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The more you connect, the less you connect: An examination of the role of phubbing at home and job crafting in the crossover and spillover effects of work–family spousal support on employee creativity

Siqi Wang[1] 🄳 | **Yasin Rofcanin**[2] | **Mireia Las Heras**[3] | **Zeynep Yalabik**[2]

[1]Aston Business School, Aston University, Birmingham, UK

[2]University of Bath, School of Management, Bath, UK

[3]IESE Business School, Barcelona, Spain

Correspondence
Siqi Wang, Aston Business School, Aston University, Birmingham, UK.
Email: wangs10@aston.ac.uk

Abstract

In an era where home and work domains have become inseparable, it is surprising that extant research has placed less emphasis on examining the boundary conditions and mechanisms to understand the home-to-work crossover and spillover process. Building on the work–home resources theory and the crossover-spillover perspectives, we test a resource-based crossover-spillover model of how one partner's work–family spousal support provision relates to the other partner's creativity at work. We propose that "phubbing" at home affects the crossover process of resource exchange between partners. Regarding the spillover from home to work, we propose that job crafting mediates the association between work–family spousal support and employee creativity. Daily diary data were collected from 65 dual-earner couples, over 15 working days in the United States. Results from the multilevel actor–partner interdependence model show that work–family support enhances employee creativity by prompting the employee's relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting at work. Moreover, our results reveal that the high level of phubbing at home weakens the work–family support crossover between partners. We contribute to the literature by adding evidence regarding the mechanisms that enable social support at home to turn into employee creativity at work.

Siqi Wang and Yasin Rofcanin contributed equally to this work.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the increasing prevalence of dual-earner couples in the workplace has attracted much attention from scholars. In the United States, 48.9% are dual-earner couples among married couples (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2023) who are facing the challenges of managing work and family responsibilities (Kossek et al., 2021; Patten, 2015; Petriglieri, 2019). A growing body of literature has documented that social support, coming from various sources (e.g., organizations, supervisors, co-workers, family members and friends) (Ford et al., 2007) helps employees to navigate the struggles faced in managing the boundary between work and family (French et al., 2018). Although employees can benefit a lot from work–family social support in the work domain (Hammer et al., 2011; Quade et al., 2021; Rofcanin et al., 2021), in the non-work domain, spousal support (Ford et al., 2007; French et al., 2018) is a crucial type of support to facilitate employee work performance.

Understanding the influence of spousal support is of paramount importance, as compared to other sources of social support, the romantic partner holds the ability to provide immediate support due to the proximity of partners to each other (Berg & Upchurch, 2007). In most situations, the partner has been identified as the first sharing target, with 75% of employed partners indicating a preference to initially share their emotional experiences with their partner to seek support (Rimé, 2009). Spousal support has crucial impacts on employed partners' work-related outcomes. It is positively related to the partner's career success (Judge et al., 1995; Ocampo et al., 2018), work–life balance (Gudmunson et al., 2009) and well-being (Bayhan Karapinar et al., 2020; Shin & Park, 2022). Given the importance of spousal support in the existing literature, scholars have only recently started to empirically explore the impacts of work–family spousal support on employed partners' work performance (Stollberger et al., 2022). In this study, we focus on work-specific spousal support instead of general spousal support because compared to general support, work–family support is more effective than general support in reducing work–family conflict (Kossek et al., 2011). Work–family support is defined as the various behaviours about how partners (and romantic partners in general) help their employed partners to better manage the relationship between work and family (Stollberger et al., 2022).

Fostering employee creativity is a crucial feature that could contribute to organizational innovation and success (Zhou & Hoever, 2014). Hence, in this study, we focus on exploring the impact of work–family spousal support on employee creativity, defined as the creation of innovative and valuable ideas at work (Amabile, 1996). A recent study has focused on employing positive affect and the flow experience at work as the primary explanatory mechanisms (Stollberger et al., 2022). However, we concur that the impact of spousal support on employee creativity requires more attention to further enrich our understanding of other possible explanatory mechanisms. Moreover, although we know that compassionate love could promote the work–family spousal support provision (Stollberger et al., 2022), less is known about what might impede the work–family support receiving process at home. Hence, in the current study, we aim to answer the following questions: (a) *How* does work–family spousal support impact employee creativity at work? (b) *What* might impede the crossover effects at home between romantic partners?

To examine the married couple dynamics in the work–family literature, much research has drawn on the work–home resources theory (hereafter the W–HR theory) (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) and spillover and crossover perspectives (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Westman, 2001). In the existing literature, the W–HR theory was adopted to explain how focal employees bring positive or negative experiences *at work to the home domain*. Subsequently, the focal employed partners will cross over the stress or the positive feelings (e.g., burnout, social support, self-efficacy, work passion, positive affect) to the partners at home which results in various outcomes (e.g., marital satisfaction, work engagement, work performance) (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009; Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Booth-Ledoux et al., 2020;

Carnes, 2017; Carlson et al., 2019; Tement et al., 2023; Wan et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2019). However, the positive crossover-spillover influences *from the home domain to the work domain* which starts from spousal support remains unexplored. Regarding the impacts of spousal support, a well-examined outcome in the literature is work–family conflict (French et al., 2018). However, we still do not know whether work–family spousal support can travel beyond the home domain to influence the employed partner's work performance. To uncover the positive crossover-spillover process starts from work–family spousal support, we integrate the W–HR theory and crossover, spillover perspective to examine *how* work–family spousal support travels all the way to work to affect the employed partner's creativity at work.

We propose that work–family spousal support provided by one partner promotes the other employed partner's job-crafting behaviours at work, which in turn, enhances the employed partner's creativity. The W–HR theory stipulates that contextual resources gained from the home domain can enrich the outcomes in the work domain. In the existing job-crafting literature, it is well-documented that job characteristics, individual characteristics and social context can predict job crafting (Bakker, 2010; Bindl et al., 2019; Rudolph et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Recent research has shown that job characteristics can also be treated as the mediating mechanism to explain how job crafting shapes the employee outcomes (e.g., well-being, positive attitudes, performance) (Holman et al., 2024). Most of the research about job crafting is mainly concentrated on the work domain (Bakker et al., 2016; Mukherjee & Dhar, 2023; Park & Park, 2023; Tims et al., 2014). Although some studies have shown that job crafting can contribute to the work-to-family enrichment process (Kim & Beehr, 2020; Loi et al., 2020; Lyu & Fan, 2022), less is known about whether home domain social support can promote job-crafting behaviour and then yield positive employee outcomes. Drawing on the W–HR theory, we propose that work–family spousal support is one of the contextual resources at home that enables the employed partner to engage in job crafting at work. Subsequently, job crafting can promote the employed partner's creativity at work via the generation of key resources (e.g., positive attitudes) (Holman et al., 2024; Stollberger et al., 2022).

This research also focuses on examining *what* factors might hinder the crossover effects at home between romantic employed partners. The ubiquitous use of communication technologies leads to the connectivity paradox such that individuals want to connect with the outside world using communication technologies (e.g., smartphones), but also get disconnected from people who surround them at home and work (Russo et al., 2019) . In the dual-earner couple dynamics, previous research has shown that communication technology usage may impede the crossover process of social support (Herrero et al., 2019). Moreover, the use of communication technologies can also impact an employed partner's perception of work–family conflict (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2007). In this study, we propose that phubbing at home will impede the work–family support crossover process from one employed partner to the other. The concept of "phubbing" is derived from the fusion of two words, namely, "phone" and "snubbing", which is defined as the behaviours that an individual focuses too much on their smartphone and snubs others in a social setting (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016, 2018; Haigh, 2012). Much empirical evidence has shown that phubbing behaviour of one party could lead to the depletion of key resources of the other party (e.g., lower self-esteem) (Thomas et al., 2022; Yasin et al., 2023; Yousaf et al., 2022). In dual-earner couples' relationships, phubbing also has detrimental impacts on their relationship quality (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Halpern & Katz, 2017). According to the W–HR theory, phubbing can be considered as a type of contextual demand that can lead to personal resource depletion and hinder the resources in the crossover process between employed partners. Moreover, the crossover perspective shows that indirect crossover arises from the social interaction between employed partners (Westman, 2001). Hence, we propose that phubbing could impede the crossover of work–family spousal support between employed partners.

