. The grouped policies will, in turn, become dependent variables. Telework and alternative work schedules fall into the "flexible working conditions" category, child and elder care benefits fall into the "child and dependent care" category, and health and wellness, as well as employee assistance programs fall into the "information services and personnel policies" category.

   d. **<u>Hypotheses</u>**

   The first group of policies, labeled "flexible working conditions" by Bardoel, Tharenou and Moss' (1999), includes telework and alternative work schedules. These policies involve deviating from the normal schedule of being present in the office between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. In this case, uptake of the policies is highly visible, in that those employees who make the choice to use them are not physically present at some point during normal work hours. The altering of standard work arrangements to accommodate an employee's home life (the 'life' aspect of work-life balance) and the resulting deviation from the norm is readily apparent to coworkers and supervisors. Cohn (2000) explains that workers who are different, or whose behavior lies outside of workplace norms experience negative treatment from coworkers (or even supervisors) because of their failure to fit within the norm.

There is evidence that use of certain work-life balance policies evinces negative attitudes toward those that make use of these policies, especially policies that are perceived to involve an undesirable side effect (like being absent from the office during normal working hours). In their study of work-life balance policies within a governmental organization, Kirby and Krone (2002)

found the discourse surrounding the use of non-universal (meaning not automatically provided to all workers such as benefits directed toward parents) benefits that removed the user from the office to be marked primarily by resentment and perceptions of unfairness on behalf of those that do not use the policies. McDonald, Brown and Bradley (2005) use the term "backlash" to describe the phenomenon of co-worker resentment towards those who use work-life balance policies.

In work groups, supervisors can influence workers' emotions, suggesting they may also be able to encourage positive or mitigate negative emotions workers may have in regard to the use of work-life balance policies (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). The degree of visibility that goes along with the use of policies in the flexible working conditions category and the potential for perceived inequitable treatment on the part of coworkers make signals of support from senior leaders and supervisors potentially vital for making the policies usable.

H1: Supervisor support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of flexible working conditions work-life balance policies

H2: Senior leader support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of flexible working conditions work-life balance policies

The use of child or elder care (policies that fall into the "child and dependent care" category) represents a similar, if less noticeable, violation of professional norms in that use of these policies can still involve the visible incursion of home life into work life. Organizations adopting dependent care policies benefit because their employees are less likely to leave, though benefits to employees are not clear (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002; Caillier, 2013). Making use of benefits such as bringing children to on-site child care facilities or receiving reimbursement for elder or child care costs may, like the use of leave benefits, engender feelings of unfairness on the part of co-workers who do not need these policies but view them as holding

value for which they are not similarly compensated (Kirby and Krone, 2011; McDonald, Brown and Bradley, 2005). Use of these policies is arguably not as visible as is use of policies in the flexible working conditions category. Coworkers may be aware an employee is receiving reimbursement for elder care as a result of small talk or see a fellow employee dropping their child off at the on-site childcare facility but no recurrent physical absence from the workplace during normal work hours is involved.

Lessened visibility with regard to use does not mean supervisor and senior leader support have no importance for child and dependent care policy use however. The life circumstances that create the need to use child and dependent care policies can also alter how an employee is perceived in the workplace. Watts (2009) describes employees being aware that becoming a mother changes how coworkers and supervisors view the new parent. Specifically, new mothers are viewed as less serious about their career by supervisors and coworkers and can be "punished" in the workplace (something Watts says has been found in previous studies as well). Rudman and Mescher (2013) explain that men who request family leave suffer consequences as well in that they are viewed negatively as workers. Similarly, employees who are subject to work interruptions due to elder caregiving responsibilities receive lower performance appraisals, experience increased stress, and in the case of men who take leave for elder care purposes, are viewed as less altruistic (Kim, Ingersoll-Dayton and Kwak; 2013; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003). The choice to use caregiver-oriented work-life balance policies, even those that are not glaringly visible in the workplace, is a choice to present oneself as an employee who has important outside responsibilities that may compete with one's commitment to the organization. For employees considering use of these policies, senior leader and supervisor support for work-life balance may mitigate their concerns about coworker backlash and potential negative impacts to their career.

H3: Supervisor support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of child and dependent care work-life balance policies

H4: Senior leader support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of child and dependent care work-life balance policies

Work-life balance policies that fall into the information services and personnel policies category (health and wellness and employee assistance programs) present a relatively low degree of home intrusion into the workplace. This is partially a result of low visibility. Employee assistance is very low visibility due to the private nature of the services involved and to the fact that confidentiality is emphasized in the administration of employee assistance programs (United States OPM, 2017). The Department of Health and Human Services (2015) lists services such as counseling, legal help, and mental health services as part of employee assistance programs and they emphasize the importance of protecting employee privacy in procuring these services.

Health and wellness policy use can be visible if a seminar or exercise activity is integrated into the workday but the nature of the policy is a bit different than other work-life balance policies in that there is an apparent benefit to the organization. Employers implement these policies in order to mitigate health care costs and to decrease absenteeism through improved workforce health. Because the employer benefits, it is in the employer's interest to encourage and normalize participation in health and wellness programs (Berry, Mirabito, & Braun, 2010). Caperchione, Reid, Sharp, and Stehmeier (2015) note that policy use can depend on individual interest: "Employees themselves may vary greatly in terms of physical fitness interests and needs." They also found that non-management participants believed that managerial flexibility (in terms of allowing time to participate in health and wellness programs) could help those who did show interest in policy use (p. 7). Overall, what literature is available

on this topic suggests that senior leader support and supervisor support should be important for the use of policies within the information services and personnel policies category.

H5: Supervisor support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of information services and personnel policies.

H6: Senior Leader support will be related to an increased likelihood of use of information services and personnel policies.

e. **Control variables**

A well-known and widely-referenced piece of public administration literature, Lowi's (1972) framework of administrative structure, is also found in the work-life balance literature. Lowi created a typology of agencies based on the type of policies they administer: regulatory, redistributive, distributive and constituent. He suggested that the kind of work an agency does has consequences for the policies and culture of the agency itself. In a study of local government agencies, McCurdy, Newman and Lovrich (2002) found that agencies that fell into the distributive category were less likely to adopt work-life balance policies while agencies that fell into an indeterminate category (not readily identifiable as distributive, redistributive or regulatory) were more likely to adopt work-life balance policies.

In another article examining the relationship between career opportunities and agency type in Florida, Newman (1994) found behavior and agency type to be related, explaining, "the Florida findings suggest that organizational behavior is determined by agency type; that is, the nature of bureaucracy is shaped by the type of policies administered" (p. 282). The authors connect these findings to previous research that has indicated that women tend to be more risk-averse. This, in turn, leads them to jobs that are viewed as socially appropriate for women. These jobs are often marked by a requirement for good interpersonal skills and engagement in emotional labor (Croson & Gneezy, 2009; Meier, Mastracci & Wilson, 2006; Stivers, 2000).

Women's attraction to jobs with these requirements can perhaps be linked to an increased representation of women in mid- and upper-level positions within redistributive agencies, agencies whose work often involve these particular skillsets (Kelly and Newman, 2001). The greater representation of women in such agencies can facilitate an acceptance of policies that are viewed as primarily intended for women. Kelly and Newman (2001) support this, finding a connection between public agency type at the state level and acceptance of affirmative action policies, a category within which they include work-life balance policies. Newman found that redistributive agencies included more women in upper-level management positions and displayed the greatest opportunity for promotion from within the agency itself while regulatory agencies had similar numbers of men and women in upper-level management and distributive agencies had fewer women than men in these positions.

Though no research has been done directly relating the use of work-life balance policies to agency type, Newman's work suggests that redistributive agencies may be more likely than the other two types to foster use of work-life balance policies because of the by-the-book behavior and presence of women in upper-level management positions. Previous research has found that women experience more work-life conflict than men and may be more supportive of policy use as a result (Higgins, Duxbury & Lee, 1994).

As noted earlier, work-life balance policies have a history of being associated primarily with women. Though work-life balance scholars have begun to abandon this perspective, many organizations and workers have not. Kanter (1977) advanced the idea that the number of women in an organization mattered for how women are viewed within that organization. On a general level, research has documented how organizational demographics such as gender composition affect work behaviors (Pfeffer, 1983; Mowday & Sutton, 1993). Thus, the number of women in

an organization may be related to how work-life balance policies are perceived and whether or not one chooses to use them. Interview subjects in Lewis' (1997) study of three different English organizations of varying sizes, including one public sector organization, suggest men working in organizations with a large proportion of employees who are men may not feel that the policies are meant for them and instead view them as intended for women. However, as previously noted, women are still more likely to use work-life balance policies.

Researchers have found size of the organization to be positively related to the number of work-life balance policies made available (Durst, 1999; Osterman, 1995; Galinsky & Bond, 1998; Roberts, 2000). Smaller organizations, or in the case of the federal government, agencies, may not be able to allow employees to take advantage of policies that involve scheduling shifts or that support group health initiatives simply due to their smaller size. Smaller organizations may not have as much demand or a diverse enough group of employees to spur adoption of work-life balance policies. As a result, the number of employees will be included as a control in this research.

Due to variations in the ability of workers to make use of work-life balance policies (e.g. low-wage workers, for example, are less able to take unpaid leaves), pay category will be used as a control (Lambert & Haley-Lock. 2004). Location, headquarters or field office, will also be used as a control due to reporting by the Office of Personnel Management that pointed to less availability of these policies in field offices compared to headquarters (United States Merit Systems Protection Board, 2000).

Gender has been widely studied both as a determinant of policy use and in terms of how it relates to career consequences associated with work-life balance policy use. Though these policies are now more inclusive of all genders (with the exception of gender-specific maternity

leave), actual use does not necessarily reflect this. For example, existing research has found women felt work-life balance policies were useful whereas men did not, and women used more policies than men (Martin, Seymour, Courage, Godbey & Tate, 1988; Smith & Gardner, 2007). Men have also been connected to a lower likelihood of work-life balance policy use multiple reasons, including the expectation of negative consequences, a fear of stigmatization for violating perceived gender norms, and the perception that work-life balance policies are tacitly directed toward women (Allen & Russell, 1999; Bailyn, Fletcher, & Kolb, 1997; Bittman, Hoffman & Thompson, 2004; Kim, 1998; Scheibl & Dex, 1998; Smithson & Stokoe, 2005; Tremblay, 2004; Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson & Siddiqi, 2013).

Two other concepts that relate to workers' determinations to use work-life balance policies are procedural justice and distributional justice. Though often presented along with other types of organizationally-based justice (interpersonal and informational justice, for example), Loi, Yang, and Diefendorff (2009) characterize procedural and distributive justice as separate, "structural forms of justice, the perceptions of which tend to be stable over time" (p. 771). Tata and Bowes-Sperry (1996) characterize procedural justice as being, "concerned with the fairness of the process used to decide the distribution of outcomes," and distributive justice as, "concerned with the fairness of outcomes" (1996, p. 1327).

Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman and Garden (2005) note the importance of perceived outcome favorability, a concept related to distributive justice (van den Bos, Vermunt, and Wilke, 1997), to achieving comfortable work-life balance. They suggest that these concepts may mediate the relationship between the organization and employee use of work-life balance policies (2005, p. 14). The general reasoning behind this theory is fairly straightforward: employees who do not trust the organization to apply policies fairly may not be willing to take

advantage of work-life balance policies because they are uncertain about the possible ramifications of such use. Though sometimes viewed as a group-level characteristic, most discussions of procedural justice and distributive justice have taken an individual-level view of this concept and connected individual perceptions of procedural justice to individual behavior within the organization (Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998). In a review of more recent work on procedural justice, Konovsky (2000) identifies multiple perspectives concerning antecedents and effects of procedural justice that take an individual-level view of the concept.

The length of time one works for an employer has been viewed as an indicator of job security which has in turn been associated with work-life balance and is recognized as a necessary control (White, Hill, McGovern, Mills & Smeaton, 2003; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). Thus, tenure working for the government will be included as a control. Similarly, age has been found to affect work-life balance and will be included as a control (Dex & Bond, 2005). Models and measures are discussed in the next section.

III. CONCEPTUAL MODEL, QUANTITATIVE DATA, AND METHODS

The research for this dissertation was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Though the quantitative data can describe the nature and strength of relationships between variables, it cannot necessarily answer the question of 'why' the relationships exist. Understanding the dynamics that underlie the relationships between senior leader support, supervisor support and the categories of dependent variables are especially important for crafting strategies to increase uptake, so from a practical standpoint, the qualitative section of this research is of the greatest interest. Creswell (2009) discusses the strengths of mixed methods research (such as the ability to triangulate data) and highlights the procedure that was used in this research, sequential explanatory strategy. This strategy involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data first and allowing the results of the first stage to influence what topics or questions are subsequently investigated in the second stage, a process he calls "embedding" (2009, p. 208).

