

2012

# Putting family back in work-family conflict: the moderating effect of family life stage on the work-family interface

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PUTTING FAMILY BACK IN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT:  
THE MODERATING EFFECT OF FAMILY LIFE STAGE ON THE  
WORK-FAMILY INTERFACE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Louisiana State University  
and Agricultural and Mechanical College in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

in

The Department of Psychology

by  
Rachel C. Trout  
B.A., Rhodes College, 2010  
August 2012

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Russell Matthews for being a truly great advisor in all aspects of my graduate career. Throughout the thesis process, he was always supportive, challenging me while also giving me confidence in my ideas and writing. I would also like to thank Dr. Tracey Rizzuto and Dr. Jason Hicks for serving on my committee. I am very grateful for the insight and suggestions they gave, all of which made my thesis more substantive and scientifically sound. I look forward to their presence on future committees.

Furthermore, I would like to thank Suzanne Booth, Tatiana Toumbeva, and Tracey Auster for being wonderful peer editors, as well great friends who were always willing to listen and talk through even the smallest of problems. To my parents, Charles and Jean Trout, I am forever thankful for their constant support and interest in my dreams, even when they involve topics foreign to them. Finally, I owe a great deal of thanks to Matt Hill, who has stood by me through all of my academic endeavors, always pushing me to be my best and never settle.

Most of all, I need to thank the hundreds of teachers who participated in my thesis out of the goodness of their hearts and the desire to see the work-family conflict of teachers improve.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the present study, various gaps in the work-family literature were addressed by investigating the moderating influence of family life stage on work-family specific support from organizations, supervisors, and coworkers as it relates to work-family conflict. Family life stage was also proposed to moderate the relationships between work-family conflict and work-related outcomes (i.e., turnover intentions and work engagement). Additionally, work-family research has often been criticized for its propensity to sample across occupations in a single study, resulting in a need to study work-family conflict in specific careers. For this reason, elementary school teachers were the focus of this study, as teachers often work in challenging and stressful environments. Path analysis was used to test the proposed conceptual model and hypotheses; MANOVAs and multiple regressions were conducted to answer the research questions pertaining to family life stage. The majority of hypotheses were supported and family life stage was found to affect the strength of many of the relationships proposed in the model. Of interest though, family-supportive organization perceptions were found to be instrumental in reducing work-family conflict in all family life stages. Also, high work-to-family conflict was significantly related to turnover intentions for teachers with children living at home, whereas teachers without children in the home thought of turning over as a result of family-to-work conflict. In conclusion, the study identified key paths and associations that might aid schools and teachers struggling to balance work and family demands as a function of family life stage.

## INTRODUCTION

Research on the topic of work-family conflict has expanded immensely over the past few decades due to the changing workforce and workplace. The influx of women into the workforce and the related growth of dual-income couples, in addition to an increase in single-parent households, has contributed to a desire to better understand work-family conflict (Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009; Kossek & Lambert, 2005; Neal & Hammer, 2007). As one of the most studied topics in the work-family literature (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005), work-family conflict can be defined as a bidirectional process that occurs when one role negatively impacts the other, such that work responsibilities can interfere with family, just as family demands can interfere with work (Frone, Russell, & Barnes, 1996; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The occurrence and prevalence of work-family conflict has generated strong interest from both the academic and applied realms to examine theoretically important antecedents and outcomes. As a result, researchers have determined that work-family conflict relates to a multitude of negative outcomes, such as lower job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and life satisfaction, and increased burnout and turnover intentions (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000).