Our theorizing and research aim to offer four contributions to the literature. First, we extend the W–HR theory by examining the combined effects of contextual demands and contextual resources on the crossover-spillover process from the home domain to the work domain. The W–HR theory proposes the enrichment process that is initiated by contextual resources (e.g., social support) and the depleting process that is initiated by contextual demands (e.g., conflicts at home, disappointments) between work and home domains (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). In this study, we focus on the combined effects

of work–family spousal support (contextual resources) and phubbing behaviour at home (contextual demands) of one employed partner on the other employed partner's work–family support perceptions and the job-crafting behaviours at work. Going beyond the existing literature that examines the enrichment process and depleting process proposed by the W–HR theory, this research extends our understanding of the home-to-work enrichment process by considering phubbing at home as a new category of contextually demanding condition that impedes the effective transferral of resources within the home domain (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012).

Second, this study examines the moderating effect of phubbing at home to contribute to the existing work–family literature on understanding the conditions under which the crossover effects between romantic partners at home might be impeded. Phubbing has been found to have negative impacts on married couples' relationship quality (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Halpern & Katz, 2017) and undermines the perception of empathetic concern, relationship satisfaction and conversation quality. Although previous research has shown that there are discrepancies between the perception of provision and the perception of receipt in the married relationship (Grote & Clark, 2001), in the existing literature, less is known about whether phubbing might hinder the resource transferal process. In this study, we go beyond the existing literature and aim to demonstrate how communication technology use at home could undermine the positive resource crossover process between romantic employed partners.

Third, we go beyond the current work–family support literature to introduce two novel explanatory mechanisms (i.e., relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting) to uncover the positive spillover effects from work–family spousal support at home to employee creativity. According to the W–HR theory, in the home-to-work enrichment process, contextual resources allow individuals to have more personal resources to engage in positive work behaviours (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Previous research indicated that job resources are important antecedents of job crafting (Rudolph et al., 2017). Since social support is an important antecedent of job crafting, however, less attention has been paid to social support from the home domain as the antecedent of job crafting. Hence, in this study, we go beyond the work domain and propose that social resources received at home can also predict job crafting at work (Wayne et al., 2007). A conceptual review article has indicated that the understanding of whether social support could facilitate crafting behaviours remains unexplored (De Bloom et al., 2020). Hence, we aim to contribute to the antecedents of job crafting from the home domain by examining work–family spousal support as the antecedent of job crafting at work. We collected diary data from dual-earner couples in the United States to test our conceptual model (Figure 1).

Fourth, we contribute to the work–family literature by investigating the nuanced interactions within dual-earner couples in relation to the impacts of work–family spousal support on work outcomes. We examined the proposed relationships for both partners simultaneously using the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) (Kenny et al., 2006). Our study extends beyond existing literature, which mainly examines spillover-crossover effects *from the work domain to the home domain* (Booth-Ledoux et al., 2020; Tement et al., 2023; Thompson et al., 2023). We aim to investigate the positive crossover-spillover dyadic process *from the home domain to the work domain*. Specifically, we explore whether work–family spousal support can travel beyond the home domain to influence the employed partner's work outcomes (i.e., job crafting and creativity). Moreover, we further investigate the role of phubbing as a condition in the crossover process, aiming to advance our understanding of the crossover process between dual-earner partners.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The W–HR theory

The basic tenet of the resource perspective (i.e., Conservation of Resource Theory; COR) is that people attempt to obtain, retain and protect resources and that stress occurs when people risk losing or lose
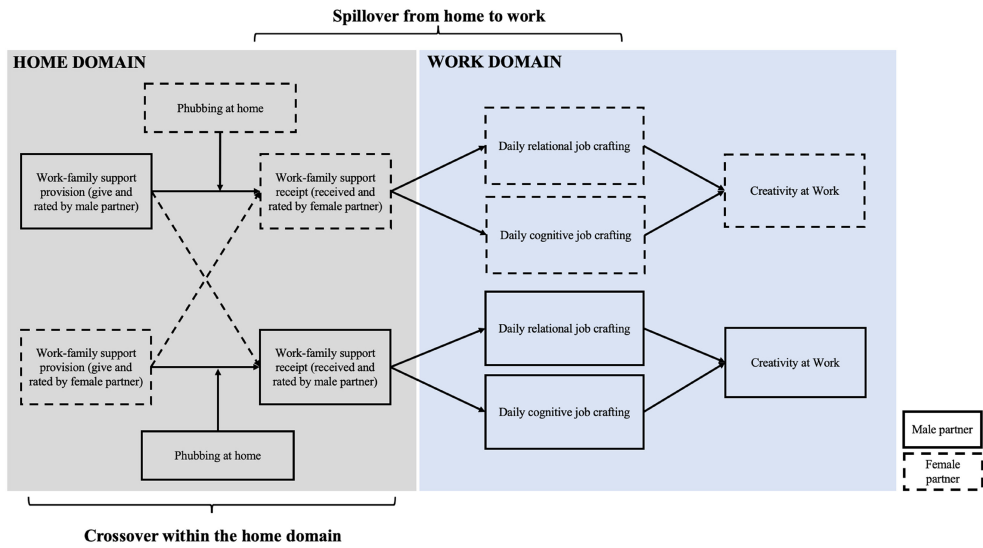
FIGURE 1 Conceptual model-APIM model.

resources (Hobfoll, 2002). The COR theory underlines two basic assumptions that explain the processes and conditions under which resources are exchanged: the gain spiral (or enrichment), in which resources accumulate within or between domains and lead to more resources and the loss spiral (or conflict), in which resources are depleted and lost (Hobfoll, 2002).

Emanating from the COR theory and the recent developments in the work–family research, the Work–Home Resource (i.e., the W–HR theory) is developed to explore and adopt the ideas of enrichment and conflict specifically within the work–home interface (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). The W–HR theory differentiates between the types of resources concerning where they emerge (contextual vs. personal resources) and their transience (volatile vs. structural resources). In addition to its focus on resources, the W–HR theory proposes that there are contextual threats, such as hindering work and home demands, which may prevent the enrichment process between work and family domains (Booth-Ledoux et al., 2020). We draw on the insights of the W–HR theory to develop and test a model of how work–family support provision at home impacts employees' creativity at work. To this end, we explore a crossover mechanism at home (work–family support given and received between the intimate partners) and a spillover mechanism to employees' creativity (those who receive support from their intimate partners) using investigating the role of cognitive and relational job crafting. Finally, we integrate the hindering role of phubbing at home, a recent phenomenon and condition that sheds light on how enrichment from home to work is likely to be impeded.

The crossover-spillover angle within the W–HR theory

The process in which the psychological stress or well-being experienced by one person affects the experience and perceptions of another person is referred to as crossover (Westman, 2001; Westman & Vinokur, 1998). Crossover perspective (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009, 2018; Westman, 2001) underlines three broad routes (we should note that from now on we use the crossover to refer to the transmission of positive experiences instead of strain) including (a) direct transmission of experiences between partners, (b) shared experiences and (c) interactional as well as relational support. In our study, we explicitly focus on the transmission of positive experiences (i.e., perceived work–family support by one's partner) via the third route of crossover perspective. The spillover perspective underlines that a person's experiences that develop in one domain can carry over into

the other domain (Zedeck, 1992), which then becomes a link to connect work and home (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018). We integrate and discuss the crossover-spillover perspectives within the W–HR theory in our manuscript.

The APIM

Given the increasing prevalence of dual-earner couples in work settings, researchers have increasingly realized the importance of testing the mutual dynamics between the members of a couple. While previous research has usually focused on employees and their supervisors as units of analysis for APIM, increasing attention is now being paid to the employed partners of romantic couples. The adoption of APIM allows us to test the mutual effects between the members in the dyad and examine the actor and partner effects simultaneously (Kenny et al., 2006).

In the APIM, actor effects refer to one's independent variable affecting this person's dependent variable; partner effects refer to one's independent variable affecting this person's partner's dependent variable. To illustrate, the impact of the perception of support received by one's partner (e.g., Partner A) on the focal employees' own cognitive and relational job crafting is an actor effect (Partner B). In contrast, partner effect refers to the impact of perceived support received by one's partner (e.g., Partner A) on the other partner's (e.g., Partner B) cognitive and relational job crafting. The theoretical and methodological advantage of the APIM model is that since the partners of a romantic couple are exposed to the same family environment, adopting the APIM method enables us to better capture how the impact of the perception of support shapes the dimensions of job crafting and employee creativity (Cook & Kenny, 2005; Kenny, 2018).

Crossover within the home domain

Work–family support provision and receipt

Positive crossover posits that the positive experience of one party can be crossed over to another party (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009; Westman, 2001). The indirect crossover occurs from the social interaction between partners (Westman, 2001). Previous studies have mainly examined the indirect crossover of negative experiences (e.g., burnout, work strain) between partners (Amstad & Semmer, 2011; Booth-Ledoux et al., 2020). Based on the crossover perspective, we focus on the indirect crossover of positive experiences between partners via the third route which is that the work–family support can crossover from one partner to the other partner via social interaction (Westman, 2001).

