

## Tired but Happy: The Benefits and Costs of Servant Leadership—A Work-Family Resource Model Perspective (Postprint)

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### Abstract

Extensive research has confirmed that servant leadership can exert positive effects on subordinates. However, the impact of servant leadership on the leaders themselves remains largely unknown. Drawing upon the work-family resource model, this article examines the benefits and costs of servant leadership. Using experience sampling methodology, we conducted a five-day diary study of 76 supervisors in enterprises in Guangzhou and analyzed the data using multilevel linear modeling. Results indicate that supervisors' daily engagement in servant leadership behaviors can generate more positive emotions, thereby improving work-family relationships, but may also trigger resource depletion, thus deteriorating work-family relationships. Supervisors' perceived organizational support serves as a "gate valve" for the double-edged sword effect of servant leadership behaviors: when supervisors perceive high organizational support, engaging in servant leadership behaviors yields more positive emotions, whereas when they perceive low organizational support, such engagement may more readily increase resource depletion. These findings broaden our understanding of the effects of servant leadership and offer new insights into interventions for servant leadership behaviors.

### Full Text

## The Bittersweet Experience of Servant Leadership: Benefits and Costs from a Work-Home Resources Model Perspective

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## Abstract

While previous research has extensively demonstrated that servant leadership positively influences subordinates, its impact on the leaders themselves remains largely unknown. Drawing on the work-home resources model, this study examines the benefits and costs of servant leadership. Using experience sampling methodology, we conducted a five-day diary study of 76 supervisors in enterprises in Guangzhou and analyzed the data with multilevel linear modeling. The results show that daily engagement in servant leadership behavior can generate more positive emotions, thereby improving work-home relationships, but may also trigger resource depletion, thus deteriorating work-home relationships. Supervisors' perceived organizational support acts as a "gate valve" for the double-edged sword effect of servant leadership behavior. When supervisors perceive high organizational support, engaging in servant leadership behavior yields more positive emotions, whereas when they perceive low organizational support, such behavior is more likely to increase resource depletion. These findings broaden our understanding of the effects of servant leadership and provide new insights for interventions.

**Keywords:** servant leadership behavior; work-home conflict; work-home facilitation; organizational support; work-home resources model

**Classification:** B849: C91

## 1. Problem Introduction

"Serve the People" is the governing philosophy of the Chinese government, which is why servant leadership has long been advocated by Chinese party and government organizations. In the business world, servant leadership has also been endorsed by many well-known companies [?, ?]. Servant leadership refers to a leadership style that transcends personal self-interest, emphasizing "serving subordinates' desires and meeting subordinates' needs," while being responsible for the long-term well-being of subordinates, the organization, and its stakeholders [?, ?]. Numerous studies have found that servant leadership positively influences subordinates' positive attitudes, voice behavior, and job performance [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Servant leadership not only serves and satisfies subordinates' wishes and needs at work but also provides resources or help for subordinates' lives, thereby facilitating their fulfillment of family responsibilities. In other words, servant leadership has an important impact on subordinates' work-home relationships. Based on this, recent research has found that servant leadership can help subordinates achieve work-home facilitation and reduce work-home conflict [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?].

However, does servant leadership behavior affect the leaders' own work-home relationships? Surveys indicate that 99% of Chinese managers are experiencing work-family imbalance, and the pressure from work and family is increasing year by year [?, ?, ?]. Given the universality of leaders' work-family problems, exploring the consequences of leadership behavior on leaders' own work-home

relationships can help organizations better identify the benefits and costs of leadership and provide reference methods for intervening in leaders' work-home relationships [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Theoretically, "how leaders treat subordinates" not only affects subordinates but also 反过来作用于领导者自身的心理与行为 [?, ?]. Therefore, exploring the impact of servant leadership behavior on leaders' work-home relationships can address both theoretical and practical needs.