The data analysis portion of this research included four steps: 1) exploratory data analysis to develop models, 2) quantitative analysis using these models, 3) qualitative analysis based on the findings of the quantitative analysis, and 4) triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative findings including the possibility of revisiting of the quantitative data based on the outcomes of triangulation. Each of the stages is fully outlined in detail in the remainder of this section, including information about data sources and an illustration of a conceptual model that guides the research.
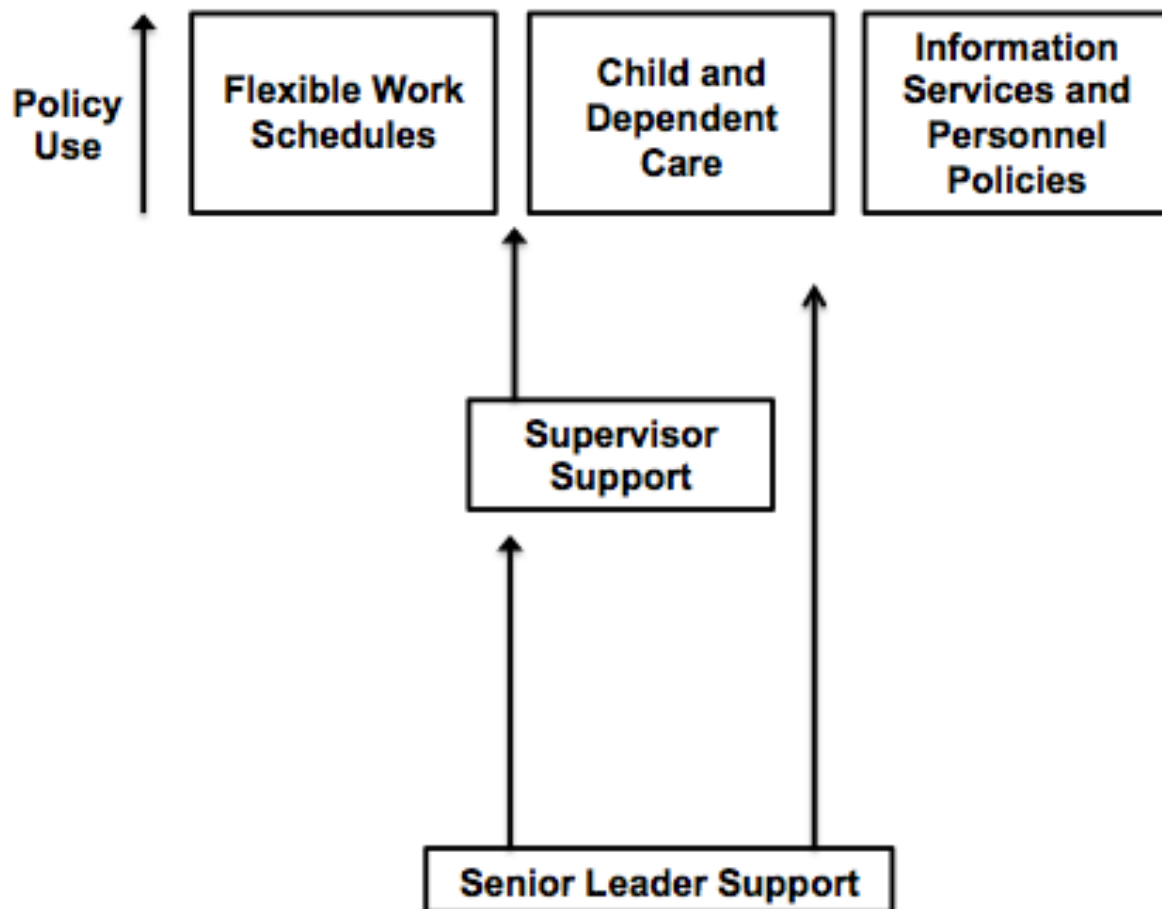
Figure 1. Conceptualization of the relationship among senior leader support, supervisor support

and work-life balance policy use

A.   **Quantitative Data and Analysis**

The 2011 Federal Viewpoint Survey provided the quantitative data for this research. The survey was conducted during April and May 2011 in order to provide federal agencies with information about employees' perceptions of their organizations. The instrument was administered via the Internet with recruitment taking place through e-mail notifications and multiple follow-up reminders. Paper instruments were provided to a small number of employees who were not able to access the Internet version. The 226,376 respondents include only full-time, permanent employees. Both large agencies/departments and small agencies (a total of 54) were included in the survey, representing 97 percent of the executive branch. A complete list of participating agencies, departments and small agencies can be found in Appendix A.

The survey was administered to a total of 540,727 employees, with 266,376 completing the survey for a response rate of 49.3 percent. The data are weighted with a base weight computed for every participant and the weights were first adjusted for non-response based on demographic categories and further adjusted using ranking (United States OPM, 2011). Additional data on the organizational characteristics of agencies included in the analysis was derived from the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) via FedScope, which, "allows customers to access and analyze the most popular data elements from OPM's Enterprise Human Resources Integration-Statistical Data Mart" (OPM, 2012). Both the size of agencies and the gender composition of agencies' workforces were derived directly from the FedScope database.

1.   **Models**

Before outlining specific models for use in this research, some exploratory data analysis was conducted in order to clarify how many models were necessary for the dependent variables used in the analysis. A total of 3 dependent variables representing 6 different work-life

balance policies were used in the analysis: flexible working conditions policies (comprised of

telework and alternative work schedules), child and dependent care policies (comprised of

childcare and elder care), and information services and personnel policies (which includes

employee assistance programs and health and wellness programs). The choice to group policies

is based on the categories delineated in the literature (specifically, the comprehensive typology

created by Bardoel, Tharenou and Moss [1999]) and an interest in creating a parsimonious

research design (Neal, Chapman, Ingersoll-Dayton, & Emlen, 1993; McDonald, Brown, &

Bradley, 2005). The discussion of the dependent variables will be based on these models:

> *Use of Flexible Working Conditions= f[Senior Leader Support, Supervisor Support, Type of Agency, Supervisory Status, Gender, Gender Composition of Agency's Employees, Size of Agency, Headquarters or Field, Age, Pay Category, Tenure in the Federal Government, Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Agency Random Effects]*

> *Use of Child and Dependent Care= f[Senior Leader Support, Supervisor Support, Type of Agency, Supervisory Status, Gender, Gender Composition of Agency's Employees, Size of Agency, Headquarters or Field, Age, Pay Category, Tenure in the Federal Government, Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Agency Random Effects]*

> *Use of Information Services and Personnel Policies= f[Senior Leader Support, Supervisor Support, Type of Agency, Supervisory Status, Gender, Gender Composition of Agency's Employees, Size of Agency, Headquarters or Field, Age, Pay Category, Tenure in the Federal Government Supervisory Status, Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Agency Random Effects]*

a. **Dependent variables**

The dependent variables are: flexible working conditions (dichotomous),

child and dependent care (dichotomous), and lastly, information services and personnel policies

(dichotomous). This involved transforming ordinal data into binary variables, a recognized

approach to handling ordinal data in quantitative social science research that avoids the

inefficiency and interpretation issues that come with using multinomial logistic modeling (Anderson, 2004). Collapsing the ordinal responses into a binary variable did involve some loss of nuance but this choice best serves the primary aim of this research which is to understand differences between those employees that feel support from supervisors and senior leaders as compared to those that do not while maintaining a desired level of parsimony and scope. The first model uses flexible working conditions as the dependent variable, measured by two questions; one concerning telework use and one concerning alternative work schedule use. The first question reads as follows in the survey: "Please select the response category that best describes your current telework situation." Unlike the other types of work-life balance programs in the Viewpoint survey, the telework question permits a range of responses, including: 1 (*I telework 3 or more days per week*), 2 (*I telework 1 or 2 days per week*), 3 (*I telework, but no more than 1 to 2 days per week*), 4 (*I telework very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis*), 5 (*I do not telework because I have to be physically present on the job [e.g., law enforcement officers, park rangers, security personnel]*), 6 (*I do not telework because I have technical issues [e.g., connectivity, inadequate equipment] that prevent me from teleworking*), 7 (*I do not telework because I did not receive approval to do so, even though I have the kind of job where I can telework*), and 8 (*I do not telework because I choose not to telework*). Those who answered that they do not telework because they must be present, have technical issues or did not receive approval are excluded from the analysis because those who choose to or not to telework of their own volition are of primary interest. A dichotomous variable, 1 (*use*) and 0 (*do not use*) represents the remaining categories.

Use of alternative work schedules is the second piece comprising the flexible working conditions dependent variable. Alternative work schedules are unique because they allow the

most flexibility in terms of integrating attention to personal needs and responsibilities into a work schedule. Unlike telework, which still requires employees to work normal hours but from an offsite location, use of an alternative work schedule permits employees to address a variety of personal needs during what would normally be working hours. It is also the most widely-adopted type of work-life balance policy available, making alternative work schedules particularly interesting (Kemske, 1998; Matos & Galinsky, 2012). Use of alternative works schedules was measured using the question, "Do you participate in the Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)?" The question employs the following response categories: 1 (*Yes*), 2 (*No*), and 3 (*Not available to me*). Respondents who answered with, "Not available to me" are excluded from the analysis, leaving a dichotomous variable. If a respondent responded positively to either the telework question or the alternative work schedule question (regardless of their response to the other constituent question), they fall into the '1' response category for the variable. Respondents who provided a '0' response to both questions, or responded '0' to one question and had a missing response to the other question are counted as '0'. This is primarily because a '0' response to one of the two policy questions indicates that the respondent chose not to make use of at least one policy, and helps to ensure that a great deal of data is not lost due to missing responses.

The second model will incorporate both types-child and elder-or dependent-care benefits (McDonald, Brown & Bradley, 2005). Like the other variables, this is assessed on the basis of two questions about the two policies grouped together. The questions measuring use of each policy are as follows: "Do you participate in the Child Care Programs (for example, daycare, parenting classes, parenting support groups)?" and, "Do you participate in the Elder Care Programs (for example, support groups, speakers)?" The answer categories for both questions are as follows: 1 (*Yes*), 2 (*No*), and 3 (*Not available to me*). As with the other dependent

variables, respondents that answered with, "Not available to me" are excluded from the analysis. The responses to each of these questions are coded 1 for yes, 0 for no. If a respondent answered 'yes' to either question, they are coded at '1', regardless of their response to the other question. Those who have a '0' response to both questions, or responded '0' to one question and have a missing response to the other question are coded as '0'.

The last model includes employee assistance programs and health and wellness programs. These policies are combined because they both fall into the category of information services and personnel policies (Bardoel, Tharenou, and Moss, 1999). The questions measuring the use of each policy are as follows: "Do you participate in health and wellness programs (for example, exercise, medical screening, quit smoking programs)?" and "Do you participate in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?" The answer categories for both questions are: 1 (*Yes*), 2 (*No*), and 3 (*Not available to me*). The responses to each of these questions are coded "1" for yes and "0" for no. A '1' response to either question is coded as a '1', two '0's or a '0' and a missing response are coded as '0'.

b.   **Independent variables**

The independent variables used in each of the models are derived from the Federal Viewpoint Survey. Senior leader support for work-life balance programs was measured using the question, "Senior leaders demonstrate support for Work/Life programs," which has the following response categories: 5 (*Strongly agree*), 4 (*Agree*), 3 (*Neither agree nor disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 1 (*Strongly disagree*), and X (*Dot not know*). Those respondents who choose "Do not know" are excluded from the analysis. Senior leader support is collapsed into a dichotomous variable. This is primarily because the research does not focus on how the intensity of the perceived supervisor or senior leader support relates to work-life balance policy use, but instead

on how supervisor and senior leader support relate to different kinds of work-life balance policies. Those respondents who chose the middle response category of 3 (*Neither agree nor disagree*) were included in the analysis. The decision to include the middle category reflects both the conscious choice to conserve data while pursuing an understanding of how having or not having support relates to use of particular categories, and existing research concerning how respondents interpret and employ this neutral response. Though midpoint categories are included in many large surveys, respondents sometimes choose this response when it does not accurately reflect their opinion for two reasons: to avoid the cognitive effort needed to process their actual opinion or in order to avoid choosing the 'I don't know' category (in this case, *no basis to judge)* and thereby admitting that they do not have an opinion on a relevant issue (Sturgis, Roberts and Smith, 2014). Similarly, Stone (as cited in Kulas & Stachowski, 2013) described the vague implications of choosing the middle response category, saying it "can reflect a decision not to prefer either end, a lack of information by which to choose, or an unwillingness to commit to a definitive response" (p. 212). However, this is an ongoing debate, and other research supports the midpoint category as an accurate reflection of respondent's ambivalence or neutrality (Nowlis & Dhar, 2002). Simplifying the independent variables while conserving data facilitates the use of multiple models that examine individual work-life balance policies while maintaining the most clear, efficient, and complete research design that still fulfills the primary aim of the research. The categories are 1 (comprised of the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses) indicating senior leader support, and 0 (comprised of 'Neither agree nor disagree' 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree'), indicating the absence of senior leader support. Those in the 'No basis to judge' category are excluded from the analysis (n= 17,672).