For dual-earner couples, the romantic partner is an important source that provides essential support for employees (French et al., 2018). To initiate the crossover process, the partner can provide work–family-related emotional and instrumental support to the partner to help him or her cope with work–family conflicts. For example, the partner could do more household chores, take care of children (Crawford et al., 2019) and provide empathy and consolation to the focal employee who shares negative experiences at work (Tremmel & Sonnentag, 2018). An example of the benefits of such support is in Tremmel and Sonnentag (2018) study, which shows that conversations between partners (affective sharing mode and cognitive sharing mode) attenuate the harm of negative experiences at work. Through these social interactions, the partner will have a high perception of the work–family support provided by the other partner.

One partner can help the other partner to share his/her concerns and offer potential solutions to complex work–home conflicts; s/he can also role model how to balance work and home -demands, can also help in organizing home life and work in a way that benefits both the family and the partner's work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Receiving work–family support from one's partner is very relevant when

both partners work full time and even more if they have caring responsibilities – for elders and/or for children, for instance. Hence, we first hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1. Within persons, actor work–family support provision is positively related to the employed partner's work–family support receipt at home.

Work–family support provision and receipt at home: The moderating role of phubbing at home

We further argue that the strength of the relationship between work–family support provision (i.e., spousal support) and work–family support receipt (i.e., spousal support) is moderated by the phubbing behaviour of the recipient. Specifically, we propose that the association between work–family support provision and the work–family support receipt is weaker when the partner (work–family support recipient) engages in phubbing at home. In our study, we argue that phubbing at home can be considered as a type of contextual demand that may prevent the effective resources transferral within the home domain. According to the W–HR theory, contextual demands include overload, physical, emotional and cognitively taxing conditions (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Contextual demands like phubbing at home are likely to deplete the partner's energy, focus and attention, impeding the enrichment and other processes that make sharing and communication very challenging. Thus, if the partner engages in phubbing at home, the social interaction decreases and the indirect crossover cannot occur (Westman, 2001). Previous research also showed that individuals' smartphone use distracts their attention and undermines their enjoyment of in-person interactions (Dwyer et al., 2018). This is also aligned with the W–HR theory which emphasizes that the contextual demands lead to personal resource depletion.

In addition, phubbing at home also contributes to their work–life conflict. The ubiquitous use of smartphones allows individuals to get connected at any time and any place (Andreassen & Pallesen, 2014). Although this situation has many advantages, extensive research indicates that the use of communication technologies after work hours increases work–life conflict (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2007; Butts et al., 2015; Diaz et al., 2012), subsequently negatively impacting the social interaction between partners (Derks et al., 2015; Van Steenbergen et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2021). Phubbing harms social relationships and contributes to conflict via three routes: expectancy violation, social exclusion/ostracism and attentional conflict (Vanden Abeele, 2020). We focus on the attentional conflict route as it can be used to explain intrapersonal phubbing behaviour. The attentional conflict route describes that smartphone acts as the environment cue that would compete for attention in social interaction between partners and cause attentional conflict (Vanden Abeele, 2020). This attentional conflict would further lead to cognitive overload (Baron, 1986) and resource depletion. Hence, in our study, we argue that phubbing distracts the work–family support recipient's attention and interrupts the crossover of the resources between partners.

Moreover, much empirical evidence has shown that phubbing could create psychological distance between romantic partners (Vanden Abeele & Postma-Nilsenova, 2018). It weakens the bond between partners and undermines the perception of empathetic concerns, both of which impact relationship satisfaction and the conversation quality (Al-Saggaf & O'Donnell, 2019; Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016; Halpern & Katz, 2017; Roberts & David, 2016, 2022; Sbarra et al., 2019; Togar et al., 2023). We also know that smartphone addiction decreases the perception of receiving social support (Herrero et al., 2019). Hence, we argue that phubbing at home will negatively impact the indirect crossover between employed partners by reducing the quality of social interaction between them. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2. Phubbing at home moderates the positive association between work–family support provision and the work–family support receipt such that the association is more positive (vs. less positive) when the recipient phubbs less (vs. more) at home.

Spillover from home to work

Work–family support and creativity at work: The role of relational and cognitive job crafting

Social support is an essential contextual resource for individuals because they can invest in things that they value (Hobfoll et al., 1990, 2018). Social support, such as family supportive supervisor behaviour (FSSB) (Russo et al., 2018), co-worker support (Stollberger et al., 2022), perceived organizational support (Rofcanin, Bakker, et al., 2019; Rofcanin, Las Heras, et al., 2019) and work–family-friendly culture (Las Heras et al., 2021) often act as the starting point of the family-to-work enrichment process (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). We propose that the specific type of social support, i.e. work–family spousal support, is a crucial contextual resource for employees to engage in job crafting at work.

According to the W–HR theory, contextual resources gained from the family domain can contribute to the functioning of the work domain (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Contextual variables such as social support could also have important impacts on employees' ability to engage in job crafting (De Bloom et al., 2020; Loi et al., 2020). Job crafting is defined as the proactive job redesign process initiated by employees to modify the boundaries of their jobs either cognitively and/or behaviorally (Grant & Parker, 2009; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Extensive research has shown that job crafting positively relates to various employee work outcomes (Lee & Lee, 2018; Zhang & Parker, 2019). According to the role-based job-crafting theory (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), there are three types of job crafting: task job crafting, relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting. Task crafting means employees change the job task boundaries such as the job types, scope and number. Relational job crafting refers to employees intentionally changing the relational aspects at work (e.g., interaction time with co-workers). Cognitive job crafting involves changing the ways employees perceive or view their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Based on the W–HR theory, we argue that when employed partners receive the work–family support provided by their partner which can be viewed as the contextual resource from the home domain, this contextual resource enables the employed partner to generate useful personal resources and then utilize these resources to engage in proactive work behaviours (e.g., relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting).

Work–family support and job crafting

We first propose that work–family support obtained from one's partner will lead to relational job crafting. We explain the link between the support from the partner to the employed partner's relational job crafting via spillover process. Spillover from home to work refers to a process whereby an individual can carry the experience from the home domain to the work domain (Eby et al., 2005). As such, when an employed partner feels supported and resourceful at home, this positive experience can spill over to the work domain, enhancing desirable outcomes like work performance.

We argue that the spillover process from spousal support to relational job crafting occurs via decreased work–family conflict. As such, the specific support provided by the romantic partner to help the other employed partner balance work and family to avoid or reduce the stress caused by work–family conflict (French et al., 2018; Michel et al., 2011). Given the depleting nature of work–family conflict (Allen et al., 2000; Greenhaus et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2012), when one of the employed partners receives ample work–family support at home, s/he will save personal resources (e.g., time, energy and emotions) from dealing with work–family conflict issues that can be invested into work.

Moreover, one important dimension of spousal support for work–family is emotional support which can provide valuable personal resources (e.g., positive affect) (Hobfoll, 2002; Stollberger et al., 2022). The positive emotional support experienced at home is especially likely to influence both the emotional and the relational perspectives at work (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Prior research has shown that when the

partner receives spousal support, s/he is more likely to invest in the interpersonal relationship at work (Booth-Ledoux et al., 2020). In addition, empirical evidence from job-crafting literature has also recognized the important role of social support. Previous research shows that social support received in the workplace can predict the relational job crafting (Kim et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2017). In the home domain, social resources from family could also motivate employees to craft employee relationships at work (Wang et al., 2020). Recent empirical evidence has supported that recovery experience at home can facilitate job-crafting behaviours, thereby extending the relational boundaries associated with a job (Hur & Shin, 2023).

In our study, we propose that when the employed partner receives work–family support at home which enables them to manage work and family, s/he will show more empathy towards other people at work (e.g., coworkers, customers, or supervisors) and thus engage in relational job crafting.

Drawing on this indirect evidence, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3a. Work–family support receipt is positively related to relational job crafting.

Moreover, we propose that work–family support obtained from the partner is likely to lead to cognitive job crafting. Cognitive job crafting involves employees' self-initiated actions to change their perceptions and views of their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Employees who engage in cognitive job crafting could change their jobs psychologically by redefining their view of the job and reframing the job to be a meaningful whole (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010). One example of cognitive job crafting is a case of employees who proactively focus on the positive side of their job (Vuori et al., 2012).