Based on the Work-Home Resources Model (W-HR) [?, ?], this study argues that servant leadership behavior has a double-edged sword effect on leaders' work-home relationships. The W-HR model posits that in resource-generating experiences, individual resources are enhanced, producing work-home facilitation, whereas in demanding experiences, personal resources are depleted, inducing work-home conflict. Following theoretical relevance and recommendations from previous research [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?], this study selects positive emotion to represent the resource generation mechanism and ego depletion to represent the resource depletion mechanism. Moreover, if servant leadership behavior has a double-edged sword effect on leaders themselves, when do servant leaders benefit and when do they pay costs? The W-HR model proposes that under different contextual resource conditions, the degree to which personal behavior generates or consumes resources varies, thereby having different effects on work-home relationships [?, ?]. Therefore, this study introduces organizational support as a contextual resource to examine its moderating effect on the resource generation and depletion mechanisms of servant leadership behavior. In terms of research methodology, this study adopts an experience sampling design to explore whether daily displays of servant leadership behavior can affect work-home relationships through daily resource changes, as recent research has begun to recognize that leadership behavior varies within-person [?, ?, ?, ?, ?], meaning that the degree of servant leadership behavior exhibited by leaders may fluctuate across workdays.

### 1.1 Resource Generation Function of Servant Leadership Behavior

Servant leadership behavior can enhance leaders' positive emotions through its resource generation function. Positive emotion refers to pleasant feelings such as happiness, satisfaction, pride, interest, and gratitude [?, ?, ?, ?]. Abundant resources are important triggers for positive emotions, and displaying servant leadership behavior can help leaders build resources in work, relationship, and personal domains [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. First, daily engagement in servant leadership behavior can improve subordinate well-being and performance, which enhances leaders' sense of competence and achievement [?, ?], thereby experiencing more pleasant emotions. Second, servant leadership behavior demonstrates a service-oriented and humble attitude, creating a safe and friendly work atmosphere that makes interactions with subordinates smoother and less frictional, allowing leaders to experience positive emotions [?, ?]. Finally, servant leadership behavior is a prosocial activity that can garner praise, appreciation, and recognition from colleagues or subordinates, which can energize and satisfy

leaders, subsequently generating positive emotions.

According to the W-HR model, the positive emotions experienced by leaders after serving subordinates constitute an important personal resource that can produce positive spillover effects, mitigating work-home conflict (where work roles interfere with fulfilling family responsibilities; [?, ?]) and enhancing work-home facilitation (where experiences at work help individuals better fulfill family responsibilities; [?, ?]). First, positive emotion is a fundamental resource that can promote individuals' approach toward goals [?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. When leaders experience positive emotions, they will actively maintain closeness with family members and establish friendly interactive relationships, generating work-home facilitation, rather than bringing poor work states into the life domain, reducing the likelihood of work-home conflict. Second, positive emotions can broaden individuals' scope of attention [?, ?]. For leaders with positive emotions, they are more likely to notice various needs of family members and consciously fulfill family-related role responsibilities, creating positive spillover from work experiences to the family domain. Simultaneously, when leaders can notice family members' needs, they will not focus solely on their own work and career while neglecting family needs, thereby reducing work-home conflict. Finally, positive emotions can enhance cognitive flexibility [?, ?, ?], promoting individuals to generate more problem-solving methods, which not only helps them successfully handle family affairs but also helps them quickly resolve work problems, preventing work issues from spilling over into the life domain.

In summary, leaders' engagement in servant leadership behavior increases positive emotions, thereby improving work-home relationships.

**H1:** Daily servant leadership behavior enhances daily positive emotion, which in turn reduces work-home conflict (H1a) and increases work-home facilitation (H1b).