In terms of antecedents, theories of social support have been particularly useful in conceptualizing how the perceptions of support from an employee's organization, supervisor, and coworkers can help employees better manage work and family demands, effectively reducing experiences of work-family conflict (e.g., House, 1981; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Past research has examined general forms of social support (i.e., feeling valued and cared for) as a potential predictor of work-family variables, as well as focused on more specific forms of workplace social support and even more specific forms of work-family support. In their meta-

analysis, Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer (2011b) found that more specific forms of support are more impactful in protecting against the occurrence of work-family conflict. In line with this finding, research has shifted to the study of work-family specific workplace support, particularly examining how supported an employee feels in terms of family demands at the organizational level, the supervisory level, and the coworker level (e.g., Allen, 2001; Hammer et al., 2009; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009). The general premise is that family supportive behaviors and attitudes exhibited by organizations, supervisors, and coworkers are likely to aid in the prevention of both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict because employees are better able to manage the various demands that are present across these domains.

Although research has established that social support can have an ameliorating effect on work-family conflict, consistent with the broader literature, there exists a limited understanding of boundary conditions around these relationships. Specifically, as noted in the reviews by Eby et al. (2005) and Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, and Lambert (2007), work-family researchers have historically done a poor job of understanding potential moderators of important relationships, such as social support and work-family conflict. In particular, little research has examined how an employee's family life stage might moderate the relationship between work-family specific support and work-family conflict. By evaluating an employee in terms of their age and the age of their children, they can be placed in a certain life stage, wherein individuals within the same life stage are expected to experience similar events, challenges, and developmental demands (Mattesich & Hill, 1987).

The concept of family life stages pertains to the changing work and family demands of a person as he/she moves through the traditional life trajectory of marriage, parenthood, and retirement (cf. Mattesich & Hill, 1987). Therefore, family life stage plays an important role when



examining the interaction between work and family (Erickson, Martinengo, & Hill, 2010). Employees are likely to value different things according to their life stage, such as work-family specific support. Drawing from social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976), if such needs are met, employees should experience fewer negative outcomes (e.g., work-family conflict) and be better able to contribute to the organization. Therefore, it is likely that family life stage may moderate the relationship between various family-specific work supports and work-to-family and family-to-work conflict.

Of note though, work-family research has often been criticized for its propensity to sample across occupations in a single study, which increases the likelihood that results will either potentially be incorrectly generalized or nonsignificant if subpopulations are too different (Casper et al., 2007; Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011a). In some instances, generalizability is desirable, as it would allow organizations across industries to find opportunities for improvement. However, using a sample of general employees may prevent researchers from seeing how certain occupations differ in their unique perceptions and reactions to work-family conflict and other stress-related factors (Innstrand, Langballe, & Falkum, 2010). To this end, the present study was focused specifically on teachers.

Teachers for grades K-12 represent approximately 3.5 million jobs in the United States workforce as of 2008, and the occupation has an expected growth of 13% by 2018 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). However, the prevalence of teacher turnover and transfer in U.S. schools today is extensive and costly according to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2008). Although teachers frequently face challenging work environments and large workloads, historically, teaching has been considered a “semi-profession” (Etzioni, 1969), characterized by a schedule and workload that allowed teachers to work while maintaining their traditional role in the home.

Despite this, research has shown female teachers experience work-family conflict at the same level and frequency as female lawyers and computer professionals, occupations commonly considered as high-stress (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). Furthermore, teachers struggle to separate their professional and family roles, with many finding it difficult to be both a successful teacher and parent (Acker, 1992; Elbaz-Lubisch, 2002; Spencer, 1986). With previous research identifying teaching as being stressful and at risk for work-family conflict, the present study provides further insight into the effects of family-specific workplace support and life stage on teachers' work-family conflict, as well as how experiencing conflict relates to feelings of work engagement and turnover intentions.

Due to the far-reaching effects teachers can have on the school environment, as well as on their students' achievement and motivation, the outcomes of work engagement and turnover intentions were chosen to be examined in relation to work-family conflict. Previous research on teachers and a range of other occupations has found the outcomes of work engagement and turnover intentions to be indicative of an employee's likelihood to leave his/her job (Mobley, 1982; Halbesleben, 2010). Both outcomes represent investment and dedication to one's job, correlating between  $-.25$  and  $-.45$  based on a recent meta-analysis (Halbesleben, 2010). Furthermore, work-family conflict is often a significant predictor of both work engagement and turnover intentions (Allen et al., 2000; Halbesleben, 2010), contributing to the possibility that an employee's life stage may also moderate this established relationship.