In the current job-crafting literature, compared with other job-crafting types, less attention has been paid to the cognitive job crafting (Zhang & Parker, 2019). The extant literature has found that social support, job characteristics and personal resources (e.g., organizational support, job autonomy, self-determination, job meaningfulness, job insecurity, recovery experience and creative self-efficacy) are positively related to the cognitive job crafting (Buonocore et al., 2020; Hur & Shin, 2023; Kilic & Kitapci, 2023; Kim et al., 2018). According to the W–HR theory, the contextual resources, such as social support, will lead to the generation of personal resources (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). In our study, the employed partner can use the personal resources (e.g., positive affect) generated from the work–family support to cognitively change their view of the job. Moreover, work–family support can help the partner to achieve a balance between work and life and enhance the feeling of meaningfulness at work (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009; Munn, 2013), which could allow the partner to have a positive view of their job (Kilic & Kitapci, 2023).

Hence, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3b. Work–family support receipt is positively related to cognitive job crafting.

The mediating role of relational and cognitive job crafting

We further proposed that relational job and cognitive job crafting mediate the positive association between work–family support and employee creativity. In the existing job-crafting literature, it is well-documented that individual characteristics, work environment and occupational identity can predict job crafting (Bakker, 2010; Bindl et al., 2019; Rudolph et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2024) and job crafting also has positive impacts on work performance (Holman et al., 2024). Most of the research about job crafting is mainly concentrated on the work domain (Bakker et al., 2016; Mukherjee & Dhar, 2023; Park & Park, 2023; Tims et al., 2014). Although empirical studies have shown that job crafting can reduce the work–family conflict (Lyu & Fan, 2022) and promote work–family enrichment (Kim & Beehr, 2020; Loi et al., 2020), less is known about whether home domain social support can promote the job-crafting behaviour and then yield employee creativity. Moreover, job

crafting is a self-initiated job redesign behaviour that allows individuals to modify their work cognitively and/or behaviorally (Grant & Parker, 2009; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Employees need to be creative to change the boundaries of their work role to meet their individual needs at work. Empirical evidence has also shown that engaging in job crafting allows employees to gain more job resources (Tims et al., 2013) and engage in creative performance at work (Demerouti et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2017).

Drawing on the W–HR theory, we propose that by exerting relational and cognitive job crafting the employed partner can obtain more essential resources (e.g., self-esteem, job satisfaction; Fuller & Unwin, 2017; Kim et al., 2018; social resources; Holman et al., 2024). In turn, this partner can invest those resources in creative behaviours at work as previous research has shown that personal resources such as self-efficacy (Redmond et al., 1993) and positive affect (Amabile et al., 2005; Madjar et al., 2002) are important predictors of work creativity.

We thus hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 4.** Relational (H4a) and cognitive job crafting (H4b) mediate the positive relationship between work–family support receipt and creativity at work.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and procedure

We chose the experience sampling design with a daily interval because the association between job crafting and employee creativity is likely to vary across days (see examples Demerouti et al., 2015; Stollberger et al., 2022). All participants in this study were dual-earner couples engaged in full-time employment within the United States. Individuals not employed full-time were excluded from participation. The participants were recruited by a provider called ROI Rocket (see Liu et al., 2020; Stollberger et al., 2022 for using the same data provider). Before the data-collection process, we informed our participants that all data were anonymized and securely stored with restricted access. Participants were assured that their responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and any identifiable information was kept strictly confidential, accessible only to the research team. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained from all participants, emphasizing their voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any stage without any repercussions. We distributed questionnaires online.

To encourage participants, all couples received $130 as a monetary incentive for questionnaire completion. The survey includes a baseline questionnaire and daily questionnaires. In the baseline questionnaire, we measure the demographics, the work–family support and the compassionate love. In the daily questionnaires, we measure the daily relational job crafting, daily cognitive job crafting and daily creativity at work. All participants received a survey at 6 pm each day for the following 14 consecutive working days. In the end, we received 65 couples (for a response rate of 75%) who have completed 910 daily matched surveys. In our sample, the male partner demographics were: average age was 34.64 years ($SD = 7.37$) and the average tenure in their current organization was 10.19 years ($SD = 8.12$). The female partner demographics were: the average age was 35.15 ($SD = 7.55$) and the average organizational tenure was 10.76 years ($SD = 9.28$).

Measures

Unless otherwise stated, all items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). To minimize participants' burden during experience sampling studies, we followed recommendations by Beal (2015) and Ohly et al. (2010) to adopt short versions of measurement scales for our constructs in this study.

Work–family support

We measured work–family support using a four-item scale adapted from the FSSB short scale developed by Hammer et al. (2013). For the work–family support provided by the partner, an example item is "I've made my partner feel comfortable talking about his/her conflicts between work and non-work". ($\alpha = .76$ and .83 for female partner and male partner, respectively). For the work–family support received by the partner, an example item is "My partner has made me feel comfortable talking about my conflicts between work and non-work". ($\alpha = .88$ and .88 for female partner and male partner, respectively).

Daily relational job crafting

We assessed daily relational job crafting with a four-item scale developed by Laurence (2010). An example item was "Today, I expanded my relational network to effectively achieve my work goals." (α averaged across days = .92 and .89 for female partner and male partner, respectively).

Daily cognitive job crafting

We assessed daily cognitive job crafting with a four-item scale developed by Laurence (2010). An example item was "Today, I enhanced the purpose of my job." (α averaged across days = .92 and .90 for the female partner and male partner, respectively).

Daily creativity at work

We assessed daily cognitive job crafting with a three-item scale developed by Tierney (1999). An example item was "Today, I've demonstrated originality in fulfilling my work." (α averaged across days = .93 and .93 for the female partner and male partner, respectively).

Daily phubbing at home

We assessed daily phubbing at home with a four-item scale developed by Roberts and David (2016). An example item was "Today, I used my phone when I was talking to my partner" (α averaged across days = .90 and .91 for the female partner and male partner, respectively).

Control variables

In this paper, three control variables will be included in the survey, including participants' age, the number of children and compassionate love from the partner. All these three control variables were measured as continuous variables. Age and the number of children might affect the spillover from the home domain to the work domain, thus, we have controlled their effects in this study. We controlled for compassionate love as previous research showed that compassionate love could moderate the work–family support provision and receipt between members in the couple (Stollberger et al., 2022). Compassionate love was measured by four items from the Love Attitudes Scale Short Form developed by (Hendrick et al., 1998). A sample item is "I am usually willing to sacrifice my own wishes to let my partner achieve his/hers." When including the control variables in our model, the strength and direction of the results of our hypotheses did not change significantly. Therefore, we excluded them from the analyses to achieve parsimony and simplicity (Becker et al., 2016).

Analytical strategy

Given the nested nature of our study (i.e., daily responses were nested within participants), the daily level is the first level and the between participants level is the second level. Specifically, we modelled the work–family support as the level-2 variables and relational job crafting, cognitive job crafting and creativity at work as the level-1 variables. We calculated the intraclass correlation for day-level variables, including relational job crafting (77% and 73% for male partners and female partners, respectively), cognitive job crafting (75% and 74% for male partners and female partners, respectively), creativity at work (61% and 68% for male partners and female partners, respectively). The results suggest that multilevel analysis was appropriate for this study. We employed multi-level APIM analyses (APIM, Kenny et al., 2006) using Mplus 8.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017) software to test our hypotheses (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016; Preacher et al., 2010). The APIM allows us to test the mutual effects between the members in the dyad (Kenny et al., 2006). In this study, the relationship between work–family support provision, work–family support receipt, relational job crafting, cognitive job crafting and creativity at work is tested simultaneously for both male partners and female partners.

Following the recommendations by Ohly et al. (2010), we centered the control variables and level-2 variables on the grand mean and the level-1 daily variables were person-mean centered. To test the direct relationships, we conducted APIM multilevel path analysis in Mplus 8.3. To test the mediation effects for couples (APIMeM), we follow the recommended procedures by Ledermann et al. (2011) and employed the Monte Carlo simulation in R with 20,000 iterations to get the bias-corrected confidence interval (CI) at 95% (Selig & Preacher, 2008). If the CI does not include zero, the indirect relationship is supported. To handle the missing data, we adopted full-information maximum-likelihood estimation following the suggestion by Newman (2014).

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables in this study.

Preliminary analyses

Prior to testing the hypotheses, we conducted multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) to determine the distinctiveness of all daily variables in the proposed model (10 constructs). The proposed model (12-factor model) showed a satisfactory fit with the data ($\chi^2 = 3535.93$; $df = 682$, $p < .001$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .96; Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = .95; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .04; standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) within = .02; SRMR between = .08). We also tested two alternative models. In the alternative model 1, we combined relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting into one factor (10-factor model: $\chi^2 = 3857.75$; $df = 695$, $p < .001$; CFI = .87; TLI = .85; RMSEA = .08; SRMR within = .05; SRMR between = .08) which was worse than the 12-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 179.01$, $\Delta df = 13$, $p < .001$). In the alternative model 2, we combined cognitive job crafting and creativity at work into one factor (10-factor model: $\chi^2 = 4529.75$; $df = 695$, $p < .001$; CFI = .82; TLI = .81; RMSEA = .08; SRMR within = .04; SRMR between =.08) which was also worse than the 12-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 305.46$, $\Delta df = 13$, $p < .001$). The results showed that our proposed model has a better fit than other alternative models.