## 1.2 Resource Depletion Function of Servant Leadership Behavior

This study argues that servant leadership behavior makes leaders pay costs through a resource depletion mechanism. Ego depletion refers to a state where psychological resources are exhausted after a period of self-regulatory activity [?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. When individuals voluntarily engage in self-regulatory activities such as "thought control," "effort expenditure," and "complex decision-making," it leads to the depletion of psychological resources [?, ?, ?, ?]. Servant leaders often involve these activities in their interactions with subordinates [?, ?]. First, servant leadership requires leaders to choose between others' interests and personal self-interest and overcome self-serving tendencies through self-control to meet the role expectations of servant leadership. In the process of controlling and overcoming the "pursuit of personal self-interest," leaders consume "self-regulatory resources" [?, ?]. Second, to unleash subordinates' potential, servant leaders play a mentoring role [?, ?]. The "mentoring role" requires leaders to spend more time and energy on subordinates, which may even delay lead-

ers' personal work progress, forcing servant leaders to work overtime. In these situations, leaders are prone to physical and mental resource depletion [?, ?]. Finally, in the decision-making process, servant leaders must consider the interests of internal stakeholders (e.g., employees, shareholders) as well as the well-being of external stakeholders (e.g., customers, community, and government) [?, ?]. To meet these complex and difficult decision-making task requirements, leaders need to consume substantial resources for information processing, thereby exacerbating resource depletion [?, ?].

When leaders experience ego depletion from engaging in servant leadership behavior, they lack sufficient resources to fulfill family responsibilities well, thereby triggering work-home conflict and reducing work-home facilitation. First, under conditions of ego depletion, servant leaders are like “a clay Buddha crossing a river—unable to save themselves,” lacking enough time and energy to accompany family members, pay attention to their needs, and provide adequate socio-emotional support [?, ?], which can easily trigger work-home conflict. Simultaneously, leaders who experience ego depletion feel exhausted at work and have difficulty obtaining good work experiences, making it harder for them to experience positive spillover from work to family life [?, ?]. Second, when servant leaders experience resource depletion from work, they inevitably bring negative work states into the family domain, which can easily cause interpersonal harm to the family [?, ?], increasing the likelihood of work-home conflict. Additionally, in a state of ego depletion, servant leaders bring fewer positive states into the family domain, reducing their willingness and motivation to participate in family activities and fulfill family responsibilities [?, ?], thereby decreasing work-home facilitation. In summary, following the logic of the W-HR model, leaders playing the servant leadership role increases ego depletion, which subsequently affects leaders' work-home relationships.

**H2:** Daily servant leadership behavior increases daily ego depletion, thereby inducing work-home conflict (H2a) and reducing work-home facilitation (H2b).

### 1.3 Moderating Effect of Organizational Support

According to the W-HR model, this study argues that organizational support, as a contextual resource, can both strengthen the relationship between servant leadership behavior and positive emotion and weaken the relationship between servant leadership behavior and resource depletion. Organizational support refers to the organization's valuing of members' contributions and caring for their welfare [?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Organizational support influences supervisors' resource change processes and their resource management strategies (resource acquisition versus loss avoidance) [?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Specifically, under high organizational support, individuals can obtain more resource support from the organization and accumulate rich personal resources. At this time, they are more likely to focus on resource acquisition and pursue opportunities to acquire resources [?, ?, ?, ?]. In other words, supervisors will view “displaying servant leadership behavior” as an opportunity to acquire resources. By engaging in servant leadership be-

havior that benefits collective welfare, they can harvest more positive feedback and build more relationship resources with various stakeholders. These accumulated resources can help supervisors achieve higher-level social needs [?, ?], subsequently experiencing more positive emotions. Moreover, high organizational support provides resource replenishment for supervisors during the process of serving subordinates, thereby slowing down or even avoiding the resource depletion caused by servant leadership behavior. However, under low organizational support, individuals face limited resources and are prone to fall into a resource depletion spiral. At this time, individuals are more sensitive to resource loss and will try to avoid any risk that may threaten resources [?, ?]. Accordingly, under low organizational support, engaging in servant leadership behavior will be perceived by supervisors as a potential threat to resources, which reduces positive emotions and amplifies the perception of resource depletion.

**H3:** Organizational support strengthens the positive relationship between daily servant leadership behavior and positive emotion (H3a) and buffers the positive relationship between servant leadership behavior and ego depletion (H3b).

See Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper] for the dual-path model of how servant leadership behavior affects work-home relationships. Note: Work-home conflict and work-home facilitation are conceptualized as daily work-home relationship indicators. Servant leadership behavior, positive emotion, ego depletion, and work-home relationships are hypothesized as within-person relationships, while organizational support is hypothesized as a cross-level moderator.

## 2.1 Sample and Procedure

The sample for this study consisted of department supervisors from eight small and medium-sized service enterprises in Guangzhou. To reduce common method bias, we used a paired supervisor-subordinate design and experience sampling methodology to collect data. With the assistance of the human resources departments of participating organizations, we recruited supervisors and their managers for the study. Before distributing the questionnaires, our research team compiled a list of supervisors who volunteered to participate and assigned them identification numbers. The survey consisted of a one-time survey and daily surveys. Approximately one week before the daily diary study, we distributed a one-time survey to participants that included measures of organizational support and demographic information. Over the following five workdays, we selected married supervisors as our research subjects, following previous work-home relationship research. Based on the approach of [?, ?, ?, ?], we selected three time points for daily tracking: 11:00, 16:00, and 19:00-21:00. At Time 1 (11:00), supervisors completed the servant leadership behavior questionnaire, and their direct managers evaluated each supervisor's transformational and ethical leadership behaviors. At Time 2 (16:00), supervisors completed measures of positive/negative emotion and ego depletion. At Time 3 (19:00-21:00), supervisors completed measures of work-home conflict and work-home facilitation. Participants who completed all five days of surveys received monetary

compensation.

Regarding the specific questionnaire distribution method, we distinguished between work hours and evening distribution. (1) Work hours questionnaire distribution: Researchers at each site were specifically responsible for distributing questionnaires promptly at 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily, with assistance from research assistants at the participating organizations. After each completion, participants sealed the questionnaire in an envelope, which was collected on the spot by the researcher or person in charge. Researchers provided timely feedback on compensation based on participants' completion status. (2) Evening questionnaire distribution: Before leaving work each afternoon, participants received the evening survey questionnaire (pre-sealed in an envelope) and were instructed to complete it between 7:00-9:00 p.m. During this time period, researchers would also send WeChat reminders to participants to complete the survey on time and required participants to take a photo of the completed questionnaire with their mobile phone and send it to the researcher. Upon receiving participant feedback, researchers provided immediate compensation to ensure timely completion.

In the one-time survey phase, we distributed 100 one-time surveys and recovered 92, with 88 valid responses. In the daily survey phase, we distributed daily surveys to these 88 supervisors and their managers, recovering 405 responses. The final sample consisted of valid paired questionnaires from 76 supervisors and their managers (380 responses), representing an effective response rate of 86.4%. Descriptive statistics showed that among supervisors, 60.7% were male, with an average age of 33.31 years (SD = 5.73 years) and average tenure of 5.79 years (SD = 4.80 years). In terms of education, most supervisors held graduate or undergraduate degrees (28.4% and 55.8%, respectively), with an average weekly work hours of 42.1 hours (SD = 7.06 hours). Regarding family status, 73.3% had children at home requiring care. Among managers, 69.5% were male, with an average age of 38.35 years (SD = 5.45 years) and average tenure of 8.32 years (SD = 4.91 years). In terms of education, most held graduate and undergraduate degrees (41.0% and 59.0%, respectively). Attrition analysis revealed no significant differences between participants who dropped out after the initial survey and those who remained in terms of gender [ $t_{\{\text{supervisor gender}\}} = 0.44$ , ns;  $t_{\{\text{manager gender}\}} = 1.27$ , ns], age [ $t_{\{\text{supervisor age}\}} = -0.76$ , ns;  $t_{\{\text{manager age}\}} = 0.74$ , ns], or tenure [ $t_{\{\text{supervisor tenure}\}} = -0.20$ , ns;  $t_{\{\text{manager tenure}\}} = 1.25$ , ns].