In summary, the present study is an investigation of how family-specific workplace support relates to the work-family conflict of teachers, as well as how those relationships might be moderated by family life stage. Additionally, the outcomes of turnover intent and work engagement were examined in relation to work-family conflict and the moderator of family life

stage. In terms of the following literature review, three types of work-family specific work support, which are the proposed antecedents to work-family conflict, are discussed. Then, work engagement and turnover intentions are explored as meaningful outcomes of the work-family conflict of teachers. Finally, family life stage is introduced as a moderator to the proposed relationships in the model. Within the resulting conceptual model (see Figure 1), key paths and associations are identified in order to contribute insight and potential solutions to schools and teachers struggling to balance work and family demands.

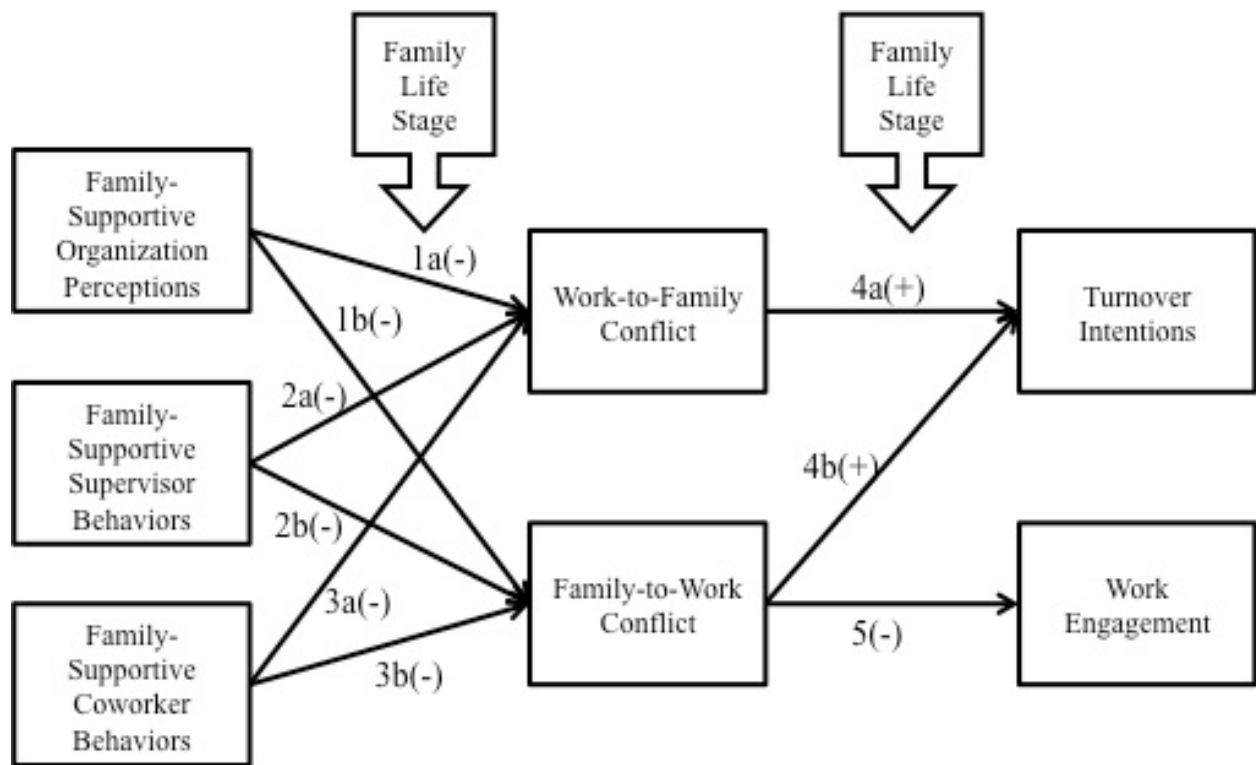


Figure 1 – Proposed Model and Relationships

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **Antecedents to Work-Family Conflict: Family-Specific Work Supports**