We further tested the distinguishability of our data. Before conducting APIM, Kenny et al. (2006) suggest that we need to identify whether the two dyad members are empirically and theoretically distinguished from each other based on a certain variable (e.g., gender). In this study, although the two members of heterosexual couple dyads are theoretically distinguished, we still need to test whether they are empirically distinguished (Kenny et al., 2006; Kenny & Ledermann, 2010). Hence, we conducted an omnibus test of distinguishability to examine whether we can treat the female partner and the male

TABLE 1 Means, standard deviations, correlations and reliabilities (on the diagonal between brackets) of the study variables.

Variables	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
Day level														
1. Daily relational job crafting, male	4.70	1.53	(.89)											
2. Daily relational job crafting, female	4.57	1.45	.14**	(.92)										
3. Daily cognitive job crafting, male	4.74	1.43	.41**	.10**	(.90)									
4. Daily cognitive job crafting, female	4.59	1.46	.13**	.32**	.12**	(.92)								
5. Daily creativity at work, male	5.16	1.08	.34**	.34**	.31**	.10**	(.93)							
6. Daily creativity at work, female	5.02	1.23	.11**	.25**	.09**	.25**	.09**	(.93)						
7. Daily phubbing at home, male	3.99	2.09	.11**	.12**	.09*	.11**	.06	.06	(.91)					
8. Daily phubbing at home, female	4.02	2.03	.22**	.23**	.20**	.23**	.14**	.16**	.65**	(.90)				
General level														
9. Work–family support provision, male	5.87	1.10	.43**	.42**	.40**	.41**	.42**	.38**	−.06	−.08	(.83)			
10. Work–family support receipt, male	6.00	1.06	.31*	.41**	.27*	.33**	.25*	.27*	.05	.02	.77**	(.88)		
11. Work–family support provision, female	5.91	.87	.31*	.40**	.28*	.35**	.29*	.35*	.02	−.07	.59**	.63**	(.76)	
12. Work–family support receipt, female	5.78	1.13	.35**	.44**	.31*	.40**	.30*	.40**	−.02	.05	.67**	.60**	.68**	(.88)

Note: Correlations are based on within-person data (N = 910). The correlations between general level variables and day-level variables are based on between-person averages (N = 65).

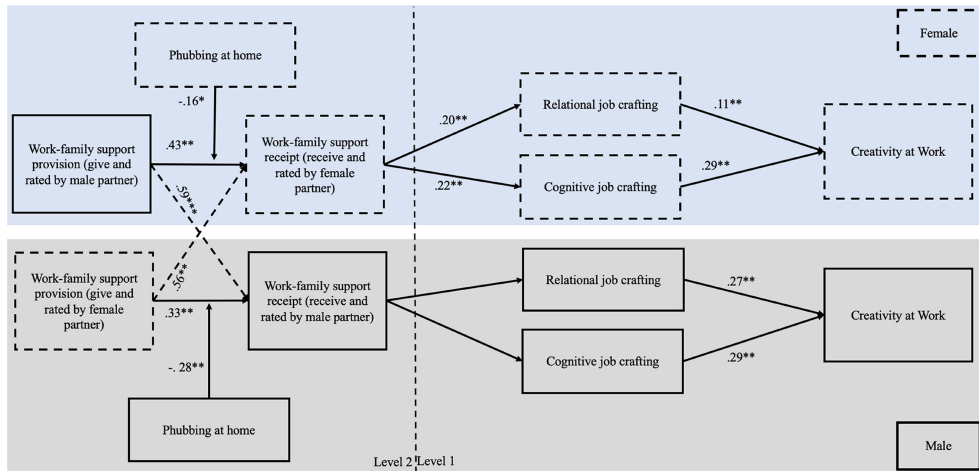Abbreviation: ICC, intraclass coefficient.

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

FIGURE 2 APIM results. *$p<.05$. **$p<0.01$.

partner as distinguishable. We compared the model fit between a constrained model and an unconstrained model. In the constrained model, we set the means, variances and correlations of the study variables to be equal across the female partner and the male partner in dyads. The unconstrained model was the model with our main analysis and set the means, variances and correlations of the study variables all to be free. We then test the χ^2 difference to see whether there are statistical differences between these two models. When conducting χ^2 difference tests using the MLR estimator in Mplus, we adjusted the χ^2 using the Satorra-Bentler scaling correction. In this chi-square difference test, significant differences were observed between women and men ($\Delta\chi^2 = 54.763$, $p<.001$). Therefore, in our data, we treat the female partner and male partner as distinguishable and all effects in the model were analysed following the protocols for distinguishable dyads (Kenny et al., 2006).

Hypothesis testing

Figure 2 presents the results of the overall model. Hypothesis 1 proposed a positive crossover effect of the work–family support from one partner to the other partner. Consistent with the previous study (Stollberger et al., 2022), our results showed that the male partner's work–family support provision was positively associated with the female partner's work–family support receipt ($\beta = .43$, $SE = .10$, $p<.001$); the female partner's work–family support provision was positively associated with male partner's work–family support receipt ($\beta = .56$, $SE = .13$, $p<.001$). Thus, our first hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that phubbing at home moderates the positive association between work–family support provision and the work–family support receipt such that the association is more positive (vs. less positive) when the recipient phubbing less (vs. more) at home. The results showed that, for both partners, phubbing at home moderates the positive association between work–family support provision and the work–family support receipt. When the male partner is the work–family support provider, the interaction term was negative and significant ($\beta = -.16$, $SE = .07$, $p<.05$). When the work–family support receipt engaged in a high level of phubbing behaviour, the relationship between work–family support provision and receipt was significant and positive ($\beta = .36$, $SE = .18$, $p<.05$). When the male partner possesses a low level of motivation for healthiness, the simple slope was positive and significant ($\beta = .83$, $SE = .17$, $p<.001$). When the female partner is the work–family support provider, the interaction term was negative and significant ($\beta = -.28$, $SE = .09$, $p<.001$). When the work–family support receipt engaged in a high level of phubbing behaviour, the relationship between work–family support provision and receipt was insignificant ($\beta = -.12$, $SE = .30$, $p = .96$). When the male partner possesses a
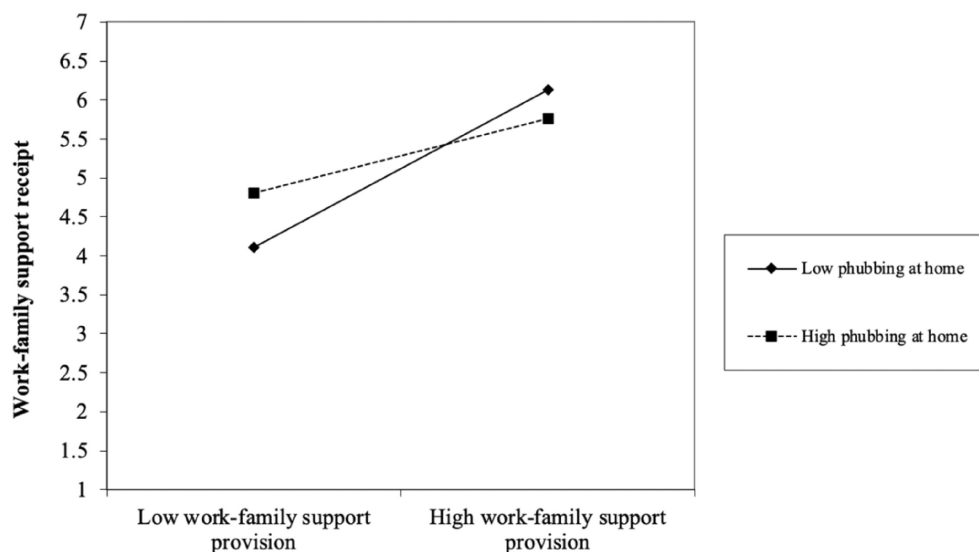
FIGURE 3 The link between work–family support provision (male partner) and the work–family support receipt (female partner) moderated by phubbing at home.