Coded in the same dichotomous fashion as senior leader support, supervisor support for work-life balance is measured by the question, "My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues," which has the following response categories: 5 (*Strongly agree*), 4 (*Agree*), 3 (*Neither agree nor disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 1 (*Strongly disagree*), and X (*Do not know*) Those respondents who chose "Neither agree nor disagree" are included with 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' in the category coded '0'. Those who responded with "do not know" are excluded from the analysis (n= 1,567).

c.   **Control variables**

The measure of the gender composition of all the agencies is derived from the FedScope data. The percentage of women employed in the agency (in decimal format) is used as a measure of gender composition because work-life balance policies have a history of being directed toward women and, making them the gender of interest for this research. Agency type is identified using Newman's (1994) categorization of Florida's state agencies, *Congressional Quarterly's Federal Regulatory Directory,* and Lowi's (1972) typology as guidance. The four agency types (regulatory, distributive, redistributive and constituent) are dichotomous variables, with the regulatory variable serving as a comparison category in the analysis. Table IV, Appendix A provides a full accounting of how the agencies in the survey were categorized, as well as information regarding the survey participation rates within each agency.

Supervisory status is measured by the question, "What is your supervisory status?" which has the following response categories: A (*Non-supervisor/Team leader*), B (*Supervisor*), and C (*Manager/Executive*). Each category is coded as a dichotomous variable, with the non-supervisory variable acting as the comparison category.

Gender is measured by the question: "Are you:" with response categories of A (*Male*) and B (*Female*). Due to a primary interest in women and work-life balance policy use, the measure is recoded so that women are coded as "1" and men as "0".

Procedural justice is a scale variable, measured by three questions, "I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal," "Arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated," and "Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerated." The response categories for each question are the same Likert-type scale: 5 (*Strongly agree*), 4 (*Agree*), 3 (*Neither agree nor disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 1 (*Strongly disagree*), and X (*No basis to judge*). The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is 0.84. The measures included in this scale have been derived from an exploratory factor analysis. Some, but not all, of the scale items come directly from previous literature; all have a theoretical basis as well and were chosen to be included in the exploratory factor analysis based on that. The first question concerning disclosure of violations has been used to measure managerial trustworthiness (Cho & Perry, 2009). Previous research indicates procedural justice is entangled with managerial trust in a complex way, and managerial trust can provide an indirect measure of procedural justice (Chen et al., 2004; Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Korsgaard & Roberson, 1995). Tyler and Blader (2000) identify neutrality as a central aspect of procedural justice, defining it as making decisions, "in an unbiased manner based on facts and rules, not personal opinions or preferences," providing support for the second two survey items included in the scale (2000, p. 92).

Distributive justice is also a scale variable, measured by six questions: "Promotions in my work unit are based on merit," "In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot improve," "In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way," "Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs," "Employees are recognized for providing high quality products and services," and "Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs." The response categories for each question are the same Likert-type scale: 5 (*Strongly agree*), 4 (*Agree*), 3 (*Neither agree nor disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 1 (*Strongly disagree*), and X (*No basis to judge*). The first measure, "Promotions in my work unit are based on merit," has been used in previous research (though worded slightly differently) to measure distributive justice (Aquino, 1995). Because the data source was not designed specifically for measuring procedural and distributive justice, many of the measures employed to create scales for both of these variables are extremely similar but not identical to items used to measure procedural and distributive justice in previous research (Loi, Yang, & Diefendorff, 2009). Alexander and Ruderman (1987) identified pay fairness, promotion-performance contingency and sanctions for poor performance as components of their scale measuring distributive justice which aligns with the measures identified for that purpose in this research. All chosen measures have a theoretical basis as well and were chosen to be included in the exploratory factor analysis based on that. The Cronbach's alpha for the distributional justice scale is 0.91.

Both scales are also based on a factor analysis with varimax rotation (N= 198,108). All items presented high loadings (>0.50) on the expected (based on the concepts and definitions of procedural and distributive justice) factor and low cross-loadings on the other factors. A third factor was discarded due to a low Eigenvalue and lack of concept-based relevance. The variables

representing these two individual scales are an average of the responses to the individual questions that constitute that scale. When encountering a missing value, the analysis instead computed and average score based on the available responses in an effort to conserve data.

Age and tenure with government are ordinal variables indicating spans of time rather than specific numbers. The response categories for age are coded as follows: B (*29 and under*), C (*30-39*), D (*40-49*), E (*50-59*) and F (*60 or older*) Government tenure has the following response categories: B (*up to 3 years*), C (*4-5 years*), D (*6-10 years*), E (*11-14 years*), F (*15-20 years*), and G (*more than 20 years*). The categories are each represented by a dummy variable, with the first listed category of each used for the comparison. The choice to break these variables, along with the pay grade variable, into a series of dummy variables was informed by literature suggesting use of work-life balance policies does not increase uniformly with age, pay or time in the organization. Work-life balance policies in the Child and Elder care category, for example, are used when life events create a need. Specifically, those providing elder care are older (roughly fifty-three years old, on average) and may earn more than younger or newer employees earn (Chari, Engberg, Ray & Mehrotra, 2015). This results in an increase in use during middle age, and lower levels of use in younger years, as well as the time period closer to retirement. The individual dummy variables provide a more complete characterization of how the categorical variables and work-life balance policy use relate.[2]

The size of the agency is a continuous variable derived from the Central Personnel Data File via FedScope. The location variable (headquarters vs. field) is coded as a dichotomous variable with 1 representing headquarters and 0 representing field offices. Pay grade is a

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[2] Converting an ordinal variable to individual dummy variables is not a widely adopted practice in the field of public administration. Recognizing that this is a unique choice, and in order to provide full transparency, the models were also run with tenure, age and pay as continuous variables. A table of the results is available in Appendix B.

categorical variable with the following response categories: A (*Federal Wage System*), B (*GS 1-6*), C (*GS 7-12*), D (*GS 13-15*), and E (*SES/SL/ST/Other*). The categories are represented by dummy variables, with the federal wage system acting as the comparison category. Table I provides descriptive statistics for the independent, dependent, and control variables in the model, while a correlation matrix for the independent, dependent, and control variables is available in Table VI, Appendix C.

TABLE I	Independent, Dependent and Control Variable Descriptive Statistics						
	% Responding Affimatively	Frequencies Yes	No			Mean	Sdt. Dev.
Flexible Working Conditions (n=201,428)	67.20%	135,278	66,150	Agency Size (n=266,254)		94,807	78,351
Child and Dependent Care (n=201,763)	4.10%	8,344	193,419	Procedural Justice (n=263,942)		3.59	1.03
Use of Information Services and Personnel Policies (n=224,870)	36.15%	82,434	142,436	Distributive Justice (n=265,249)		3.06	0.97
Supervisor Support (n=187563)	82.80%	155,329	32,234	Proportion of Respondent's Agency's Employees that are Women (n=265,283)		46.0%	0.12
Senior Leader Support (n=180447)	62.50%	112,723	67,724				
Proportion of Respondents that are Women (n=246,889)	47.6%	117,567	129,322				
Holds Non-Supervisory Position (n=248,201)	72.7%	180,546	67,655				
Holds Supervisory Position (n=248,201)	16.8%	41,762	206,439				
Holds Manger/Executive Position (n=248,201)	10.5%	25,893	222,308				
Works in Headquarters (n=245,945)	42.0%	104,472	141,473				
Works in a Redistributive Agency (n=266,376)	27.0%	70,730	195,646				
Works in a Regulatory Agency (n=266,376)	25.0%	66,212	200,164				
Works in a Distributive Agency (n=266,376)	20.0%	54,396	211,980				
Works in a Constituent Agency (n=266,376)	28.0%	75,038	191,338				
Tenure working for the government							
Up to 3 years (n=266,376)	13.9%	37,044	229,332				
4 to 5 years (n=266,376)	7.3%	19,485	246,891				
6 to 10 years (n=266,376)	15.7%	41,838	224,538				
11 to 14 years (n=266,376)	9.4%	24,894	241,482				
15 to 20 years (n=266,376)	10.2%	27,242	239,134				
More than 20 years (n=266,376)	35.8%	95,383	170,993				
Age category							
29 and under (n=266,376)	5.1%	13,626	252,750				
30-39 (n=266,376)	14.4%	38,384	227,992				
40-49 (n=266,376)	26.9%	71,723	194,653				
50-59 (n=266,376)	33.6%	89,474	176,902				
60 or older (n=266,376)	12.0%	32,047	234,329				
Pay category							
Federal Wage System (n=266,376)	3.2%	19,825	246,551				
GS 1-6 (n=266,376)	4.6%	12,178	254,198				
GS 7-12 (n=266,376)	36.0%	95,950	170,426				
GS 13-15 (n=266,376)	41.4%	110,237	156,139				
SES/SL/ST/Other (n=266,376)	7.4%	19,742	246,634				

d. **Analysis**

Multilevel mixed-effects logistic regression is used for the analysis, since the dependent variables are all binary. This choice is based on the need to control for shared variation based on groupings within individual agencies. Grouping based on agency makes sense because employees working within the same agency may share experiences or characteristics that impact use of work-life balance policies and it is important to account for these effects (the data available facilitated this grouping because respondents provided information regarding their agency of employment). The "meqrlogit" command is used in the STATA program because this particular command allows multi-level models that involve wide variations in the number of respondents within grouping variable groups to converge (in this case, there is wide variation in the number of respondents within each agency, which is the grouping variable) (Statacorp, 2013). Unfortunately, use of the meqrlogit command precludes the use of weighting, so no weights were used in this analysis.

The federal government remains on the forefront of work-life balance policy provision in the United States. Simply having such policies is not enough to benefit workers or employers, as the policies must be used to be effective. This research will attempt to clarify whether the federal government's efforts to support work-life balance through a variety of formal policies have created the necessary environment to foster use or whether their efforts may need to be re-directed in the future.

IV. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results for the categories of policies are reported in Table II, while independent and dependent variable descriptive statistics are reported in Table I to provide a context within which to interpret the results. No goodness of fit statistics are reported because there are currently no acceptable goodness of fit tests available for multilevel logistic models, though statistics scholars are actively pursuing this goal (Perera, Sooriyarachchi, & Wickramasuriya, 2016).

Each of the three dependent variables is dichotomous, indicating use (or lack of use) of a policy or policies in that policy category. Thus, findings for a total of three models are reported, with the following dependent variables: flexible working conditions (dichotomous), child and dependent care policies (dichotomous), and information services and personnel policies (dichotomous). In the subsequent reporting of findings, results are first addressed by policy type and hypothesis; a discussion of the findings in light of relevant literature, organized by independent variable, follows.

TABLE II Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance Policy Use, and Senior Leader Support and Work-Life Balance Policy Use

	Flexible Work Schedules *(n= 185,525)*	Child and Dependent Care *(n=186,093)*	Information Services and Personnel Policies *(n=207,343)*
	Adjusted Odds Ratios	Adjusted Odds Ratios	Adjusted Odds Ratios
Supervisor support	**1.239****	**.905****	**1.075****
Senior leader support	**1.109****	**1.352****	**1.305****
Log of agency size	.943	.965	1.041
Percent of agency's employees that are women	1.807	.263	0.602
Being female	1.6**	1.599**	1.138**
Holds supervisory position	.728**	1.047	1.004
Holds manager-executive position	.655**	.947	1.069**
Holds a non-supervisory position (comparison)			
Works in headquarters	1.267**	1.191**	.965**
Works in field (comparison)			
Works in a constituent agency	.718	1.207	.89
Works in a distributive agency	.726	0.998	.895
Works in a redistributive agency	.491$^+$	1.469	1.028
Works in regulatory agency (comparison)			
Procedural Justice	.994	.892**	.935**
Distributive Justice	.968**	1.244**	1.102**
Tenure working for the government			
Up to 3 years (comparison)			
4 to 5 years	1.011	1.212**	1.078**
6 to 10 years	.983	1.477**	1.152**
11 to 14 years	.994	1.561**	1.296**
15 to 20 years	1..022	1.6**	1.333**
More than 20 years	1.161**	1.656**	1.349**
Age category			
29 and under (comparison)			
30-39	.888**	1.81**	1.132**
40-49	.803**	1.112	1.125**
50-59	.817**	.913	1.059*
60 or older	.706**	.955	.953$^+$
Pay category			
Federal Wage System (comparison)			
GS 1-6	.468**	1.094	.921*
GS 7-12	1.076*	.711**	.834**
GS 13-15	2.107**	.567**	.74**
SES/SL/ST/Other	1.146**	.534**	.598**

**p<.01
 *p<.05
 + p<.10

A.   **Policies**

1.   **Flexible working conditions**

Flexible working conditions is a dichotomous variable representing the use of telework or alternative work schedules. As noted previously, the data was analyzed using the meqrlogit command in Stata, a command that facilitates mixed effects modeling with a binary dependent variable. The likelihood-ratio test comparing this model to an ordinary logistic regression model is highly significant (at the 0.000 level), indicating the necessity of a multilevel model.