Supportive organizational cultures have been a topic of interest for several decades, encompassing the values and expectations held and perpetuated by the members of the organization (Schein, 1985; Denison, 1996). The culture of an organization can have a significant impact on the attitudes and outcomes of employees (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999; Trice & Beyer, 1993). One facet of organizational culture that has gained much attention is the perception of work-family specific workplace support, which represents the various ways an organization can convey it cares about employees' management of both work and personal roles (e.g., Allen, 2001; Hammer et al., 2009). A supportive work-family culture can manifest itself through available work-life policies, and employee perceptions of work-family support from the organization, the managers, and fellow coworkers.

However, previous research has shown that work-family policies and perceptions of support function as distinct constructs, with employee perceptions of work-family support typically affecting their use of work-family policies and programs (Thompson et al., 1999). Often work-family policies (e.g., flextime, telecommuting) are not utilized in an organizational culture that does not convey an atmosphere where family and personal life is valued (Allen, 2001). Although such policies and practices are a step in the right direction toward embracing an employee's various life roles, they must be accompanied with feelings of support and respect for the balance of work and family. Therefore, the antecedents of interest in the present study include perceptions of work-family specific support from the organization, supervisors, and coworkers.

**Family-supportive organization perceptions.** In an effort to help understand when and why work-family policies and programs are utilized effectively, Allen (2001) developed the concept of *family-supportive organization perceptions*. Although family-supportive organization perceptions has its foundation in the established construct of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), Allen (2001) recognized that the latter construct only measured general feelings of support at work and lacked the ability to assess employee opinions of family supportiveness. At its core, family-supportive organization perceptions capture how supportive of family life an organization appears to be to its employees. Therefore, it is an extension of social support theory. Defined as a transfer of resources (e.g., trust, concern, time, information, advice) between individuals with the goal of helping one or all parties involved (van Daalen, Willemsen, & Sanders, 2006; House, 1981), social support can be used to protect against potential stressors, including work-family conflict. Accordingly, family-supportive organization perceptions serve as a representation that resources are available to the employee. These perceptions therefore fall in line with the theory of conservation of resources (COR), in which individuals strive to gain and maintain resources, as well as avoid resource loss, in order to minimize stress (Hobfoll, 1989). In situations where an individual perceives a family-supportive organization, he/she in essence perceives that there are resources from which to draw in order to more effectively balance work and family demands.

From a resources standpoint, perceiving the organization to be supportive of work-family demands also allows the employee to request family-friendly policies (e.g., flextime or telecommuting) without the concern of it reflecting badly upon him/her. Without this anxiety, the employee is better able to focus on the appropriate domain (work or family) at the time that works best for him/her, theoretically reducing both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work

conflict. Previous research has shown family-supportive organization perceptions to be negatively related to work-family conflict (Booth & Matthews, 2012; Kossek et al., 2011b; Allen, 2001).

Given the growing body of research on family-specific workplace support, Kossek et al. (2011b) conducted a meta-analysis to purposely examine the unique relationship between work-family specific organizational support and work-to-family conflict above and beyond general organizational support. They found that family-supportive organization perceptions were more negatively related to work-to-family conflict than general perceived organizational support was, indicating that the two differ operationally and should not be used interchangeably. Based on this accumulated evidence, it is hypothesized that family-supportive organization perceptions are negatively related to work-to-family conflict.