low level of motivation for healthiness, the simple slope was positive and significant ($\beta = 1.15$, $SE = .17$, $p < .001$). We plotted the interaction at $1SD$ above and $1SD$ below the mean of the phubbing at home of the male partner and the female partner respectively. Results of the simple slope test further showed that work–family support provided by one partner (e.g., partner A) can successfully cross over to the other partner (e.g., partner B) when there is less phubbing behaviour at home by the work–family support receipt. However, when there is more phubbing behaviour at home by the work–family support receipt, the work–family support receipt cannot properly receive the support. Figures 3 and 4 present the plotted interaction effects. Hence, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that work–family support receipt is positively related to relational job crafting (H3a); and cognitive job crafting (H3b). Our results showed gender differences. For the male partner, our results showed that work–family support receipt was not positively associated with relational job crafting ($\beta = .07$, $SE = .13$, $p = .597$), nor the cognitive job crafting ($\beta = .07$, $SE = .12$, $p = .435$). For the female partner, our results showed that work–family support receipt was positively associated with relational job crafting ($\beta = .20$, $SE = .10$, $p < .05$) and cognitive job crafting ($\beta = .22$, $SE = .10$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 4 proposed that there is a positive association between work–family support receipt and creativity at work via relational job crafting (H4a) and cognitive job crafting (H4b), at a daily level. We found gender differences when testing the mediation effects. For the male partner, the indirect effect of work–family support receipt on creativity at work via relational job crafting (indirect effect = .17, 95% CI Low = −.12; CI High = .45); and via cognitive job crafting (indirect effect = −.004, 95% CI Low = −.039; CI High = .032). These CIs include zero, hence the indirect effects were not significant for the male partner.

In contrast, for the female partner, our results showed that work–family support receipt was positively related to relational job crafting ($\beta = .36$, $SE = .16$, $p < .05$), which in turn was positively associated with creativity at work ($\beta = .23$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$). The indirect effect of work–family support receipt on creativity at work via relational job crafting (indirect effect = .150, 95% CI Low = .159; CI High = .563), was positive and significant. In addition, our results showed that work–family support receipt was positively related to cognitive job crafting ($\beta = .41$, $SE = .18$, $p < .05$), which in turn was positively associated with creativity at work ($\beta = .23$, $SE = .32$, $p < .01$). The indirect effect of work–family support receipt on creativity at work via cognitive job crafting (indirect effect = .361, 95% CI Low = .040; CI High = .259), was positive and significant.
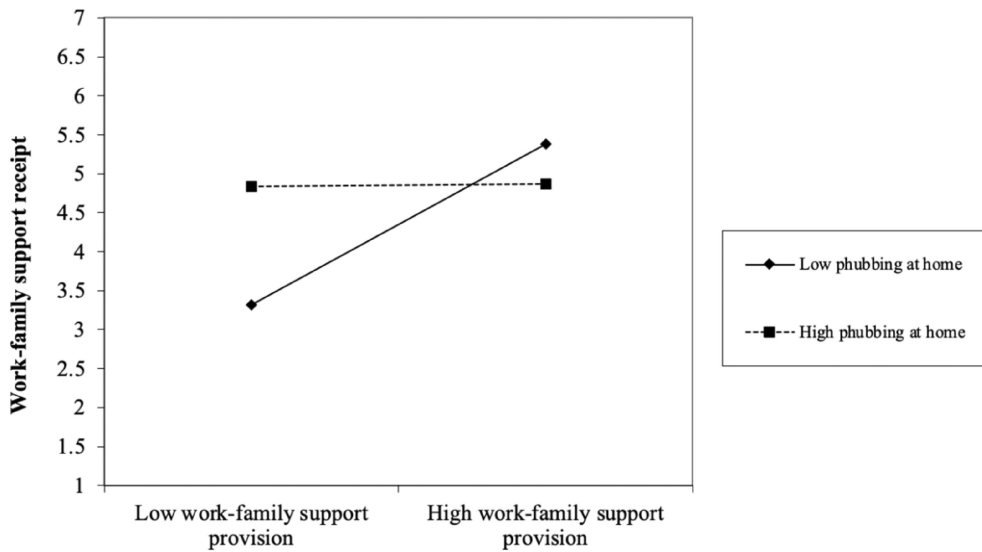
FIGURE 4 The link between work–family support provision (female partner) and the work–family support receipt (male partner) moderated by phubbing at home.

The results of both Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 have indicated gender differences. A possible explanation for these gender differences could lie in the notion of sex roles attitudes. Among our sample, the division of sex roles might be more determined and discrete, as a result, placing women in a position where they need more resources to experience a positive family-to-work enrichment process.

DISCUSSION

Researchers have highlighted the importance of helping dual-earner couples manage work and home lives (Hall & MacDermid, 2009; Hirschi et al., 2019; Shockley et al., 2021). The existing literature has paid much attention to examining how support from the work domain could help employees manage work and life (Crain & Stevens, 2018). This study emphasized the support from the home domain to uncover how dual-earner couples utilize the support from their partner to facilitate their creativity at work via proactive job-crafting behaviours (cognitive job crafting and relational job crafting). Most of our hypotheses have been supported and we also found that there is a gender difference observed in the family-to-work enrichment process. We discuss the importance of these findings below.

Theoretical implications

An important first contribution of our research relates to the extension of the W–HR theory. The theory proposes how dealing with contextual demands in one domain can drain personal resources and thus interfere with the other domain (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Our focus on phubbing at home, as a boundary condition, shows that the exchange of work–family support between the partners is interrupted when one of the partners engages in phubbing and thus steers away the personal resources from investing in these relationships. As a recently explored and new phenomenon underpinned with the post-pandemic era, our results are aligned with research showing the draining nature of connectedness to technology and spillover effects on work life. Furthermore, the W–HR theory discusses different categories of contextual demands including overload, physical, emotional and cognitively taxing conditions. Phubbing at home can

be considered as a new category of contextually detrimental condition that prevents the effective transferral and utilization of resources within the home domain and hence extends the contextual resources category of the W–HR theory (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Furthermore, our focus on a daily diary design that includes dual-earner couples in the United States is a further strength to support the propositions of the theory and shows short term processes and transitions between home and work have a significant impact on employees' lives in both domains (Aw et al., 2021; Du et al., 2018, 2020).

A second contribution of our research is our focus on and integration of a relatively new and interesting phenomenon of phubbing at home. As recent research has shown, although technology has led to several remarkable positive outcomes, addiction to and overuse of technology is also associated with severe negative consequences (Cousins & Robey, 2015) leading to stress and strain (Stankovic et al., 2021). Studies have mainly explored the impact of phubbing within the work domains, overlooking the potential consequences for romantic couples and its spillover impact in other domains. This omission is crucial in light of growing evidence underpinning the role of crossover in dual-earner couples (Rofcanin, Bakker, et al., 2019; Rofcanin, Las Heras, et al., 2019) and the potential of phubbing at home to prevent resource transfers between the partners of the romantic couple (Stollberger et al., 2022). This study is one of the latest attempts to contribute to the latest debates on the dark side of phubbing and is a response to investigate phubbing at home, as a contextual and hindering demand that depletes personal resources (Yousaf et al., 2022). Previous research on phubbing has mainly investigated the individual outcomes at work, leading to damaged social interaction (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018), reduced social well-being, depression and burnout (Davey et al., 2018; Roberts & David, 2017). Our findings contribute to these debates by focusing on how phubbing at home impacts the work–related resource support between the partners, having a negative spillover impact on the two unique types of job crafting and employee creativity. While previous research has mainly explored the role of psychological and motivational mechanisms to explore the consequences of phubbing at home (e.g., intrinsic motivation), this research brings a proactivity angle and underscores that the two types of job crafting can be used as a coping mechanism to deal with the loss of personal resources emanating from phubbing at home.

A third contribution of our research is our focus on two parallel mediating mechanisms of relational and cognitive job crafting in relation to the home domain. Although most previous research has revealed that relational and cognitive job crafting are positively associated with favourable workplace outcomes such as work engagement, work performance and decreased work strain (Bruning & Campion, 2018; Lazazzara et al., 2020), there is still little research conducted on the antecedents of these two types of job crafting. As such, the majority of studies to date that revealed the antecedents of job crafting include job characteristics, individual differences, motivational characteristics and social context (Niessen et al., 2016; Zhang & Parker, 2019) with an omission of the home domain.

Our findings open a potentially new area of inquiry to show that the different types of job crafting are not only likely to enrich the work–family domain but enrichment within the home domain is likely to trigger job crafting (Rastogi & Chaudhary, 2018). Our findings imply and support the notion that the association between work–family (as well as family–work) and job crafting is likely to be bidirectional and invites further studies to unpack this nuanced association (Wayne et al., 2007). Our specific focus on cognitive job crafting is a response to the call for studies to examine the nomological network of this relatively understudied proactive approach employees adopt at work (Buonocore et al., 2020) and expands these debates to test the prevalence of it using a dynamic data analyses approach in the US sample. Our focus on relational job crafting also contributes to the latest debates on the consequences of relational job crafting that include work engagement and voice (Rofcanin, Bakker, et al., 2019; Rofcanin, Las Heras, et al., 2019). We show that work-related support received by one's partner is likely to be reinvested in the work domain in the form of cognitive and behavioural strategies to incur and trigger further creativity. Our study enriches the findings of Stollberger et al. (2022) that work–family support will indirectly affect employee creativity at work by introducing two types of job crafting as mediators. Our findings are important because our research has emphasized the important impacts of support from the home domain on employees' creativity at work compared to previous research that only focuses on support from the work domain.