As indicated in Table II, Supervisor support is significant at the .000 level as is senior leader support, and both variables correspond to an increase in likelihood of use. This supports the relationships posited in Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. The results of the analysis show that those who indicate supervisor support for work-life balance are 23.9% more likely to use flexible working conditions policies than those who do not, and those who indicate having senior leader support are 10.9% more likely to use flexible working conditions policies.

2.   **Child and dependent care**

Child and dependent care is a dichotomous variable as well and was analyzed using the same meqrlogit command in Stata. The likelihood-ratio test comparing this model to an ordinary logistic regression model is highly significant (at the 0.000 level), indicating the necessity of a multilevel model. Both supervisor support and senior leader support are significant at the .000 level. Reported supervisor support is related to a 10% decreased likelihood of use of child and dependent care, while reported senior leader support is related to a 35.2% greater likelihood of use of child and dependent care. Hypothesis 3 is therefore not

supported, while Hypothesis 4 is supported. Child and dependent care actually displays the greatest increased likelihood in relation to senior leader support of all the dependent variables.

       3.   **Information services and personnel policies**

       Use of information services and personnel policies is also represented by a dichotomous variable and was analyzed using the same meqrlogit command in Stata. As listed in Table II, the likelihood-ratio test comparing this model to an ordinary logistic regression model is highly significant (at the 0.000 level), indicating the necessity of a multilevel model. Both supervisor support and senior leader support are significant at the .000 level. Reported supervisor support is related to an 7.5% increased likelihood of use of information services and personnel policies, while reported senior leader support is related to a 30.5% increase in likelihood of use of information services and personnel policies. Both Hypothesis 5 and, Hypothesis 6 are supported by the results of the analysis.

       Though the conceptual model indicates that the relationship between senior leader support and work-life balance policy use is both direct and mediated by supervisor support, the meqrlogit-based analysis does not permit the inclusion of mediating variables. However, in order to both recognize and address the indirect effect, a causal mediation analysis was conducted using the "paramed" command in Stata. Paramed allows for mediation analysis in models that contain binary independent, mediating, and dependent variables. The indirect effect of senior leader support on flexible working conditions mediated by the presence of supervisor support is an 8% increased likelihood of use that is significant at the .000 level. Similarly, the indirect effect of having senior leader support on child and dependent care mediated by the presence of supervisor support is a 3% increased likelihood of use which is significant at the .000 level. This relationship is surprising based on the model results that showed supervisor support is related to

a decreased likelihood in use. In order to run the paramed analysis, control variables could not be included, so this may account for the divergence from the results in the larger model, and the paramed results should be interpreted with this in mind. Information services and personnel policies do not follow this pattern, as the mediation analysis results are not significant. Though the mediation cannot be included in the multi-level mixed effects logistic regression models, the results of mediation analysis clarify the existence of this relationship as well as the impact.

B.   **Discussion**

The analysis focused on both how supervisor and senior leader support individually relate to use of work-life balance policies and whether type of policy makes a difference for this relationship. This discussion will highlight these variations, offering possible explanations for the differences in light of the available literature while also identifying avenues for further investigation during the subsequent qualitative portion of the research.

While discussing the findings, it is necessary to keep some important limitations in mind. One considerable limitation was the inability to control for whether respondents were married or had children or elderly dependents. Previous research has suggested that marital status is related to one's work-life balance needs and one's choice to make use of work-life balance policies (Goldberg, Greenberger, Koch-Jones, O'Neil, & Hammill, 1989; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). Similarly, work-life balance policy use (especially child and elder care) are logically related to having a child or elderly parent. Unfortunately, the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey does not include questions that pertain to these aspects of home life. Agency categorization provides a second limitation. There is currently no consensus on the appropriate categorization of all the agencies included in this survey, or a single source that categorizes all of these agencies. However, Newman (1994) and Meier (1979) categorize many agencies and the *Congressional*

Quarterly's Federal Regulatory Directory provides a list of all agencies with regulatory responsibilities. Where any agreement existed amongst the three, that category was chosen. Where no agreement existed, Newman's (1994) categorization was given precedence because her scheme was developed and used in a similar gender and work-life balance-oriented context. Meier's (1979) classification was given precedence for those agencies Newman did not categorize. The 2006 *Congressional Quarterly Federal Regulatory Directory* classification was based on an extremely inclusive definition of regulatory, listing all agencies with any regulatory responsibilities as regulatory, so it was only used when neither of the other two sources classified an agency. Lastly the data used for this analysis was collected in 2011, and federal leadership has subsequently changed as a result of the 2016 election. Though the current administration has not issued any formal statements regarding work-life balance initiatives in federal agencies, lower-level shifts that this research cannot address may have occurred.

Though the results of the analyses indicate the expected positive relationship between supervisor support and use of flexible working conditions policies and information services and personnel policies, this was not the case for supervisor support and use of child and dependent care policy use. Senior leader support was, however, related to flexible working conditions policy use, child and dependent care policy use, and information services and personnel policy in the hypothesized fashion.

As noted, the relationship between supervisor support and child and dependent care policy use is significant but negative. One considerable limitation of this data is the inability to account for the respondent's care responsibilities (there was no data available regarding this aspect of the respondents' lives). Therefore it is not possible to control for whether an individual has child or elder care responsibilities at all, which could affect the results because the choice to

use these policies is logically influenced by need (while many respondents may indicate having supervisor support, very few may actually make use of child and elder care policies simply because they do not have child or elder care responsibilities). It is, however, worth noting that senior leader support still displayed a positive, significant relationship with child and dependent care policy use.

Senior leader support displays the smallest increased likelihood of use in relation to flexible working conditions, a larger increased likelihood of use in relation to information services and personnel policy, and the largest increased likelihood of use in relation to child and dependent care policy use. When examined collectively, these results appear to indicate that, of all policies examined, senior leader support is most meaningful in terms of child and dependent care policy use (it is related to a 35.2% increased likelihood of use).

The results confirm previous research finding that supervisor support and senior leader support are indeed related to increased work-life balance policy use. This analysis delves deeper than previous work-life balance research in examining whether the relationship between supervisor support and use or senior leader support and use changes depending on the type of policy. The findings suggest that this is indeed the case, perhaps due to the varying substantive characteristics of the individual policies. As noted, supervisor support is related to the largest increased likelihood of use for flexible working conditions. Senior leader support is related to a smaller, but still increased likelihood. These policies involve physical absence from the workplace during normal working hours, a characteristic that both differentiates them from other work-life balance policies and possibly accounts for the fact that supervisor support displayed the largest increased likelihood of use in relation to flexible working conditions policies.

This could be related to the phenomenon of 'presenteeism' where, according to Rasmussen and Corbett (2008), "it is more a question of being at work than whether the employee is working efficiently" (p. 28). The presenteeism norm also dictates that advancement within an organization is contingent upon coming in early and staying late (Cramer & Pearce, 1990). Supervisors act as the main arbiters of supervisee behavior (a role senior leaders take on indirectly or from a distance), and often play a role in facilitating or preventing career advancement, making it possible that supervisor support is powerful enough to counteract norms that discourage use such as presenteeism. An employee who wants to make use of alternative work schedules risks violating the presenteeism norm and incurring negative career consequences as a result of this choice.

Previous research identifies telework specifically as a challenge to the presenteeism norm with managers apprehensive about trusting employees and in turn refusing requests to telework or making the experience unpleasant for the employee (Rasmussen and Corbett, 2008; Mahler, 2012). Blair-Loy and Wharton (2002) found that organizations offering work-life balance policies benefit from a perception that they are supportive employers while still fostering the presenteeism norm and sending mixed messages regarding use of work-life balance policies. Thus, supervisor support is exceptionally important in terms of making presenteeism-violating work-life balance policies like flexible working conditions policies usable for employees and may explain why this displayed the largest increase in likelihood of use for supervisor support. Senior leader support also displays the expected positive association with use of these policies. The impact is smaller and in light of the presenteeism norm and senior leader's more distant relationship to day-to-day operations, this smaller positive association makes sense.

The child and dependent care variable displayed the only non-positive association among independent and dependent variables in this analysis, between supervisor support and use of that policy category. However, in terms of senior leader support, child and dependent care policies displays the largest increase in likelihood of use of all the policy categories. The negative association between supervisor support and use initially appears to be quite surprising, especially in light of the senior leader support result.

However, there may be an underlying phenomenon driving the negative association. Child and dependent care use is driven by a very specific need that directly conflicts with work - providing required care for a person. Flexible working conditions encompass telework and alternative work schedules both of which may address a variety of personal issues. Use of flexible working conditions policies may also address no particular need at all and instead may be used to address one's personal preferences such as a proclivity for working from a home office rather than in a formal office environment, or a desire to avoid a time-consuming daily commute to the office by shifting one's work schedule.

Information services and personnel policies are similarly nonspecific in terms of the issues they address - health and wellness policies are intended to encourage healthier medical and behavioral choices and not immediate crises and employee assistance policies address a range of personal issues through services like counseling or legal advice. Those employees that have both the need to provide care for a dependent and a supportive supervisor may not choose to take advantage of formal child and dependent care policies. Beauregard (2011) makes the case that parents in the workplace are often viewed as receiving special benefits for which the rest of the employees must contribute effort, time or funding (this is based on Equity Theory [Adams, 1965], wherein individuals compare the effort they expend and the rewards they reap to others in

similar situations). She cites an argument advanced by Burkett (2000) that parent-specific work-life balance policies (such as on-site care facilities) are financially supported by all employees, while white, middle-class parents are the primary users of such policies. The use of policies that are exclusively for caregivers then creates a feeling of unfairness or inequality, so some caregivers avoid use of caregiver-specific policies. This may provide an explanation for the negative relationship between supervisor support and child and dependent care policies. Employees may not feel the need to rely on divisive, formal child and dependent care policies as their supportive supervisors may instead allow them the flexibility necessary to address these needs on an informal basis (choosing to take a sick day off to care for a sick child that is home from school rather than using a government database provided as part of child and dependent care services to locate a temporary babysitter, for example). They may choose to use other less caregiver-specific work-life balance policies such as alternative work schedules to allow them to be available when care is necessary (for example, an employee might choose an alternative work schedule that allows them to come in early and leave early enough to pick their child up after school rather than putting them in a government-run after school day care). A supportive supervisor could actually make their workers feel comfortable choosing to use work-life balance policies that, while more disruptive to traditional workplace norms, allow the employee to take on the work of caring for their own child or elderly parent instead of using child and elder care services to arrange for outside care. Previous research also suggests employees are less comfortable discussing elder care needs in the workplace at all, suggesting that employees may choose to turn to work-life balance policies that are not elder care-specific to avoid discussing this sensitive aspect of their personal lives when they require help with elder care responsibilities (Solomon, 1999).

Flexible working conditions are indeed much more widely used in the federal government than child and elder care policies. Those without supportive supervisors may instead have to resort to use of formal policies in order to assure they can address these important needs when they arise. Anderson, Coffey and Byerly (2002) found evidence to support the view that managerial support, which they deemed an "informal workplace practice" relating to work-life balance, is critical for ongoing integration of life and work beyond just facilitating use of formal policies. Similarly, Behson (2005) found managerial support that involved permitting an employee to address family or personal business when needed can be more important for employee outcomes (such as work-life conflict) than the implementation and use of formal policies.

Whereas supervisor support would be extremely necessary to facilitate alternative or informal methods of addressing child and dependent care needs, senior leader support would be significantly less important because senior leaders do not handle day-to-day decision making regarding individual employees the way supervisors do. Without the ability to influence daily work-life balance decisions, senior leader support would still be necessary for fostering an environment supportive of child and elder care policy use within their agency. Senior leaders are in a position to make decisions regarding the types of child and dependent care services that are made available for the employees in an agency (whether money is directed toward making an on-site child care center available, for example), and those who express outward support for work-life balance may be more likely to ensure that more services are made available to employees (United States OPM, 2013a; United States OPM, 2013b). This higher-level influence and the decision-making responsibilities senior leaders have within an agency may account for the divergent associations between the two independent variables and child and dependent care use.

The ability to make budgetary decisions about whether money will be directed toward building facilities gives senior leaders an exceptional amount of power with respect to the availability of child and dependent care. This may also account for the strongest positive relationship in the analysis, between senior leader support and child and dependent care.

Both senior leader support and supervisor support were positively related to information services and personnel policy use, though like child and dependent care, senior leader support displayed a stronger association. In Berry, Mirabito and Baun's (2010) examination of return on health and wellness programs, they identify the senior leader's role as one of establishing the normality of the health and wellness policy and setting the policy up as a natural part of the organization's culture. Alternatively, supervisors create their own mini-culture with regard to policy accessibility. Some organizations ask managers to take part in programs themselves as a way to encourage employee use. For a policy that is less intrusive to the workplace (like the health and wellness or employee assistance programs included under the umbrella of information services and personnel policies), establishing the policy as a normal and fully-integrated aspect of the organizational culture may be the most important factor for facilitating use, as use does not interrupt or alter day-to-day work routines. Supervisor involvement would only be necessary for providing information about employee assistance services or releasing employees for any health and wellness meetings that might occur at the workplace. Therefore, the establishment of senior leader support for information services and personnel policies could be more necessary for making policies that are less intrusive to normal work schedules widely usable, while supervisor support has a smaller but still positive impact.