## 2.2 Measurement Instruments

We used a translation-back-translation procedure for questionnaires from English sources. All questionnaires used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### 2.2.1 Daily (Within-Person) Measures

**Servant Leadership Behavior:** We used the servant leadership behavior scale developed by [?, ?], which includes 7 items. A sample item is “Today, I placed my subordinates’ interests before my own interests.” The Cronbach’ s alpha for this scale in our study was 0.84.

**Positive Emotion:** We used the positive emotion scale from [?, ?], which includes 5 items. A sample item is “To what extent do you currently feel ‘excited’ ?” The Cronbach’ s alpha was 0.91.

**Ego Depletion:** We used the ego depletion scale employed in [?, ?], which includes 5 items. A sample item is “I currently feel exhausted.” The Cronbach’ s alpha was 0.94.

**Work-Home Conflict/Facilitation:** We used the work-home conflict and work-home facilitation scales from [?, ?, ?, ?], each containing 4 items. A sample item for work-home conflict is “My work reduces my investment in my family,” and for work-home facilitation is “Doing work-related things helps me deal with family problems.” The Cronbach’ s alphas were 0.90 and 0.86, respectively.

### 2.2.2 Between-Person Measures

**Organizational Support:** We used the scale from [?, ?, ?, ?], which includes 8 items. A sample item is “My organization really cares about my personal well-being.” The Cronbach’ s alpha was 0.89.

### 2.2.3 Control Variables

Previous research has found that negative emotion and work hours affect work-home relationships [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?], ethical leadership behavior affects ego depletion [?, ?], and transformational leadership behavior affects individuals’ emotional states [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Therefore, we controlled for these factors. Negative emotion was measured using the 5-item scale from [?, ?] ( = 0.91). Transformational leadership behavior was measured using the 4-item scale from [?, ?, ?, ?, ?] as used in [?, ?] ( = 0.91). Ethical leadership behavior was measured using the 8-item scale from [?, ?] ( = 0.91). Work hours were measured as objective daily working time (in hours).

## 2.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Discriminant Validity

To test whether the measures of our main variables (servant leadership behavior, positive emotion, ego depletion, work-home conflict, work-home facilitation, and organizational support) had structural validity and discriminant validity, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis using structural equation modeling. Table 1 shows that the six-factor model fit the data best and was significantly

better than alternative models, indicating that our measures demonstrated discriminant validity.

## 2.4 Statistical Analysis Strategy

Given the hierarchical structure of our data (multiple days nested within each supervisor), we used Mplus 7.0 to test our hypotheses with multilevel path analysis. This approach can test the overall hypothesized model because it can simultaneously include multiple regression equations, thereby handling relationships among multiple independent and dependent variables simultaneously. Following recommendations from [?, ?, ?, ?] and [?, ?], all Level 1 predictors were group-mean centered, which excludes the influence of between-person differences in predictors and ensures that results reflect purely within-person relationships. All Level 2 variables were grand-mean centered. Finally, we used the parametric bootstrap procedure recommended by [?, ?, ?, ?] (20,000 Monte Carlo replications) to estimate bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals for indirect effects to test mediation.

## 3.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 2 presents the proportion of within-person variance for each Level 1 construct. The constructs measured at Level 1 in this study showed considerable within-person variation across days, with within-person variance percentages ranging from 38% to 64%.

Table 3 shows that servant leadership behavior was significantly positively correlated with positive emotion ( $r = 0.15$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and ego depletion ( $r = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Positive emotion was significantly negatively correlated with work-home conflict ( $r = -0.13$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and significantly positively correlated with work-home facilitation ( $r = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Ego depletion was significantly positively correlated with work-home conflict ( $r = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with work-home facilitation ( $r = -0.03$ , ns). Organizational support was significantly positively correlated with servant leadership behavior ( $r = 0.47$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and positive emotion ( $r = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and significantly negatively correlated with ego depletion ( $r = -0.32$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## 3.2 Hypothesis Testing