However, in their meta-analysis, Kossek et al. (2011b) note that the relationship between family-supportive organization perceptions and family-to-work conflict has been relatively understudied compared to work-to-family conflict. This could be due to the operationalization of the construct in previous research, where family-to-work conflict was either not examined or it was combined with work-to-family conflict and examined generally (e.g., Allen, 2001; Major, Fletcher, Davis, & Germano, 2008; Thompson et al., 1999). Although the dearth of research examining family-to-work conflict prevented its inclusion in the meta-analysis of work-family specific work support by Kossek et al. (2011b), several recent studies have found family-supportive organization perceptions to negatively relate to family-to-work conflict (Booth & Matthews, 2012; Lapierre et al., 2008; Shockley & Allen, 2007). Therefore, family-supportive organization perceptions are hypothesized to be negatively related to both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict.

**Hypothesis 1a:** Family-supportive organization perceptions are negatively related to work-to-family conflict.

**Hypothesis 1b:** Family-supportive organization perceptions are negatively related to family-to-work conflict.

**Family supportive supervisor behaviors.** In addition to organizational work-family support, it is also advantageous to consider other forms of work-family specific workplace support. Kossek et al. (2011b) specifically recommended that future research examine more domain-specific support (e.g., work-family support) across levels, where the impact of support from a supervisor or coworkers, as well as from the organization, could be identified. Furthermore, feelings toward an organization often start at the local rather than the global level, meaning that perceived support from a supervisor can be just as, if not more, influential on work-related beliefs and outcomes than the perceived support of an organization (Allen, 2001; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). To that end, perceived supervisor support is an employee's perception that a supervisor is concerned about the employee's work and well-being (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Previous meta-analytic work has shown that supervisor support influences many work-related outcomes, such as work-family conflict (Kossek et al., 2011b) and turnover intentions (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ng & Sorenson, 2008).

However, traditional measures of supervisor support generally only account for the emotional support provided by supervisors and not the actual behaviors supervisors might exhibit (see Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman, & Daniels, 2007). Additionally, supervisor support tends to refer mainly to an employee's feelings of support from their supervisor in general work matters, rather than how much the supervisor supports them in their attempts to balance work and family specifically. As a result of these two deficits in the supervisor support literature, Hammer et al.

(2009) developed a construct to specifically delineate family supportive supervisor behaviors. *Family supportive supervisor behaviors* are defined as behaviors demonstrated by a supervisor that consistently acknowledge and promote the family. Originally conceptualized by Hammer et al. (2007), family supportive supervisor behaviors are made up of the following four dimensions – emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling behavior, and creative work-family management.

Validation of the family supportive supervisor behavior measure showed incremental validity of the construct over and above general measures of supervisor support in its prediction of work-family related outcomes and also general outcomes, such as job satisfaction and turnover intent (Hammer et al., 2009). Kossek et al. (2011b) also examined the construct of family supportive supervisor behaviors and found additional support in its ability to be more effective at reducing work-to-family conflict than general supervisor support alone. Therefore, the presence of supervisors who exhibit family supportive behaviors as defined by Hammer et al. (2009) should result in employees experiencing less work-to-family conflict. In terms of family-to-work conflict, Hammer et al. (2009) did not find a significant relationship with family supportive supervisor behaviors. Therefore, a lack of research prevented the relationship from being included in Kossek et al.'s (2011b) meta-analysis. However, this deficiency in the literature should not imply a lack of relationship. It can be argued based on COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) that having a family supportive supervisor who engages in all four types of behavior is a resource and additional resources make both directions of work-family conflict seem less severe. Previous research has concluded that resources developed to manage work and family, even if they originate in the work domain, are systematically related to both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (Booth & Matthews, 2012). As a result, the following hypotheses are proposed.