The existing academic literature focuses primarily on the importance of supervisor support for facilitating use and may have missed a larger lever organizations could use for this

purpose. With limited funds available, it is critical that organizations direct resources where they are most useful, especially public organizations that regularly struggle to efficiently allocate limited resources. Directing resources toward training senior leaders how to deploy effective strategies for presenting and promoting work-life balance policies within their individual agencies might be the most efficient way to facilitate increased use.

However, this analysis contributes important information that available research has largely overlooked- differences in factors determining policy use based on policy type. For those policies that involve disrupting the normal work schedule (in the case of this analysis, flexible working conditions), supervisor support plays a more important role, perhaps because supervisors are gatekeepers for the use of policies that intrude on the normal work routine. These findings will be further investigated in the qualitative portion of this research.

V. QUALITATIVE DATA AND METHODS

Pursuant to the approach outlined at the outset of the methods section, the next step in Creswell's sequential mixed-methods approach involved allowing the results of the first, quantitative stage to define what topics were subsequently investigated in the second stage via interview questions, a procedure called "embedding" (2009, p. 208). Results from the quantitative component of this research illustrate that the type of policy matters with regard to the relationship between support and uptake. The results also illustrate that, while supervisor support and senior leader support both matter for uptake, the relationships with the three types of policies differ. Based on these results, the qualitative analysis delves into why the type of policy matters and how federal employees experience work-life balance policy requests and use. The qualitative portion of this research is limited in scope, sample and is somewhat exploratory in that the questions are based entirely around further exploring the quantitative findings (Creswell, 2009).

A.   Data and Analysis

1.   Data

Snowball sampling, a procedure outlined by Babbie (2007), was used to identify participants for the qualitative portion of this research. Snowball sampling is specifically necessary for populations that are hard to locate. Both personal and professional acquaintances provided initial contacts in federal agencies. As prescribed by Creswell (2009), for purposes of maintaining validity in the research design, participants were drawn from seven agencies that participated in the Federal Viewpoint Survey.

The ten interviews that provided the data occurred between December of 2013 and December of 2014 via telephone. All interviews were, with the participant's permission and subsequent to their review of an IRB-approved recruitment document (see Appendix D), recorded except one for which the participant requested no recording. Six women and four men participated. More information about participant demographics can be found in Table III. Participants were each asked the same 13 questions, though probes varied depending on the responses of the participant. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix E. The questions are explicit reflections of the quantitative findings in that they aim to clarify why supervisor and senior leader support relate differently to uptake of the various kinds of work-life balance policies. Specifically, the questions focus on what policies the respondents use or are familiar with (which is an indirect indication of the level of importance supervisors and senior leaders place upon these policies), whether they believe their supervisor and senior leaders are supportive of work-life balance, the experiences they have had with work-life balance policies, how one goes about accessing policies, how different policies are promoted, and how individual policies are viewed in their organization. Unfortunately, the qualitative interviews reflect only those policies with which these specific participants are familiar so the interviews provided limited information regarding differences between policies.

2.   **Analysis**

The nine interviews (the tenth participant requested no recording, so there is no transcript, only notes) were professionally transcribed and loaded into a qualitative coding program, TAMS analyzer. The program is basic but provides all of the tools necessary to conduct the analysis required for this research. The coding process included reading through all

TABLE III Interview Participant Demographics			
Participant	**Agency**	**Agency Type**	**Position Titles**
1	DHHS	Redistributive	▪Public Health Advisor
2	OPM	Constituent	▪Director
3	VA	Redistributive	▪Human Resource Specialist
4	NRC	Regulatory	▪Administrative Specialist
5	EEOC	Regulatory	▪District Director
6	DHHS	Redistributive	▪Health Communication Specialist
7	DHHS	Redistributive	▪Program Specialist
8	NTSB	Distributive	▪Regional Administrator
9	DOL	Regulatory	▪Workforce Development Specialist
10	VA	Redistributive	Chose not to share position title

of the interviews and creating a list of initial themes, choosing two interviews to read closely while using the list of themes to code those interviews by hand, revision of the initial list of themes based on this pilot coding in order to produce a set of codes, creating a codebook (see Appendix F), coding all the interviews using the code list and, after completing coding, revisiting each instance of a code to reflect on whether it met the definition of that code. Though a second coder would be useful for validating the coding procedure, this section of the dissertation research is primarily useful for triangulating and further exploring the quantitative findings that supervisor and senior leader support matter for work-life balance policy use. Due to the lack of a second coder, the approach to coding was extremely conservative and the last examination of the individual codes resulted in the elimination of any ambiguous instances of coding. Future research based entirely on a qualitative examination of these topics and questions would benefit from concurrent coding by two or more individuals.

VI. QUALITATIVE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A.   Findings

1.   Supervisor support and senior leader support

Six participants said that they had supervisor support with regard to maintaining work-life balance. The interviews indicated that this support for work-life balance extended to or was expressed via supervisors allowing the use of work-life balance policies, including this statement by participant six:

I would say as far as the supervisors that I worked directly with and their supervisors, I think everyone's very supportive of a work-life balance. I've never had any issue with anything in particular, what I've wanted to do I've been granted....I guess I think they're supportive.

Relatedly, six participants also expressed the opinion that the use of work-life balance policies hinges on the supervisor's discretion. One noted how a supervisor's approach to management affected that supervisor's comfort level with the use of certain policies, saying, "The supervisors who are able to...set up expectations and let them run have little trouble with telework and the supervisors who need to maintain a little more control have more trouble."

None of the participants felt they currently had a supervisor who was not supportive of work-life balance but four did report that they noticed resistance to work-life balance policy use (specifically, alternative work schedule or telework use) amongst older supervisors. The participants linked the resistance to discomfort with not being able to directly supervise employees that were not physically in the office: "My boss was super, super old school, not

super telework friendly...he was not cool with the telework thing. It was after he retired and one of my colleagues was promoted up to boss that I started doing the telework".

Four of the participants linked the reluctance to permit the use of work-life balance policies that remove the employee from the office during normal working hours to older bosses. This reluctance was connected by participants to older supervisor's discomfort with technology, as well as discomfort with the inability to physically supervise employees who are not in the office.

Participant seven reflected on her own supervisor's resistance to telework, finding it marked by both discomfort with the lack of physical supervision and the technology involved in telework:

> For me it's something that can actually help my productivity. So I tried to get him onboard with that. I just think it's a generational thing that a lot of people in that generation think that you have to actually be at work to be doing work. There's no technological prowess among them so I think some of the things that I knew how to do and access from home, they didn't. They didn't even know how to really access their own email from home sometimes.

Participants who act as supervisors themselves echoed this discomfort, specifically highlighting the differing attitudes found in younger employees. Participant eight, whose job was supervisory in nature, expressed such reticence:

> If you're working from your house I'm not quite sure what you're doing because you need a lot of direct supervision. I think we run into that conflict particularly with some of the younger people who think they don't need to be supervised.

However, participant six demonstrated an opposing attitude, highlighting perceived benefits of being physically present:

I'm just wondering because a lot of the people that are around me who are my age don't do [telework]. We like to be physically present. We feel like we learn so much. There's more experienced people, and we like to be here and talk to them with face time.

The issue of expectations concerning one's physical presence in the workplace was also approached from another, more direct angle. Participants were asked whether there was an expectation in their office that they be physically present during normal working hours. Eight of the ten participants responded affirmatively. One participant who felt a presenteeism norm did indeed exist in her department went on to say she couldn't name where that pressure to be present came from. Two of the participants, both of whom had supervisory responsibilities in their positions, affirmed the existence of a presenteeism norm while also suggesting they support keeping employees physically in the office, especially younger employees who require more supervision.

Seven of the participants indicated that they felt senior leaders support work-life balance. Participant eight had direct interactions with a senior leader who had dealt with her own health issues and was very supportive of work-life balance as a result. He pointed to that as influencing his perception of senior leader support:

I think anytime somebody's been through some health-related issue like that they're more sensitive or she'll say, 'If you're off, don't call in on the conference call. If you're off, you're off. Take the day off. Pick up when you get back.'

The non-supervisor participants described both indirect evidence of senior leader support (things like general agency directives to increase use of telework, or instructions to form

committees for work-life balance program development), and direct experiences with senior

leaders that demonstrated support. In response to the question concerning senior leader support,

participant four explained how his agency's regional administrator was spurred by the Federal

Employee Viewpoint Survey to take action on work-life balance, saying that the administrator,

> ….discussed the survey, discussed how we compared with other agencies, how our
>
> regional office compared with the rest of the agency, and that they were going to take an
>
> employee for I think four, maybe six months and his full-time job was to go through the
>
> data and create a working group to work on some of the low points within the region to
>
> improve on the culture.

Participant nine did feel that a senior leader in his organization was not supportive of

work-life balance and that this directly affected the usability of particular policies. In response to

a question regarding whether mid-level supervisors were encouraged to be more flexible with

telework and alternative work schedules, he said, "They would like to be but they take the

direction of our regional administrator. He sets the tone. Even if they wanted to be more

flexible, they're not allowed to be. He sets the policy." Like supervisors, senior leaders can

directly affect what policies are available to employees.

2.   Equitable application

The quantitative results indicated that, for most work-life balance policies,

supervisor support does matter for use. However, this does not provide a full picture of the

relationship between supervisor support and use. For example, support could be important

simply because supervisors are the head of the work group and their support of a particular

policy makes use more acceptable for everyone in the work group. Or the relationship could be

much more direct, with supervisors acting as gatekeepers, using their own discretion in allowing

or disallowing the use of work-life balance policies. Though the quantitative segment of this research indicated a positive relationship between supervisor support and two types of work-life balance policies, it did not elucidate the underlying mechanics of that relationship.

Six of the ten participants indicated a lack of equitable application with regard to work-life balance policies. Not all of the participants named supervisors specifically as the arbiters of use in this situation – three noted that policies were applied differently depending on their individual agency's policies (one of the three indicated that supervisor and agency both impacted how policies were applied). When asked whether supervisors were generally supportive of use of work-life balance policies, participant three explained:

> I think so. You know, a lot of rumors where they're not....like I know that in the human resources office in another facility recently got all of them taken away automatically, arbitrarily because there was a complaint that people wasn't (sic) very responsive and they connected into that and I think that's sometimes dangerous.

The participant was referring specifically to telework.

Multiple participants did point to supervisors using their discretion to decide how and when policies could be used. Participant nine noted that his office had an office-wide policy of two teleworking days per week. Despite this established policy, he pointed to an exception: "We have one person here that gets three days work at home a week. That person has actually had them for a number of years, and that rubs some people wrong because it's kind of like a double standard." As exemplified in this quote, multiple participants pointed to supervisors using their discretion to decide how and when policies could be used.

3. **Other barriers to use**

Supervisors, senior leaders and administrative discretion were not the only barriers to use participants identified. Three participants identified seniority as a barrier to use. Participant eight suggested senior leaders sometimes expressed frustration at their inability to use alternative work schedules themselves, noting that:

I only hear senior managers grumble and groan where apparently they can't have flexible schedules. So they grumble and groan that everybody else does. When they want to have a meeting a lot of people aren't there. So maybe they resent the fact that lower level staff can actually do that and they can't.

Four participants felt that a wholly practical consideration – office coverage with a small staff – limited the use of policies that take employees out of the office during business hours. Though not all participants worked directly with the public, participant five detailed how her small office that interacts with the public finds engaging with telework and alternative work schedules to be challenging:

One issue we have here is we have to have sufficient coverage for what we call our intake, which is when people come in….We have to evaluate, 'Are we going to have enough people in the office on Fridays and Mondays or do they have to pick a different day?'

4. **Work-life balance policies as instruments of the organization**

As noted previously, though work-life balance policies are ostensibly intended to aid employees with balancing their work and private lives, organizations may see them from a different, more instrumental perspective, viewing the policies as tools to benefit the organization. One example of the instrumental perspective is organizational encouragement of use of those

policies that benefit the organization, a characteristic of both telework and alternative work schedules. Both policies facilitate savings in terms of allowing budget-conscious approaches to providing workspace such as desk sharing in smaller office spaces or keeping offices dark and non-climate controlled a few days each week while employees work from home (Davidson, 2010).

Six participants said telework is promoted to employees and three said that use of both telework and alternative work schedules are promoted in their organization. One woman who participated in an interview explained that telework is both encouraged as a money-saving measure for the agency and viewed as desirable from the employee perspective. She also emphasized the need to make sure new employees are informed of the availability of telework in order to keep telework policies in place. The six employees that indicated telework is promoted to employees expressed a belief that both policies are promoted more than the other available work-life balance policies.