**Results for H1.** As shown in Figure 2 [Figure 2: see original paper], servant leadership behavior positively predicted positive emotion ( $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), while positive emotion was significantly negatively related to work-home conflict ( $\beta = -0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and significantly positively related to work-home facilitation ( $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Using the parametric bootstrap procedure recommended by [?, ?] (20,000 Monte Carlo replications) to test mediation, the results showed that the indirect effects of servant leadership behavior on work-home conflict and work-home facilitation through positive emotion were  $-0.014$  and  $0.016$ ,

respectively, with 95% confidence intervals of [-0.034, -0.0006] and [0.001, 0.038], neither of which included zero. Therefore, both H1a and H1b were supported.

**Results for H2.** As shown in Figure 2, servant leadership behavior positively predicted ego depletion ( $\beta = 0.16, p < 0.05$ ), while ego depletion was significantly positively related to work-home conflict ( $\beta = 0.15, p < 0.05$ ) but not significantly related to work-home facilitation ( $\beta = -0.05, ns$ ). Using the same parametric bootstrap procedure (20,000 Monte Carlo replications), the indirect effect of servant leadership behavior on work-home conflict through ego depletion was 0.024, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.0004, 0.059], which did not include zero. However, the indirect effect on work-home facilitation was -0.008, with a 95% confidence interval of [-0.031, 0.009], which included zero. Therefore, H2a was supported, but H2b was not.

**Results for H3a.** As shown in Figure 2, organizational support significantly moderated the relationship between servant leadership behavior and positive emotion (interaction coefficient  $\beta = 0.06, p < 0.05$ ). As illustrated in the interaction plot (Figure 3 [Figure 3: see original paper]), the positive relationship was stronger for individuals with high organizational support compared to those with low organizational support. Simple slope tests showed that when organizational support was high, the effect of servant leadership behavior on positive emotion was stronger ( $\beta = 0.17, t = 2.53, p < 0.05$ ); when organizational support was low, the effect was weaker ( $\beta = 0.07, t = 0.63, ns$ ). Therefore, H3a was supported.

**Results for H3b.** As shown in Figure 2, organizational support significantly moderated the relationship between servant leadership behavior and ego depletion (interaction coefficient  $\beta = -0.17, p < 0.001$ ). As illustrated in the interaction plot (Figure 4 [Figure 4: see original paper]), the positive relationship was weaker for individuals with high organizational support compared to those with low organizational support. Simple slope tests showed that when organizational support was high, the effect of servant leadership behavior on ego depletion was weaker ( $\beta = 0.14, t = 0.61, ns$ ); when organizational support was low, the effect was stronger ( $\beta = 0.27, t = 4.32, p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, H3b was supported.

### 3.3 Supplementary Analysis

In the preceding sections, we reported results with control variables included. Following recommendations from [?, ?] to increase transparency of control variable usage, we reanalyzed the data without any control variables. The results showed that servant leadership behavior negatively affected work-home conflict through positive emotion (indirect effect = -0.011, CI95% = [-0.031, -0.0004]) and positively affected work-home facilitation through positive emotion (indirect effect = 0.014, CI95% = [0.001, 0.032]). Servant leadership behavior positively affected work-home conflict through ego depletion (indirect effect = 0.021, CI95% = [0.0007, 0.049]) but did not significantly affect work-home facilitation through ego depletion (indirect effect = -0.006, CI95% = [-0.030, 0.014]). Orga-

nizational support positively moderated the relationship between servant leadership behavior and positive emotion (interaction coefficient = 0.06,  $p < 0.05$ ) and negatively moderated the relationship between servant leadership behavior and ego depletion (interaction coefficient = -0.18,  $p < 0.001$ ). These results indicate that control variables did not substantially interfere with our findings.