**Hypothesis 2a:** Family supportive supervisor behaviors are negatively related to work-to-family conflict.

**Hypothesis 2b:** Family supportive supervisor behaviors are negatively related to family-to-work conflict.

**Family supportive coworker behaviors.** Fundamentally, an organization is a social entity, defined by the people that work there (Schneider, 1987). Therefore, the work experience and attitudes of an employee are continually shaped by his/her coworkers. With organizations adopting more team-based work and more horizontal organizational hierarchies, the need to study the impact of coworker relations becomes increasingly more salient. Although many studies have found coworker behaviors to relate to stress/strain, as well as other work outcomes, Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) suggest that the realm of coworker research lacks an overarching conceptual and empirical framework that would help researchers pose and address the important questions regarding coworker relations.

To help address such voids in the literature, the relationship between family-specific coworker support relates to work-family conflict is addressed in the present study. Although the majority of work-family literature focuses on organizational or supervisor support, evidence for the importance of coworker support is present (Major et al., 2008). The rationale for work-family specific coworker support influencing work-family conflict is grounded in social capital theory, in addition to COR theory (Coleman, 1988; Hobfoll, 1989). Social capital is described as the benefits and goodwill one may receive through daily relationships (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Experiencing goodwill exchanges from coworkers is viewed as a resource and increases one's social capital. Social capital is seen as very positive in organizational settings, having been

connected to such outcomes as career success, recruitment, lower turnover intentions, and cross-functional team effectiveness (cf., Adler & Kwon, 2002).

Therefore, social capital in the form of work-family specific coworker support is likely to show similar positive protective effects on work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. Several studies have found that coworker support both directly and indirectly reduces work-to-family interference, even after controlling for demographic and work-related variables (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999; McManus, Korabik, Rosin, & Kelloway, 2002; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Coworkers are well positioned to assist and support each other, either emotionally or instrumentally, when conflict arises, due to their close proximity and familiarity with the daily struggles of the job (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009; Ray & Miller, 1994).

Nevertheless, just as measures of general supervisor support typically focus on the emotional side of support, measures of coworker support too usually lack the behavioral or instrumental component of support (e.g., Ray & Miller, 1994). In order to capture the construct of coworker work-family specific support, both emotional and behavioral support are assessed to determine how work-family supportive coworkers can help employees balance work and family, which is a needed addition to the growing literature on work-family specific social support. As mentioned in the previous discussions of family-supportive organization perceptions and supervisor behaviors, workplace social support has typically only been studied in relation to work-to-family conflict, but due to the family specific nature of the constructs, it is hypothesized that work-family specific coworker support will negatively relate to both directions of work-family conflict. Mesmer-Magnus, Murase, DeChurch, & Jiménez (2010) found evidence that perceptions of family-supportive coworkers negatively related to work-family conflict. They argued that coworkers would perform more family supportive behaviors when they perceived a

colleague to have family-to-work conflict. A need for more research examining coworker support, work-to-family conflict, and family-to-work conflict also drives the rationale for the following hypotheses (Kossek et al., 2011b; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2009).

**Hypothesis 3a:** Family supportive coworker behaviors are negatively related to work-to-family conflict.

**Hypothesis 3b:** Family supportive coworker behaviors are negatively related to family-to-work conflict.

### **Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict: Work Engagement and Turnover Intentions**

The majority of past research on the work-family interface has utilized very heterogeneous samples, where participants hold a variety of occupations. Although this is beneficial for generalizability, researchers may be missing certain idiosyncrasies that accompany a specific career. Therefore, the occupation of teacher is the focus of this study. Being a teacher is known to be a difficult and stressful career (Travers & Cooper, 1996). In addition to school violence and student misbehavior, teachers are often subject to poor school conditions, heavy workloads, large class sizes, and little to no social support as reported by the Occupational Outlook Handbook (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Due to the variety of job demands teachers face, the outcomes of work engagement and turnover intentions were chosen specifically for this study because such stressful conditions are likely to contribute to a teacher's work-family conflict, and thus, increase turnover intentions and decrease work engagement. Furthermore, work engagement and turnover intentions are constructs that not only affect the school for which the teacher works, but also can have a direct impact on the success of their students.