Fourth and in relation to the above-mentioned discussions on job crafting, this research provides important theoretical implications for work–family literature. First, we enrich the broad proactivity literature and job-crafting studies by highlighting work–family support from the romantic partner as the antecedent of employee job crafting. The extant job-crafting literature has recognized the impacts of social support from work on employees' work outcomes (Parker et al., 2017). However, limited research has examined the impacts of social support from the home domain on job crafting. Moreover, most research to date has mainly adopted the J-DR theory to explain how social support influences job crafting (see a review by Lee & Lee, 2018). In the contemporary workplace, work and family are inevitably intertwined with each other, so it is necessary to include the social support obtained outside the work (i.e., specifically from one's romantic partners) domain in the job-crafting literature.

Specifically, we believe that by obtaining support from one's partner, the focal employed partner is likely to appreciate the importance of work-related support received and further seize and capitalize on this type of resource to improve the functioning at work. To illustrate, imagine an employed partner who can share work-related issues with his/her partner and receive constructive and supportive communication in return. Feeling re-energized and vitalized, this partner is likely to cultivate her relationships through engaging in new network building (i.e., relational job crafting) and reconceptualizing his/her work better in mind (i.e., cognitive job crafting) both of which overall improve his/her work standards. As a result, this focal employed partner is likely to be more creative and innovative, going above and beyond the requirements of his/her task and showing a great extent of citizenship behaviours.

A further and key strength of our research is that our results revealed nuanced findings about the role of gender. Our findings showed that the family-to-work enrichment process is only effective for the female partner. When receiving work–family support from their male partners, female partners can utilize this social resource to craft their jobs at work, leading them to be more creative and responsive. Previous research has shown some contradictory findings regarding whether there is a gender difference in the work–family enrichment process or not (Liu, Ngo, & Cheung, 2016; Van Steenbergen et al., 2014). Our study adds to the literature by showing a gender difference in the family-to-work enrichment process. Our findings are in line with the proposition that when granted the same resources, male and female partners would utilize the resources differently (Kossek et al., 2021; Wayne et al., 2007). Latest empirical evidence, especially during and post-COVID era has also shown that women and men will value, interpret and utilize resources differently. Women are more likely to utilize relational resources and organizational work–family supportive policies in their family life than men (Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003). For example, one empirical study has found that the relationship between work–life balance policies provided by the organization (WLBPs) and work-to-family enrichment was stronger for women than for men (Baral & Bhargava, 2011). In a study conducted during the COVID pandemic, Kossek et al. (2021) found that women reported more problems when it comes to managing the intrusion of work into their family domains. In a similar context, Leroy et al. (2021) showed that women needed and benefited from a wide array of support mechanisms such as leaders, their colleagues and partners during the COVID pandemic period when especially majority of employees switched to working from home.

Although previous studies mainly focused on the work-to-family enrichment process, our findings provided a possibly novel perspective on family-to-work perspective and empirically showed that environmental resources (e.g., work–family support from the partner) contribute more strongly to the work–family facilitation process for women than men (Wayne et al., 2007). One possible explanation and a source of speculation for this could be rooted in the literature on social norms and expectations from women. Broadly speaking, society still expects women to juggle home and work domains simultaneously, leading to potential exhaustion and depletion. In support of this, the empirical findings showed that post-COVID, women thrived more when they had supportive partners and worked with family-supportive leaders (Luo et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2022). Another possible source of explanation and avenue of research could lie in the notion of sex roles and attitudes. It may be that among our sample, the division of sex roles (e.g., men being the breadwinners and women taking care of home chores; Kossek et al., 2021) may be more determined and discrete; placing women in a position where they need

more resources to experience a positive family-to-work enrichment process. Inspired by our findings on gender differences, we recommend future research to explicitly explore and integrate not only gender but also gender and sex role differences, normative pressures and factors relating to the family situation (e.g., elderly care, childcare).

Furthermore, our study advances the existing literature by investigating the effects of work–family spousal support on the partner's job crafting and creativity in the context of dual-earner couples. By exploring the nuanced interactions between partners, we go beyond the previous literature that mainly focuses on the negative crossover-spillover process between dual-earner couples (Debus & Unger, 2017; Kinnunen et al., 2010; Luk & Shaffer, 2005; Thompson et al., 2023), and mainly from the work domain to the home domain (Tement et al., 2023), the findings of this study showed that the positive resources received at home (i.e., work–family spousal support) can travel all the way long to affect the other partner's creativity. Moreover, by examining the condition of the crossover process between partners, our study showed that the partners cannot always receive the support provided by the other partner, other factors (e.g., phubbing) might impede the resources transfer process between partners.

The context of our research is crucial for the foreseeable future of working from home. With the unfolding of the pandemic, we witness an increasing prevalence of dual-earning couples who work from home (Shirmohammadi et al., 2022, 2023). This situation is challenging as it blurs the boundaries between work and home, but most importantly is likely to harm the relational, communicational and emotional affairs between the partners (Shockley et al., 2021; Stollberger et al., 2022). Drawing on a recent framework developed by Shirmohammadi et al. (2022), we recommend strategies specifically concerning the (a) definition of boundaries and the (b) application of these strategies to achieve optimum work–family functioning. Firstly, as suggested by the authors, a first step could be to define the areas at home (e.g., definition and explanation of behaviours) where phubbing is allowed (and not). For instance, we would expect this strategy to highlight that phubbing would be less acceptable if it intervenes in a dinner or quality time with one's partner. Such an approach includes the optimum and equal use of technology across spaces within the home. Secondly and most importantly, as alluded to by the authors, increasing communication and sharing is the second and most vital step for the implementation of work–family supportive incentives. As our findings suggested, the increasing phubbing behaviour decreases the extent of sharing and communication between the partners, hence reducing the perceived support received. Some practical ways of maintaining intact and lively communication channels between partners could include designating and assigning an active family governor and incentivizing the optimum act of phubbing (e.g., spending more time outside in nature, walking the dogs or pets together and capitalizing on the work–family events in a communal sharing mood). It is also likely that one of the partners could be better at integrating the boundaries at home (Shockley et al., 2021) and future research is recommended to explore the two-way interaction of segmentation profiles and phubbing impact on the sharing patterns. Finally, parental status (e.g., family, kid, or elderly care responsibilities) is likely to change the dynamics of phubbing, support received and the consequential impact on employee outcomes (Kangas et al., 2023).

Limitations and future research avenues

Although the current research has some valuable strengths, our study also has some limitations that need to be addressed. First, in this study, our constructs were self-reported which may have a common method variance (CMV) issue (Podakoff et al., 2003). We have conducted procedural remedies and statistical remedies recommended by Podakoff et al. (2003) to minimize the impacts of CMV. Firstly, we placed the mediator variable and dependent variable on different pages of our daily questionnaires. Our predictor variables (work–family support provision and receipt) were measured once on the first day of our data collection, which reduced the social desirability tendency. Moreover, we attached a cover letter to ensure the participants about their anonymity, which helped us to reduce respondents' evaluation apprehension. Secondly, in

terms of statistical remedies, we grand-mean centered all the level-2 (trait-level) variables and group-mean centered all the level-1 (day level) variables to control the social desirability tendency which is a cause of CMV (Beal, 2015). Additionally, we control the effects of the unmeasured latent method factor following the recommendation by Podsakoff et al. (2003). We conducted a CFA with the unconstrained common latent factor (CLF) and another CFA with the zero constrained common latent factor (CLF). The results of the chi-square test showed that there is no significant difference in the chi-square test.

Secondly, our participants are recruited from the United States and their status is full-time employment with high-earning potential. In research on work–family, broadly speaking, the findings from the non-Western world (e.g., Chile, Brazil, South America, Turkey) generally show that the division of responsibilities between men and women relies heavily on women for home chores and relies heavily on men for work and career progression (Las Heras et al., 2021; Rofcanin et al., 2018; Rofcanin, Bakker, et al., 2019; Rofcanin, Las Heras, et al., 2019). Therefore, we suggest future studies to expand the generalizability of our findings by recruiting and conducting samples from non-Western contexts such as China, Turkey or Brazil, examples of which exhibit unique patterns of work–family dynamics within and between domains. At the same time, given the nature of diary data where we are constrained by shorter scales, these new studies can replicate and develop longer versions of such constructs to improve the reliability and construct validity.