#### 4.1 Theoretical Implications

First, by adopting a leader perspective and simultaneously examining both positive and negative effects of servant leadership behavior on leaders themselves, this study helps develop a more comprehensive understanding of the “double-edged sword” effects of servant leadership and advances research on its consequences. Although previous research has examined how servant leadership behavior affects subordinates’ work-home relationships [?, ?], these studies have overlooked its impact on leaders’ own work-home relationships. Given the important value of servant leadership behavior for organizations, examining how it affects leaders’ own work experiences is crucial because the benefits and costs of servant leadership behavior directly relate to the sustainability of such behavior. To address this gap, this study simultaneously examined both positive and negative outcomes of servant leadership behavior. The results reveal that servant leadership behavior can bring both positive outcomes (increased positive emotion) and negative outcomes (increased resource depletion) for leaders, supporting our theoretical proposition that servant leadership behavior has double-edged sword effects.

Second, this study advances understanding of the mechanisms through which servant leadership behavior affects leaders’ work-home relationships by revealing its dual pathways. We found that servant leadership behavior can positively influence work-home relationships through the resource generation mechanism of positive emotion, while also negatively affecting work-home relationships through the resource depletion mechanism of ego depletion. These results are consistent with some related previous research. For example, [?, ?] found that daily displays of transformational leadership behavior can promote leaders’ positive emotions and reduce negative emotions; however, that study did not examine the resource depletion mechanism of leadership behavior. Additionally, [?, ?] found that some positive leadership behaviors (e.g., ethical leadership) consume leaders’ psychological resources and produce resource depletion. Unfortunately, these studies examined the impact of leadership behavior on leaders’ resources from a single perspective and have not simultaneously examined both resource generation and depletion mechanisms from an integrated perspective. By introducing the W-HR model and incorporating both resource generation and depletion mechanisms into our theoretical framework, and controlling for transformational and ethical leadership behaviors, this study explains that servant leadership behavior has both resource generation functions and resource depletion aspects. This not only comprehensively explains the resource change process of servant leaders but also represents the first integration of the W-HR

model with servant leadership theory to reveal the dynamic formation mechanism of work-home relationships.

Third, this study reveals the contingency conditions under which servant leadership behavior produces costs or benefits—the moderating role of organizational support. Integrating contextual variables into within-person analytical frameworks has become an important trend in management research [?, ?]. In light of this, we examined how organizational support moderates the benefits and costs of servant leaders. The results show that under high organizational support, servant leadership behavior enhances its positive effects (increasing positive emotion), whereas under low organizational support, servant leadership behavior strengthens its negative effects (increasing resource depletion). This demonstrates that organizational support can enhance the benefits of servant leadership while reducing its potential losses or costs. Previous research has also widely supported the resource replenishment function of organizational support. For example, meta-analyses have found that perceived organizational support can satisfy individuals' socio-emotional needs, increase helping expectations and self-efficacy, and these important resources can increase positive emotion, job satisfaction, organization-based self-esteem, and work-home balance while reducing work stress, emotional exhaustion, and work-home conflict [?, ?, ?]. Additionally, the positive moderating effect of organizational support has received widespread support [?, ?, ?, ?]. Thus, our findings are consistent with previous perspectives.

Fourth, this study both applies and empirically tests and advances the W-HR model. Specifically, we found that resource gains from work experiences can relatively stably predict both work-home conflict and work-home facilitation, whereas resource losses from work experiences can only predict work-home conflict but not work-home facilitation. This suggests that work-home conflict and work-home facilitation are somewhat distinct [?, ?]. Therefore, we speculate that the main reason for this result may be that the effects of resources from the work domain on work-home conflict and work-home facilitation may differ. Although resource depletion at work increases pressure to fulfill family roles and triggers work-home conflict, it may not necessarily affect work-home facilitation because work-home facilitation may be influenced by other resources with stronger effects in addition to resource depletion at work, such as spousal emotional support [?, ?]. A recent meta-analysis provides support for this. [?, ?] found that compared to resources from the work domain, resources from the family domain (e.g., family social support) have a greater impact on work-home facilitation, and that resource generation from situations has a stronger effect on work-home facilitation than resource depletion from situations. This also suggests that the W-HR model needs to specifically distinguish types of work-home relationships.