**Turnover intentions.** Past research has consistently used and found support for the argument within conservation of resources theory that when a stressor is perceived (e.g., work-family conflict), an individual will work to conserve resources by decreasing effort in his/her work and/or family roles (Hobfoll, 1989). In the work domain, this often leads to thoughts of leaving the organization at some point in the future, which is more generally referred to as turnover intentions (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Harris, Harris, & Harvey, 2008). Although turnover intentions do not always result in actual turnover, they have been found to be a strong predictor, more so than the related turnover antecedents of job search, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Kopelman, Rovenpor, & Millsap, 1992; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999). Turnover can have deleterious results on the school and students from which the teacher leaves. The Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) estimated that 12% of the teaching workforce each year chooses to transfer schools or leave the profession altogether, not including those who retire. This is higher than the U.S. general voluntary turnover rate of 9% (Compdata Surveys, 2011). As a result, students lose the stability and knowledge of a teacher, while school districts are forced to spend thousands of dollars to hire and train new teachers (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007). Although school districts and principals may not be able to control some of the stressful factors of a teacher's work experience, recognizing teachers who struggle with work-family conflict and trying to address the strain associated with it could ameliorate potential turnover intentions.

Past meta-analytic work has demonstrated a positive relationship between work-to-family conflict and turnover intentions, meaning that the more work interferes with family, the more likely a person is to report a possible intention to leave an organization (Allen et al., 2000). It is generally assumed that by withdrawing from the organization, work-to-family conflict will likely

be eliminated, given that the person has secured another job that is more suited for his/her work-family demands. Although the meta-analysis by Allen et al. (2000) did not examine family-to-work conflict in relation to turnover intentions, previous research has shown that family-to-work conflict is positively related to thoughts of turnover (Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, & Keough, 2003). Therefore, it is proposed that employees who experience work-family conflict may consider leaving the organization as a way to reduce/eliminate their conflict.

**Hypothesis 4a:** Work-to-family conflict is positively related to turnover intentions of teachers.

**Hypothesis 4b:** Family-to-work conflict is positively related to turnover intentions of teachers.

**Work engagement.** Although turnover intentions are one way to measure an employee's attitude toward his/her current job, they may not capture the complete picture. Thus, the more affirmative work outcome of work engagement was examined. Work engagement refers to the positive outlook and energy an employee intrinsically feels and exhibits while performing his/her job duties (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). Made up of three subfactors - vigor, dedication, and absorption, the development of the construct of work engagement came from the desire to examine the opposite, more affirmative side of burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Work engagement has been shown to positively relate to both in-role and extra-role performance, making it a valuable quality for an employee to possess (Christian et al., 2011).

Therefore, observing work engagement, a positive work-related outcome, allows researchers to understand how detrimental work-family conflict may be to a teacher. Individuals with high work-family conflict are likely to reduce their efforts at work in order to conserve

resources, making work engagement difficult to achieve. Conversely, individuals with low work-family conflict are able to expend more effort on the job, which could result in high levels of work engagement. It has been found that teachers who possess more enthusiasm, a related construct of engagement, are better at kindling their students' interest and excitement about learning (Patrick, Hisley, & Kempler, 2000). More specifically, teachers with high levels of work engagement are more likely to reach their educational goals compared to teachers who are experiencing burnout (Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998; Rudow, 1999). Although previous research on teachers has found significant results between work-family conflict and vigor (Cinamon, Rich, & Westman, 2007), examination of the relationship between work-family conflict and work engagement as a whole has resulted in conflicting and unexpected findings (Hasbesleben, 2010; Rantanen, Mauno, Kinnunen, & Rantanen, 2011). Therefore, more research is needed to determine the true nature of this relationship.