Moreover, our participants were heterosexual couples, which limits the overall applicability of our findings to other contexts. The dynamics of sharing, support and responsibilities of elderly families and children may differ depending on whether the partners are same-sex couples or not. Another limitation is the type of professions the dual-earner couples work in as some professions, for example, healthcare, legal professions might impact the work–life balance and experiences of couples (Teo et al., 2013). In addition, although the number of children is asked as a control variable, how the care of children is shared is not considered. At the same time, how the household work is shared is not considered either. It is well accepted that women perform most of the household work and childcare regardless of the cultural context (McMunn et al., 2020). Such well-established inequality might have an impact on spousal support as female partners might have a different understanding, experience as well as expectation of support at home as well as at work.

Third, another aspect to consider given the recent changes in our understanding of work, is how much the participants in our study work remotely and/or hybrid in their work. As shown by COVID-19-related studies, constantly working from home and/or working hybrid makes a difference in the interaction and support the couples show to each other (Hu et al., 2023). Moreover, we considered gender differences in our study, but we did not consider national cultural differences. Previous research has shown that, in the work–family enrichment process, there were gender differences exist when the research is conducted in the Netherlands (Van Steenbergen et al., 2014). In contrast, researchers have found no gender difference in the work–family enrichment process when they use Chinese samples (Liu, Ngo, & Cheung, 2016). Moreover, the cultural context also creates a different understanding of support from extended family which might impact the dynamics and understanding of support between couples (Amah, 2021). This evidence showed us that culture might play an important role in work–family facilitation. Therefore, we encourage future research to examine the influence of culture in the work–family facilitation process.

Fourth, our study did not integrate the exploration of any boundary conditions or contextual variables to test the proposed associations. Our main idea was to test the indirect effect of support on creativity via the two types of job crafting. It will be interesting to expand and explore the conceptualization and types of other job-crafting approaches, such as increasing job resources or increasing challenging job demands (Tims et al., 2014) on our proposed associations.

Fifth, we have a relatively small sample size ($N = 65$) of dual-earner couples. Although the statistical analysis using the APIMPowerR app[1] (Ackerman & Kenny, 2016) indicated that our sample size is suf-

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[1]This APIMPowerR app allows us to determine the power for a given sample size and specified effect sizes. In the app, because our data is a distinguishable case, hence, we need to enter the effect size for actor and partner effect for both Partner A and Partner B. Based on the calculation results of this app, our study with a sample of 65 at level 2 and 14-days repeated measures can provide a statistical power above .80.

ficient to achieve a statistical power above .80, we acknowledge the potential limitations associated with a smaller sample size. Therefore, we encourage future researchers to collect data from a larger sample to enhance the generalizability and robustness of the findings, particularly in capturing the broader dynamics of couples.

Furthermore, we believe that it would be interesting to further examine the perception of others' phubbing behaviour on employee creativity. One important route of how phubbing behaviour harms social relationships is via the mechanisms of social exclusion/ostracism (Vanden Abeele, 2020). The social ostracism route depicts that phubbing by one partner is likely to make the other partner feel socially excluded from a social interaction which would elicit stress and negative affect (Vanden Abeele, 2020). As such, we would expect to see the phubbing behaviour of one partner leading the other partner to feel socially rejected and neglected (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018); reducing the quality of social interaction (Vanden Abele & Postma-Nilsenova, 2018). Positive affect and social support are two important antecedents of employee creativity (Liu, Jiang, et al., 2016; Zhou & Hoever, 2014), while negative affect and resource depletion are expected to hurt creativity (Martin & Stoner, 1996; Opoku et al., 2023). Hence, it would be important to examine the connectivity paradox to test whether phubbing could harm employee creativity via personal resources depletion (e.g., negative affect, emotional neglect, social exclusion).

Another fruitful avenue of future research will be around relational resources and particularly love shared between the members of a couple. Research on crossover has started exploring the importance of love as a shared resource between couples and how such a valuable resource compensates for the lack of other types of resources generated through other means. Future research is recommended to explore different types of love, e.g., compassionate love, to include how our proposed associations unfold.

Practical implications

A key challenge employers face in today's hybrid work settings is the implementation of work–family initiatives. Irrespective of whether employees have sufficient flexibility to work from home or not, most of the employees are not likely to take full advantage of this opportunity to engage fully in their work and/or home roles (Kossek et al., 2023). This issue is attenuated by the advance of technology and the invasion of our personal lives with the constant exposure to mobile phones. Building on the latest research by Kossek et al. (2024), we recommend close collaboration between HR managers and employees' first-line supervisors to develop a work–family supportive context. One key component of enhanced family engagement is good quality communication and sharing with one's significant other at home (e.g., work–family interpersonal capitalization; Ilies et al., 2017). Accordingly, employers can greatly benefit from implementing work–family supervisor training where they underline the importance of sharing and communication and less exposure to technology and mobile use, particularly if the latter is work related (Perrigino et al., 2018). Hence, embedding supervisor training programmes within the organizational culture and implementing them effectively is likely to facilitate enhanced family engagement and reduce the pressure to respond to work-related emails or demands via one's mobile phone. We believe that the adoption of this perspective will be a significant step to minimize the undesirable consequences of phubbing at home.

HR departments, in collaboration with first-line managers and organizations, can develop and implement two types of job crafting (i.e., cognitive and relational job crafting) to facilitate employee creativity. Drawing on the unique features of these two types of job crafting, we recommend specific steps to be developed and implemented for each employee (van Wingerden et al., 2017). As a first step, employees can be evaluated based on their jobs and personal characteristics (person-job analysis). Following this, a personal job crafting plan can be crafted for employees whose behaviours will be observed. To illustrate, relational job crafting can be observed by evaluating the extent to which employees expand and develop their relational connections at work to achieve their goals more effectively

(Rofcanin, Bakker, et al., 2019; Rofcanin, Las Heras, et al., 2019). Cognitive job crafting can be assessed by understanding and measuring the degree to which employees re-imagine and conceptualize their every-day tasks in a different and positive light (Buonocore et al., 2020). These programmes can be carried out either as (a) experiments or (b) online, depending on the availability and support of the organization (Verelst et al., 2021, 2023). These job-crafting programmes can be carried out continuously at certain intervals so that the results can be evaluated. For instance, following a 4-week relational and cognitive job-crafting intervention, the work outcomes of these programmes can be evaluated and compared to the work outcomes of employees who did not participate. Depending on the effectiveness and success of such interventions, organizations can effectively manage and integrate these tools as part of their human resource management development strategy in the long run. In line with prior research that has supported the link between task crafting and employee creativity (Zhou et al., 2024), these training programmes will enhance and facilitate employees to cognitively approach their jobs from a new lens and widen their network for different ideas and means, all leading to enhanced creativity.

Overall, our conceptual model also has yielded different patterns for women versus men. Our findings demonstrated that female employees value support mechanisms more than male employees. Hence, to help employees balance work and family lives, organizations should provide different types of support that may be sought after by female and male employees. As discussed above, our personalized job-crafting interventions and work–family support training programmes and interventions could be particularly targeted at women to help them facilitate and develop better home and work lives. For instance, incentives and schemes for interrupted careers of women, the provision of supportive and structural resources for them in the form of personalized coaching and the management of blurred boundaries between work and home will be some of the key first steps to achieving (Verelst et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study investigates the mechanisms and boundary conditions regarding the association between work–family support and creativity at work using data from dual-earner couples in the United States. While our model received overall support, our findings revealed certain gender differences in the family-to-work enrichment process: For the male partner, work–family support was positively related to relational and cognitive job crafting, which in turn positively related to creativity at work for the female partner. For the male partner, although we found that relational and cognitive job crafting were positively related to creativity at work, the male partner cannot transfer the work–family support to the work domain. We hope that our findings will ignite and invite more research on the home-to-work process.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Siqi Wang: Conceptualization; methodology; formal analysis; data curation; writing – original draft; writing – review and editing; project administration; visualization. **Yasin Rofcanin:** Conceptualization; supervision; resources; project administration; writing – review and editing; methodology; visualization; writing – original draft. **Mireia Las Heras:** Conceptualization; methodology; funding acquisition; supervision; resources; writing – review and editing; project administration. **Zeynep Yalabik:** Writing – review and editing; supervision.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

As authors of the manuscript, we declare no conflicts of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data of this manuscript are not shared with any other projects nor papers.

ORCID

Siqi Wang (iD) https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3331-6151

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