Previous research has shown that leadership behavior (including servant leadership behavior) and work-home relationships have inherent dynamic characteristics and fluctuate daily [?, ?, ?, ?]. In particular, this daily fluctuating

servant leadership behavior can have important effects on leaders' work-home relationships beyond its impact on subordinates. However, previous research has neglected this issue. To address this gap, this study used experience sampling methodology to examine daily changes in W-HR and their role in the relationship between daily servant leadership behavior and daily work-home relationship experiences. Through this effort, our study responds to the call from [?, ?] and enhances our understanding of the inherent dynamic characteristics of the W-HR model.

## 4.2 Practical Implications

Servant leadership behavior is considered a positive leadership behavior that benefits the long-term well-being of all organizational stakeholders and is of great value for organizational development and innovation. Consequently, previous research has strongly advocated for the use of servant leadership behavior to manage employees. However, this study shows that servant leadership behavior has double-edged sword effects. Supervisors' engagement in servant leadership behavior brings both benefits and costs to themselves. Therefore, in practice, for managers to design and implement policies and measures that motivate supervisors to continuously display servant leadership behavior, they must both enable supervisors to experience work-home facilitation and reduce their work-home conflict. Our findings offer several insights for managers. First, organizations can design and implement policies to help supervisors balance their work and family lives. For example, implementing initiatives that allow supervisors to flexibly manage their work schedules and increase their control over work hours [?, ?, ?, ?] can further enhance supervisors' perceived organizational support, thereby helping to reduce the negative consequences of servant leadership behavior and increase the positive experiences associated with it. Second, organizations can implement supervisor training programs by clearly explaining to supervisors the personal benefits of engaging in servant leadership behavior (e.g., increased positive emotion), which can motivate more supervisors to display such behavior [?, ?]. Given that engaging in servant leadership behavior has certain negative effects, organizations need to take measures to reduce the resource depletion associated with it. For example, organizations can incorporate servant leadership behavior into performance evaluation criteria and provide financial rewards, helping supervisors obtain resource replenishment from practicing servant leadership behavior. Meanwhile, organizations can use various opportunities during work to provide recognition and praise for supervisors' servant leadership behavior, making supervisors feel that their behavior receives organizational support and thus experience a sense of value and meaning [?, ?]. This can quickly replenish supervisors' psychological resources [?, ?], thereby reducing or avoiding resource depletion and mitigating the disadvantages that servant leadership behavior brings to leaders themselves.

### 4.3 Research Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations. First, although we selected work-home conflict and work-home facilitation as outcome variables of servant leadership behavior in the family domain based on previous work-home literature, future research could expand the family outcome variables by considering attitudes and behaviors in family life, such as provision of spousal emotional support and family life satisfaction [?, ?, ?]. Second, although this study used a diary design and had supervisors evaluate their own servant leadership behavior and their direct managers evaluate supervisors' ethical and transformational leadership behaviors at different time points, this method still relies on self-reports and therefore cannot completely rule out common method bias. Future research could try alternative measurement approaches, such as having supervisors evaluate their own ethical and transformational leadership behaviors while direct managers evaluate supervisors' servant leadership behavior, and consider combining diary methods with experimental designs [?, ?, ?] to better verify the relationship between servant leadership behavior and work-home relationships. Finally, although this study examined the moderating effect of organizational support as a contextual resource condition on the relationship between servant leadership behavior and work-home relationships, other moderating mechanisms may exist. For example, previous research has found that contextual resources such as participation in decision-making may have contingent effects on work-family spillover [?, ?], and personal resources such as proactive personality can also predict individuals' work characteristics and related resource change processes [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Therefore, we encourage future research to examine how contextual and personal resources such as participation in decision-making or proactive personality moderate the spillover effects of servant leadership behavior. Additionally, future research could explore the benefits and costs of other service-oriented leadership behaviors (e.g., transformational leadership or responsible leadership) [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?].

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