Another instrumental use of work-life balance policies is facilitating the hiring or retention of employees through framing the policies as an incentive. Five participants indicated that work-life balance policies are used as incentives to attract or retain employees. Participant seven, who has since moved on to a job at the local government level, noted:

> And so, recently I know that boss, the one who took over, said that he….so, you know in times of budget crisis they're constantly trying to figure out how they could retain employees. It was like, well we can't give people raises, so he was told by his supervisors in D.C. 'You guys need to be more flexible with teleworking'.

Another participant who works in a small agency doing highly technical work explained that his bosses often used the lure of expansive work-life balance policies to attract employees who

might otherwise choose to work for private sector organizations. The participant explained that private sector organizations can offer higher pay than government agencies but rarely offer work-life balance policies comparable to those available in the federal government. Clearly, the organizations that these participants work in do not simply view work-life balance policies as a support mechanism for employees; these federal agencies view work-life balance policies as an opportunity to attract and keep employees who might otherwise flee to the private sector as well.

Whether or not work-life balance policies are primarily viewed as instruments of the organization, formal work-life balance policies are sometimes circumvented by supervisors and employees alike. Eight participants noted that work-life balance is indeed addressed through informal channels. When asked about the possibility of addressing personal responsibilities that impinge on work time without using formal work-life balance policies, participant six responded:

> Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Two examples of that. One is exactly that. There's a few women who leave early to pick up their children and then work from home to make up those hours later in the evening. And then also, for health reasons, I know two people who have excused absences in the middle of the day and then have to make up the hours at a different point in time.

Though none of the participants went into detail about why an informal policy might be used instead of a formal policy, the fact that these employees' needs are being addressed informally suggests formal work-life balance policies may not completely fulfill their intended role.

B.   Discussion

A few points must be noted prior to discussion. As previously discussed, the participants' lack of familiarity with all the policies studied makes validation of policy-specific

findings impossible. Thus, the discussion will focus only on areas where the quantitative results intersect with the information derived from the qualitative segment of the research as well as some of the new questions raised in the qualitative part of the research.

The qualitative findings regarding supervisor and senior leader support generally validate the quantitative findings in that multiple participants expressed a belief that they had supervisor or senior leader support, and further, that use of work-life balance policies was related to supervisor support or senior leader support. Participants in the qualitative research also express a belief that policies are not applied in an equitable manner, supporting the idea that supervisors play a role in policy availability and use. This possibly highlights a negative outcome of supervisor and senior leader discretion – the ability to use that discretion to limit work-life balance policy use.

According to the quantitative results, while both supervisor support and senior leader support are related to the use of flexible working conditions policies, supervisor support is more strongly related to use than senior leader support (the interviews suggest senior leader support relates to whether policies are made available at all to an agency's employees). The qualitative findings support this and clarify some of the reasoning suggested in the quantitative discussion for why supervisor support is important.

Participants indicated the existence of a presenteeism norm (something that, as previously noted, specifically relates to policies that remove an employee from the office during normal business hours), an explanation posited in relation to the quantitative findings. However, the interviews also highlighted a connection between older supervisors, discomfort with technology, and presenteeism. Scholarly literature concerning generational differences with regard to worker values demonstrates a divide between younger, millennial workers and older, baby boomer

employees with regard to work in general; older workers simply do not place as much importance on balance as younger ones do and older workers hew to traditional models of work (Smola and Sutton, 2002). Older employees and supervisors may also be less familiar with the technology involved in teleworking, making their discomfort with use of the policy understandable.

The quantitative results suggest that senior leader support is most strongly related to child and dependent care use. The qualitative findings potentially elucidate this finding. Participants in the qualitative segment of this research discussed senior leader support as expressed primarily via senior leaders' efforts to increase work-life balance policy awareness and the implementation of specific rules regarding use of work-life balance policies. Senior leaders are likely to have more control over the larger questions that affect work-life balance policy use, namely, they have much more control than supervisors over what kind of benefits are available and the degree of funding that goes into making certain policies available. The Office of Personnel Management clearly states that child and dependent care policies vary depending on the agency (United States OPM, 2017). On-site child care facilities or discounted services agreements with nearby senior care facilities are examples of senior leader-specific power that relates to child and dependent care policy availability and use.

Beyond providing (or withholding) expansive child and dependent care options, this extra engagement with providing child and dependent care also telegraphs to lower-level employees that their senior leaders are supportive of addressing these issues and, in turn, of employee use of these policies (Kodz, Harper and Dench, 2002). Further, the qualitative findings provide support for the suggestion made based on the quantitative findings that supervisor support is negatively related to child and dependent care use because employees may be addressing child and

dependent issues informally. Multiple participants noted that personal issues are addressed informally, specifically in relation to childcare issues.

A few other qualitative findings are worth noting in relation to the quantitative findings. During multiple interviews, functional considerations regarding staffing levels were noted as a limiting factor with regard to the use of work-life balance policies, most often in reference to flexible working conditions. With functional considerations, technology may eventually overcome obstacles like staff coverage in an office or the need for employees to be physically present in order to provide services to the public. Innovations like Skype, which facilitates online meetings among otherwise disparate individuals allow collaboration outside of the more traditional conference room setting.

Even interacting directly with the public no longer requires one to be physically present. Advances such as telehealth systems which permit doctors to see and diagnose patients from afar illustrate how jobs that require direct interaction with clients can still be done outside of an office setting. Thus far, 19 states have passed legislation legitimizing telehealth by requiring third-party reimbursement for such services (Weinstein, 2014). The more widely this technology of this kind is used, the more acceptable it will become as a solution for the federal government should agencies choose to expand telework to public-facing employees.

One interviewee reported that senior leaders seemed to be resentful of those below them using flexible working conditions policies because the senior leaders themselves were not permitted to use flexible working conditions policies, suggesting that the ability to use work-life balance policies may be restricted for those in higher positions within the organizational hierarchy. This cannot be characterized as a finding because it was not the result of a direct question and as such was not discussed by any of the other research participants but this does

highlight an issue discussed in the scholarly literature regarding work-life balance policy implementation. As noted in the discussion of the senior leader support and work-life balance policies, senior leader support for and adoption of these policies is important for legitimizing the use of these policies; senior leaders can be key role models when it comes to normalizing use (Drew and Murtagh, 2005; Todd & Binns, 2013). With previous research highlighting the importance of senior leader use for modeling purposes, this comment supports the assertion that restrictions on those higher in the organization may impact employees in the lower rungs of the organization as well.

The qualitative stage of this research produced one finding that, though not directly related to the quantitative portion, requires attention and discussion. Five participants mentioned the strategy of using of work-life balance policies as retention or hiring incentives, relating this to the federal government's inability to offer raises or pay comparable to the private sector. One individual who currently works in a science-oriented government agency and who participated in an interview noted that use of work-life balance policies was readily offered to employees that needed to be retained while the availability of these policies was left to word-of-mouth for the rest of the employees.

This approach is problematic because work-life balance policy awareness efforts are limited to a select group of workers. This practice muddies the purpose of work-life balance policies. Employees already often frame requests for the use of work-life balance policies in terms of how their use would benefit the organization rather than emphasizing addressing their own needs suggesting that work-life balance policy use is primarily framed as acceptable only if it benefits the organization (Hoffman & Cowan, 2010). The choice to present these policies as hiring or retention incentives may act to further this perception or even reframe work-life balance

policies as a special reward given in order to obtain or retain employees who are especially desirable and not policies that are primarily intended to help employees balance home life and work life.

Overall, despite participants' limited familiarity with the various types of work-life balance policies examined in the quantitative stage of the research, the qualitative data did both clarify and confirm some points that were brought up in the discussion of the quantitative results, fulfilling the intended role of qualitative research in a sequential mixed-methods approach.

VII. Conclusion

This research sought to examine how senior leader and supervisor support relate to employee use of specific types of work-life balance policies in the federal government context. The sequential, explanatory, mixed-methods approach bolstered reliability because the qualitative portion supported the quantitative findings and it served to elucidate the underlying dynamics behind the quantitative findings. As Dick notes (1979), mixed-methods often provide a "more complete, holistic, and contextual portrayal" (p. 603) of the topic being studied, as the findings of this research illustrate.

Though both supervisor support and to a lesser extent senior leader support have previously been examined as determinants of work-life balance policy use, this research contributes to the scholarly literature in a couple of ways. The choice to focus on the federal government context was important both because it is relevant to the field of public administration and due to the nature and position of the federal government in society. The public sector focus also adds to work-life balance literature because much of the existing research has been conducted in the private sector context, a distinction that matters for reasons discussed in previous chapters.

The executive branch of the federal government is, depending on the chosen measure, the largest enterprise in the world and a case can be made that it is also the most significant body in the American system of governance (Madsen, 2014). It is also one of the most progressive employers in the United States with regard to the provision of work-life balance benefits. Due to its stature, the federal government serves as model employer for other organizations. Examining work-life balance policy uptake in this particular context – a model employer that formally

provides extensive work-life balance benefits – has the advantage of elucidating informal aspects of the organization that may inhibit uptake in an organization whose practices many other organizations may emulate.

The way work-life balance policies were approached in this research is also an important contribution. The use of mixed-effects modeling is somewhat novel, but not entirely new in the work-life balance literature. Though the mixed-effects model was chosen specifically due to the variation in federal agencies, the choice of how to model multiple levels (using the meqrlogit command in Stata) was made specifically to facilitate examining a large number of employees within diverse agencies of widely varying size and has not been used with regard to this research topic before.

Focusing on a large, public sector organization contributes to the literature as well, because it produces findings that are a bit more generalizable to other public organizations than smaller studies done on more homogenous organizations. Though the federal government is unique in its provision of formal work-life balance policies, other public organizations that follow suit and take the initial step toward employee work-life balance through implementation of formal policies could in theory review the results of this research to understand how to facilitate use.

The choice to examine how supervisor and senior leader support relate to specific types of work-life policies is useful, and perhaps the most important contribution because characteristics of work-life balance policies vary a great deal. Some, such as telework, involve being out of the office environment, some, like an employee assistance program, may only involve accessing a list of providers. While some scholarly literature examines individual policies or policy categories, the current literature fails to examine how uptake differs between

categories of policies. In general, there is a lack of research comparing the strength of the relationships between antecedents of uptake and use of different kinds of policies, and this research works to fill that gap while also including the little-examined role of senior leader support. Though work-life balance has been a topic of great interest over the past decade, holes remain in the scholarly literature, especially with regard to the public sector. Though the bulk of available meta-analyses focus primarily on research regarding work-family conflict (with work-life balance policies mentioned only in that context), scholars have characterized work-life balance research as primarily focusing on private organizations (Julien, Somerville, & Culp; 2011). This research managed to address a few small but significant gaps.

While this research has filled some gaps in knowledge, the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative stages of this research also raise intriguing questions and open potential paths forward for future research. The quantitative findings confirmed the expected, positive relationship between senior leader support and the three work-life balance policy types, and supervisor support and employee use of work-life balance policy categories (with the exception of the supervisor support variable and the child and dependent care policies category).

The strength of the relationships is especially informative – the nature and impact of senior leader support is different than supervisor support. Specifically, senior leader support means more for facilitating the use of work-life balance policies that don't involve changes in work schedule or location (those that do fall into the flexible working conditions category), while supervisor support is most important for ensuring use of those particular policies. In the qualitative findings, these same policies (telework and alternative work schedules) were characterized as normalized due to being promoted government-wide (more so than the other policies). Taken together, these findings suggest that agency senior leaders may be more

important for influencing availability and awareness of less-normalized and promoted policies within their individual agencies while supervisors have more influence over individual discretionary decisions regarding who gets to use policies that affect one's work schedule.

Relatedly, the qualitative findings regarding a lack of equitable application of work-life balance policies pointed to supervisory discretion as potentially a major barrier to use. In practical terms, this points to a need for safeguards like requiring supervisors to provide justification for denials and secondary review by upper-level supervisors of supervisors' decisions to deny access to benefits like telework. This also points to a potential path for future research: developing a better understanding of exactly what considerations supervisors take into account when allowing or denying use of work-life balance policies, and perhaps testing whether formal guidelines regarding when an employee can use work-life balance policies might produce more egalitarian decisions regarding use.

The qualitative findings both supported this interpretation of the quantitative findings in that supervisor support and senior leader support were confirmed to be important for policy use (though in different ways, as previously noted), and raised other questions. The qualitative finding that older supervisors were more wary of flexible working conditions policy use needs to be further examined. Specifically, because this finding emerged from the qualitative research, further investigation could clarify whether this is a pervasive issue and, if it is, why older supervisors have an issue with use of these policies. This knowledge would help to inform practical efforts to address their reluctance. If, as the qualitative findings suggest, technology might be a barrier for older supervisors, training is one obvious approach to ameliorating the problem. Adequate training can provide the experience needed to help supervisors and employees alike master the technology necessary to telework successfully (Sharit et al., 2004).

Unfortunately, if older supervisors present a barrier to use on a larger scale, this problem would require a large-scale intervention.

The federal government is populated by an aging workforce. By September of 2017, 31% of the roughly 2 million federal government employees will be eligible to retire (Government Accountability Office , 2014). Some of this resistance to telework due to discomfort with technology will most likely dissipate over time but the eligibility to retire does not necessarily mean these employees will actually retire in the near term. Provision of adequate training to all employees is a much more expedient approach to ensuring that all employees are comfortable with the technical aspects of telework. Such training would also help address one barrier to telework by making supervisors comfortable with the technological aspects of telework.

The finding of a presenteeism norm among older supervisors is a much more complex issue to address. The qualitative analysis already illustrates that telework and alternative work schedules are promoted more than other work-life balance policies suggesting that the federal government is working hard to normalize use of these policies. Perhaps the biggest shift needed to fully integrate flexible working conditions is one the Office of Personnel Management has already begun pursuing with a pilot study of what they call ROWE, or a results-only work environment.

The previous director of the Office of Personnel Management, John Berry, advocated moving toward a results-only work environment, wherein workers would be held responsible for completing their work on time rather than whether they were present at their desks during certain prescribed hours (Rosenburg, 2009). Such a change would represent an extreme shift in

workplace norms concerning job performance and would entail a considerable amount of education for senior leaders, supervisors and employees.

Under John Berry, the Office of Personnel Management attempted a results-only work environment pilot in 2010. The pilot produced what were characterized as "mixed results" and was eventually ended. However, as with many work-life balance policies, training for those acting as supervisors in the pilot was not adequate and metrics for measuring results were not well developed (Tuutti, 2012). One pilot study is inadequate for determining the viability of any major human resources program and further pilot studies should be done that correct the problems identified in the first one to determine whether those issues (in this case, a lack of clear objectives and metrics to measure whether those objectives were met) mitigated the success of the results-only work environment.

For those who believe work-life balance to be a positive approach to promoting employee satisfaction that in turn has positive outcomes for the organization, perhaps the most troubling finding is the use of work-life balance policies as hiring and retention incentives. Such incentives serve as an obvious point of leverage for cash-strapped agencies that require specialists or professionals that would otherwise be highly paid in the private sector. However, the choice to use work-life balance policies in this way re-frames them in the minds of all parties involved. These policies become exclusive rewards rather than practical and widely available policies intended to help employees handle both their professional and personal needs.

In an op-ed in the Huffington Post, President Obama expressed support for making work-life balance policies a basic part of employment in America rather than an exceptional, extra benefit, saying "Family leave, childcare, flexibility and a decent wage aren't frills. They're basic needs. They shouldn't be bonuses — they should be the bottom line" (Obama, 2014). Based on

the qualitative results, this diverges from the lived experiences of federal workers. Work-life balance cannot simultaneously be the purview of all workers and reserved for instances when an employer wishes to attract or keep a valuable individual employee – treating them as perks to be used in special circumstances makes these policies exclusive rather than easily accessible. If the federal government wants to embody President Obama's approach to work-life balance, it may need to reconsider how these policies are being presented to current and prospective employees. The actual impact of these two approaches to work-life balance policy implementation has, however, not been widely researched. The federal government would provide a suitable venue for further research into how simultaneously framing these policies in such different ways can affect usability.

Work-life balance continues to be a struggle for both employees and employers despite increasingly widespread attempts to address the problem in all sectors of paid employment. Though this research has addressed a small and specific – though strategically chosen – corner of the work-life balance landscape, the knowledge generated contributes to a growing field that will hopefully have positive practical consequences for both workers and organizations. The choice to examine work-life balance policy use in the federal government helps to further knowledge about what inhibits use when an organization already has formal policies. Understanding whether supervisor and senior leader support are important for uptake does not in and of itself address the larger question of whether work-life balance aids with the integration of work and home responsibilities. It is instead a meaningful step in that direction. Integration via work-life balance policies cannot be achieved, or even examined, without first understanding what makes work-life balance policies usable. This research indicates that use may be somewhat reliant on those individuals who hold power within the organization. As more and more organizations

choose to follow the federal government's lead, this research has the potential to answer the

questions that will naturally arise regarding how to make these policies work for employers and

employees alike.

APPENDIX A

TABLE IV Agency Categorization and Participation

Redistributive	Total Participation	% Participation
Department of Education	2,891	76.30%
Department of Health and Human Services	23,102	40.40%
Department of Housing and Urban Development	5,365	64.60%
Department of Education	2,891	76.30%
Railroad Retirement Board	611	73.00%
Social Security Administration	7,069	55.00%
Department of the Treasury	17,985	66.40%
Department of Veterans Affairs	13,707	46.50%

Regulatory	Total Participation	% Participation
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	555	63.80%
US Access Board	21	84.00%
Department of Commerce	18,071	56.00%
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	387	65.30%
National Credit Union Administration	510	49.70%
Department of Justice	21,488	56.50%
Department of Labor	7,482	50.20%
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	1,252	54.50%
Environmental Protection Agency	8,584	54.20%
Federal Communications Commission	862	50.70%
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board	33	91.70%
Federal Trade Commission	597	59.00%
National Indian Gaming Commission	73	76.00%
Corporation for National and Community Service	405	71.90%
Federal Election Commission	158	50.00%
Federal Maritime Commission	88	75.90%
National Labor Relations Board	665	43.20%
National Mediation Board	21	56.80%
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	2,612	69.10%
Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission	33	68.80%
Postal Regulatory Commission	49	80.30%
Securities And Exchange Commission	809	53.40%
Consumer Product Safety Commission	230	53.70%
US International Trade Commission	168	54.00%
Office of the US Trade Representative	88	44.40%

Constituent	Total Participation	% Participation
U. S. Air Force	8,775	34.60%
Institute of Museum and Library Services	49	89.10%
US Agency for International Development	1,243	40.00%
Department of the Army	18,827	32.70%
Federal Labor Relations Authority	91	74.60%
Merit Systems Protection Board	143	70.40%
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board	84	85.70%
Office of Management and Budget	286	65.40%
Commission on Civil Rights	23	82.10%
OSD, Joint Stf, Defnse Agencies, and DoD Fld Actv	8,006	38.70%
General Services Administration	2,491	53.20%
International Boundary & Water Commission	175	83.70%
Committee for Purchase from People who are Blind or Severely Disabled	20	80.00%
Federal Housing Finance Agency	314	74.20%
Department of Homeland Security	15,506	51.80%
National Capital Planning Commission	32	82.10%
National Archives And Records Administration	1,855	73.10%
Department of the Navy	12,475	41.60%
Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board	71	86.60%
Office of Personnel Management	3,463	73.10%
Selective Service System	107	91.50%
Surface Transportation Board	93	70.50%

Distributive	Total Participation	% Participation
Department of Agriculture	14,588	55.90%
National Endowment for the Arts	97	74.60%
National Endowment for the Humanities	116	79.50%
Department of Energy	5,613	39.30%
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	971	70.90%
Export-Import Bank of the United States	163	47.20%
Trade and Development Agency	26	72.20%
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	176	77.20%
Court Services & Offender Supervision Agency	556	45.70%
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	27	84.40%
Broadcasting Board of Governors	1,089	67.00%
Inter-American Foundation	22	73.30%
Department of the Interior	7,051	51.80%
National Science Foundation	728	63.10%

National Aeronautics and Space Administration	9,240	55.40%
Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation	32	78.00%
Small Business Administration	1,621	72.00%
National Gallery of Art	384	51.30%
Department of State	2,422	43.10%
Woodrow Wilson International Center For Scholars	22	64.70%
National Transportation Safety Board	220	64.30%
Department of Transportation	10,203	68.80%

APPENDIX B

TABLE V Effects of Individual, Job and Organizational Characteristics on Work-Life Balance Policy Use

	Flexible Work Schedules *(n= 185,525)*	Child and Dependent Care *(n=186,093)*	Information Services and Personnel Policies *n=207,343)*
	Adjusted Odds Ratios	Adjusted Odds Ratios	Adjusted Odds Ratios
Log of agency size	0.941	0.968	1.043
Percent of agency's employees that are women	1.382	0.306	.605
Being female	1.469**	1.618**	1.139**
Holds supervisory position	.809**	1.038	1.013
Holds manager-executive position	.671**	.935	1.063**
Holds a non-supervisory position (comparison)			
Works in headquarters	1.342**	1.175**	.964**
Works in field (comparison)			
Works in a constituent agency	.693	1.205	.885
Works in a distributive agency	.694	1.002	.892
Works in a redistributive agency	.507	1.427	1.023
Works in regulatory agency (comparison)			
Procedural Justice	.995	.892**	.932**
Distributive Justice	.965**	1.238**	1.10**
Tenure working for the government	1.04**	1.077**	1.066**
Age category	.934**	.86**	.962**
Pay category	1.337**	.823**	.887**
Supervisor support	1.273**	.901**	1.079**
Senior leader support	1.097**	1.344**	1.304**

**p<.01
 *p<.05
+ p<.10

APPENDIX C

TABLE VI Correlation Matrix for Independent, Dependent, and Control Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1 Flexible Work Schedules	1															
2 Child & Dependent Care	.054**	1														
3 Information Services & Personnel Policies	.078**	.184**	1													
4 Log of Agency Size	-.163**	-.005*	-.003	1												
5 % of Women in Agency	.042**	-.003	-.031**	-.213**	1											
6 Respondent Gender	.09**	.048**	.025**	-.043**	.209**	1										
7 Supervisor	-.038**	-.002	0	.083**	-.083**	-.076**	1									
8 Manager-Executive	-.046**	-.01**	.009**	.036**	-.055**	-.092**	-.154**	1								
9 Non-Supervisor	.063**	.009**	-.007**	-.095**	.107**	.127**	-.735**	-.558**	1							
10 Works in Headquarters	.083**	.0149**	-.023**	-.067**	.068**	.061**	-.045**	.006**	.034**	1						
11 In a Constituent Agency	-.097**	.004+	-.007**	.202**	-.468**	-.13**	.121**	.084**	-.16**	0.001	1					
12 In a Distributive Agency	.064**	-.003	.017**	-.156**	-.288**	-.046**	-.006**	.025**	-.012**	-.11**	-.317**	1				
13 In a Redist. Agency	-.024**	.004+	-.024**	.195**	.775**	.172**	-.057**	-.048**	.081**	.05**	-.377**	-.305**	1			
14 In a Regulatory Agency	.062**	-.005*	.015**	-.264**	-.036**	0.002	-.062**	-.063**	.095**	.051**	-.36**	-.291**	-.346**	1		
15 Procedural Justice	-.004+	.012**	.03**	.004*	-.032**	-.079**	.089**	.154**	-.181**	0.002	.014**	.006**	-.03**	.011**	1	
16 Distributive Justice	.005*	.032**	.055**	-.018**	-.003	-.049**	.09**	.166**	-.19**	.043**	-.004*	-.012**	-.016**	.032**	.683**	1
Tenure Working for Government																
17 Up to 3 Years	-.025**	-.013**	-.036**	.019**	.009**	-.022**	-.115**	-.09**	.158**	.075**	.052**	-.067**	.021**	-.013**	.071**	.044**
18 4 to 5 Years	-.003	-.002	-.018**	.006**	-.01**	-.023**	-.05**	-.053**	.079**	.036**	.022**	-.031**	-.007**	0.014**	.009**	-.006**
19 6 to 10 Years	-.019**	.009**	-.106**	.04**	-.035**	-.041**	-.007**	-.044**	.036**	-.006**	.047**	-.026**	-.014**	-.01**	-.021**	-.043**
20 11 to 14 Years	0.001	.004+	.006**	-.003	.005*	-.012**	.019**	-.019**	-.003+	-.006**	-.034**	-.006**	-.001	.043**	-.022**	-.025**
21 15 to 20 Years	0.001	0	.012**	-.006**	.014**	.004*	.03**	.02**	-.039**	-.015**	-.041**	.007**	.005**	.031**	-.032**	-.021**
22 More than 20 Years	.032**	0.001	.037**	-.043**	.014**	.065**	.086**	.128**	-.16**	-.057**	-.038**	.085**	-.003	-.037**	-.006**	.034**
Age Category																
23 29 and Under	.01**	-.01**	-.021**	-.024**	0.014**	.028**	-.09**	-.079**	.13**	.05**	-.002	-.03**	-.008**	.039**	.041**	.023**
24 30-39	.012**	.037**	-.007**	-.014**	.02**	.028**	-.062**	-.095**	.117**	.018**	-.03**	-.035**	-.003	.067**	.008**	-.025**
25 40-49	0	-.012**	.023**	.044**	-.048**	.005*	.09**	.071**	-.122**	-.041**	.023**	.014**	-.018**	-.017**	-.033**	-.016**
26 50-59	.004*	-.019**	.028**	.023**	-.012**	.005*	.056**	.085**	-.105**	-.026**	.028**	.035**	0.002	-.064**	-.021**	0
27 60 or older	-.023*	-.007**	-.009**	-.029**	.023**	-.057**	.004*	.029**	-.024**	.005*	-.009**	.018**	.024**	-.033**	.011**	.026**
Pay category																
28 Federal Wage Sys.	-.069**	.011**	.02**	.107**	-.07**	-.128**	.057**	-.025**	-.031**	-.076**	.112**	-.044**	-.002	-.074**	-.028**	-.04**
29 GS 1-6	-.108**	.026**	.007**	.074**	.083**	.112**	-.086**	-.072**	.121**	-.013**	.007**	-.057**	.099**	-.055**	-.037**	-.024**
30 GS 7-12	-.076**	.006**	.035**	.046**	.018**	.133**	-.143**	-.192**	.252**	-.1**	.035**	-.006**	-.01**	-.021**	-.075**	-.078**
31 GS 13-15	.166**	-.013**	-.074**	-.135**	-.018**	-.113**	.145**	.122**	-.205**	.145**	-.074**	.036**	-.036**	.08**	.074**	.085**
32 SES/SL/ST/Other	-.049**	-.015**	-.009**	.033**	-.018**	-.036**	.022**	.195**	-.152**	-.026**	-.009**	.02**	.005*	-.015**	.046**	.031**
33 Supervisor Support	.05**	.007**	-.019**	-.032**	-.012**	-.018**	.01**	.022**	-.023**	.02**	-.019**	.025**	-.028**	.025**	.395**	.38**
34 Senior Leader Support	.028**	.034**	.012**	-.029**	-.014**	-.017**	.018**	.07**	-.063**	.043**	.012**	-.007**	-.019**	.014**	.463**	.474**

**p<.01
*p<.05
+ p<.10

TABLE VI Correlation Matrix for Independent, Dependent, and Control Variables

		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
1	Flexible Work Schedules																		
2	Child & Dependent Care																		
3	Information Services & Personnel Policies																		
4	Log of Agency Size																		
5	% of Women in Agency																		
6	Respondent Gender																		
7	Supervisor																		
8	Manager-Executive																		
9	Non-Supervisor																		
10	Works in Headquarters																		
11	In a Constituent Agency																		
12	In a Distributive Agency																		
13	In a Redist. Agency																		
14	In a Regulatory Agency																		
15	Procedural Justice																		
16	Distributive Justice																		
	Tenure Working for Government																		
17	Up to 3 Years	1																	
18	4 to 5 Years	-.124**	1																
19	6 to 10 Years	-.191**	-.133**	1															
20	11 to 14 Years	-.141**	-.099**	-.152**	1														
21	15 to 20 Years	-.149**	-.104**	-.16**	-.119**	1													
22	More than 20 Years	-.335**	-.234**	-.361**	-.267**	-.281**	1												
	Age Category																		
23	29 and Under	.339**	.116**	-.025**	-.077**	-.085**	-.19**	1											
24	30-39	.153**	.135**	.204**	.063**	-.078**	-.334**	-.105**	1										
25	40-49	-.142**	-.079**	-.058**	.051**	.164**	.078**	-.286**	-.529**	1									
26	50-59	-.168**	-.098**	-.096**	-.048**	-.017**	.293**	-.184**	-.327**	0	1								
27	60 or older	-.118**	-.068**	-.071**	-.029**	0	.198**	-.094**	-.167**	-.47**	-.294**	1							
	Pay category																		
28	Federal Wage Sys.	-.012**	.004+	.009**	0.002	-.002	0	-.016**	-.016**	.01**	.019**	.005*	1						
29	GS 1-6	.105**	.024**	-.004+	-.011**	-.015**	-.071**	.056**	.007**	-.037**	-.017**	0.003	-.043**	1					
30	GS 7-12	.157**	.045**	-.009**	-.03**	-.035**	-.093**	.155**	.059**	-.087**	-.063**	-.038**	-.15**	-.182**	1				
31	GS 13-15	-.0177**	-.049**	-.008**	.039**	.042**	.113**	-.155**	-.041**	.098**	.049**	.019**	-.169**	-.205**	-.718**	1			
32	SES/SL/ST/Other	-.034**	-.012**	.028**	-.011*	0	.018**	-.028**	-.026**	.003	.023**	.027**	-.056**	-.067**	-.236**	-.265**	1		
33	Supervisor Support	.047**	.008**	-.009**	-.011**	-.018**	-.013**	.031**	.023**	-.007**	-.028**	-.018**	-.035**	-.035**	-.028**	.064**	-.016**	1	
34	Senior Leader Support	.074**	.013**	-.019**	-.019**	-.027**	-.018**	.039**	0.003	-.018**	-.018**	0.001	-.03**	-.009**	-.02**	.038**	-.008**	.363**	1

**p<.01
*p<.05
+ p<.10

APPENDIX D

Recruitment Letter

My name is Lauren Bowman. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Illinois-Chicago. I am conducting research as part of my dissertation project to assess what affects federal employee use of work-life balance policy use. To that end, I am writing to ask permission to conduct a telephone interview with you in your capacity as a human resources manager concerning use of work-life balance policies in your organization.

With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview, excluding the introductory portion of the conversation, which may include identifying details such as your name. The interview contents will be treated as confidential. No identifiers of you, your organization or anyone mentioned in the course of the interview will be included in any published material or conference presentations that results from this study. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

You may contact the University of Illinois at Chicago Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at (312) 996-1711 if you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Although there is no direct benefit for participants of this research, I expect to generate useful and practical information concerning what mechanisms affect work-life balance policy use and possibly suggestions facilitating more widespread use of these policies. Whether you participate or not, we would be happy to let you know when the final summary of our findings is available.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Illinois at Chicago or your employer. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting these relationships.

I would be grateful if you could let me know whether or not you would be willing to be interviewed for the purposes outlined above, and welcome any questions you may have concerning this research. My phone number and e-mail are listed below.

Thank You,

Lauren Bowman, Ph.D. Candidate
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E-mail: Lbowma3@uic.edu

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions

1. The federal government offers the following work-life balance programs: Telework, alternative work schedules, childcare, elder care, employee assistance programs, and health and wellness programs. What level of experience/involvement do you have with these policies?

2. Is work-life balance a high profile issue in your organization (regularly discussed and addressed), discussed periodically or not at all?

    a. Do senior leaders within your organization ever discuss work-life balance policy use? Do they focus on particular policies?

    b. Do you think supervisors in your organization are generally supportive of work-life balance?

3. How are employees made aware of the availability of work-life balance policies?

    a. In your view, do all employees feel able to use these policies (the policies usually involve some sort of interference with work). Does gender play a role?

4. Are the human resources processes for getting permission to use these policies the same?

    a. Some of these policies, such as health and wellness and telework policies, benefit the organization (health and wellness policies may cut insurance costs, telework can cut overhead). Are these policies viewed as more usable as a result?

5. Can you recall anyone being denied use of these policies? If so, why?

6. In your organization, are work-life balance issues ever addressed informally/without use of these policies (for example, an employee being permitted to leave early one day a week on an informal basis in order to pick their children up from school)?

7. Is there pressure in your organization to be physically present (i.e. not use telework, even if it is offered)?

8. If permissible under your organization's rules, would you be willing to provide me with copies of any fliers, memos, posters or other materials used to convey information about work-life balance policies to employees, such as procedures for use, availability of policies, etc.?

9. Please provide the title of your position in your organization.

APPENDIX F

Qualitative Codebook

Awareness>organizational>no

Response to question 2 or other utterances in the interview indicate 1) lack of formal awareness of work-life balance policies in the larger organization (are not advertised in the organization regularly, presented as part of orientation, any formal institutional communication regarding work-life balance) or 2) belief that employees generally are not aware of policies.

Awareness>organizational>yes

Response to question 2 or other utterances in the interview indicate 1) presence of formal awareness efforts regarding work-life balance policies in the larger organization (are advertised in the organization regularly, presented as part of orientation, there is formal institutional communication regarding work-life balance) or 2) belief that employees generally are aware of policies.

Awareness>personal>no

Response to question 2 or other utterances in the interview indicate lack of personal awareness of a category of work-life balance policy (such as a failure to recognize this is available in their organization)

Awareness>personal>yes

Response to question 2 or other utterances in the interview indicate personal awareness of or experience with all categories of work-life balance policies

BeneficialPoliciesUsable

Response to question 4a indicates a belief that policies that are beneficial to the organization are more accessible to employees in terms of willingness to use

EquitableApplication>no

Response to question 4 or other utterances in the interview indicate lack of (organizational, work unit, supervisor, or any level) uniformity in allowance to use work-life balance policies of any sort

EquitableApplication>yes

Response to question 4 or other utterances in the interview indicate a belief in (organizational, work unit, supervisor, or any level) uniformity in allowance to use work-life balance policies of any sort

Gender>no

Response to question 3a or other utterances in the interview indicate a belief that gender is not related to choice and/or ability to use work-life balance policies

InformalWLB

Response to question 6 or other utterances in the interview indicate a belief that work-life balance issues are sometimes addressed outside of the context of formal policy use, whether via example ('my coworker sometimes leaves early to get her child from day care, but she isn't on an alternative work schedule. She just mentions it to our boss and he says it's fine') or a comment referring directly to a belief that work-life balance issues are addressed informally.

LimitsOnUse>FieldOffice

Respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that work-life balance policies are limited in field offices when compared to those in the central office.

LimitsOnUse>SeniorPositions

Respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that work-life balance policies are less usable (for whatever reason) if one holds a supervisory position.

LimitsOnUse>SizeOfOffice

respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that work-life balance policies are less usable (for whatever reason) due to the small size of their office or an office with which they are familiar.

LimitsOnUse>technological

Respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that work-life balance policies are less usable (for whatever reason) due to technological limitations. This could mean either the technology is unavailable or the employees/supervisors are not comfortable using it.

OldVsYoung

Respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that older employees or supervisor are less comfortable with/less likely to use work-life balance policies that take employees out of the office during normal work hours.

Presenteeism

Response to question 7, or through example or direct utterance, indicates that there is pressure in the respondent's organization for employees to be physically present in the office during normal work hours.

RetentionIncentive

Respondent indicates, either through example or direct utterance, that work-life balance policies are used as either hiring or retention incentives within their organization.

SeniorLeaderSupport>DontHave

In response to question 2a, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that senior leaders within respondent's organization do not support work-life balance policy's existence and/or use

SeniorLeaderSupport>UseIsDependent

In response to question 2a, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that their or their fellow employees use of work-life balance policies is dependent on senior leader's attitudes/support

SeniorLeaderSupport>have

In response to question 2a, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that senior leaders within respondent's organization do support work-life balance policy's existence and/or use

SupervisorSupport>UseIsDependent

In response to question 2b, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that their or their fellow employees use of work-life balance policies is dependent on supervisor's attitudes/support

SupervisorSupport>have

In response to question 2b, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that supervisors within respondent's organization do support work-life balance policy's existence and/or use

TeleworkPushed

In response to question 3a, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that telework policy use is encouraged from any/all levels of the organization while other policies are not

TeleworkPushed>AltWorkPushedToo

In response to question 3a, or through example or direct utterance, respondent indicates that telework policy use and alternative work schedule use is encouraged from any/all levels of the organization

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        Teaching Assistant, 2010-2011; Spring 2013
        Graduate Research Assistant, 2007-2012

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RESEARCH

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

Bowman, Lauren N. & James R. Thompson. (2013). Public administration programs in business schools. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 19*(2), 239-261.

Feeney, Mary K., Bernal, Margarita. & Lauren Bowman. (2014). Enabling work? Family-friendly policies and academic productivity for men and women scientists. *Science and Public Policy, 41*(6): 750-764.

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In Progress

Thompson, James R. & Lauren N. Bowman. Beyond the constitution: Bureaucratic legitimacy in "Everyday life". Under review.

Chapters in Edited Books

Mastracci, Sharon & Lauren N. Bowman. (2015). Gendered Organizations and Human Resource Management Practices that Foster and Sustain Gendered Norms in Kearney & Coggburn, Eds. *Public Human Resource Management: Problems and Prospects, 6th Edition.*

TEACHING

Urban Government I: Managing the Internal Environment (UPA 300)
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Finalist, Chancellor's Graduate Research Fellowship 2013

Chair, University of Illinois at Chicago, Public Administration Student Association, 2008-2009
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CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

"Revisiting the Glass Ceiling: Employment Trends, Intersectionality, and Gendered Organizations" with Sharon Mastracci. Presented at the American Society for Public Administration Conference, New Orleans, LA, March 2013.

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"Work-Life Balance Policies in the Federal Government: What Factors are Related to Use?" Presented at the 2nd Annual Public Administration Research Symposium, Chicago, IL, March 2012.

"Departments of Public Administration Programs in Colleges of Business Administration: Allies or Aliens?" with J. Thompson. Presented at the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) Annual Conference, Kansas City, MO, October 2011.

PhD Student Pre-conference Workshop, "Writing Theory in a Technicist Field" Public Administration Theory Network Conference, Norfolk, VA, May 2011. (Attendee)

"Enabling Work? The Effects of Family-Friendly Policies on Academic Work Outcomes for Men and Women Scientists." with Mary K. Feeney. Presented at the 69th Annual National Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), Chicago, IL, April 2011.