As it relates to work-family issues, there is a small amount of evidence that only one direction of work-family conflict negatively relates to work engagement. Cinamon et al. (2007) found that family-to-work conflict has a negative relationship to vigor, a component of engagement. Building on conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), family-to-work conflict draws resources away from the work domain, interfering with an individual's ability to fully engage at work. Therefore, work engagement should not be affected by work-to-family conflict because resources are being taken from the family domain, not the work domain, according to the domain specificity perspective of the work-family interface (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992). It may also be that employees who are engaged in their work do not see work-to-family conflict as a problem, but will consider family interference to be detrimental to their work

(Schaufeli & Buunk, 2002). Therefore, it is hypothesized that only family-to-work conflict of teachers is negatively related to work engagement.

**Hypothesis 5:** Family-to-work conflict is negatively related to the work engagement of teachers.

### **The Moderating Effects of Family Life Stage**

Although it is proposed in the present study that work-family specific support serves as a resource that would reduce the work-family conflict of employees, which would result in more work engagement and fewer thoughts of turnover, it is important to consider how individual differences affect the aforementioned relationships. A review of the work-family literature by Eby et al. (2005) identified a need to focus more on employee characteristics that may factor into the work-family interface, in addition to considering family-related variables. In order to address such issues, the construct of family life stage is examined as a potential moderator to the relationship between work-family specific support and work-family conflict, as well as to work-family conflict and the chosen work outcomes. Conceptually, work-family specific support may be more apparent and impactful for people in certain family life stages and will therefore affect work-family conflict accordingly. Furthermore, the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions (as well as family-to-work conflict and work engagement) may also differ depending on a person's family life stage.

The majority of research involving the family life cycle and its associated stages lies in the domains of marriage, family, and human development, but the construct has the potential to bring new insight to many areas of study in industrial-organizational psychology, and in particular, the examination of work-family issues (cf. Erickson et al., 2010; Martinengo, Jacob, & Hill, 2010). The small amount of research that does connect family life stage to the work-

family interface typically examines how the various life stages differ in the amount of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict that is perceived (e.g., Erickson et al., 2010; Hill et al., 2008; Matthews, Bulger, & Barnes-Farrell, 2010a). Although the mean differences and effect sizes reported in these studies are informative to the work-family literature, the gap regarding how family life stage moderates work-family support, conflict, and outcome relationships is addressed in the present study.

Furthermore, in their review of work-family literature, Eby et al. (2005) called for work-family researchers to put more emphasis on the non-work lives of employees and to move away from the dichotomous labels of parent/non-parent in an effort to better grasp the complexity of the family domain. Rather than taking an individualistic perspective of work-family conflict, life course theory allows for individuals to be grouped based on their current family life experience, recognizing that people function within larger systems (Moen & Sweet, 2004). Examining constructs of interest in terms of family life stage may give organizations, and managers in particular, actionable knowledge about what they might be able to do to help employees who are in a certain life stage. For instance, building an onsite daycare for employees with young children or allowing part-time hours for older employees who want to spend more time traveling, but also want to remain active in the company, could be beneficial to employees of particular life stages.

Both the conceptualization and operationalization of the family life cycle is complex, with researchers taking a variety of different approaches. Although numerous variations of the family life cycle exist, a simplified version of the classification structure of Erickson et al. (2010), which was adapted from Mattesich and Hill (1987), is utilized in the present study. The family life stage categories are as follows: *establishment* (no children, < 35 years old); *preschool*



(youngest child < 5 years old); *school age* (youngest child between 5 and 12 years old); *adolescence* (youngest child between 13 and 17), *empty nest* (no remaining dependent children), and *non-parent* (no children, > 35 years old). A more thorough description of the family life stage classification for the present research is outlined in Table 1 (see Appendix I).

For employees with children, using the age of the employee's youngest child as well as the employee's own age to determine life stage helps to account for potential changes in work and family roles, interactions, and demands that typically occur during parenthood (Mattesich & Hill, 1987). Basing the division of the stages on the age of the youngest child allows researchers to consider the unique developmental and societal changes that must be accomplished to move ahead in the cycle. Furthermore, based on the medical literature, the age of 35 was selected as a cutoff point for deciding an employee's classification in either the establishment or non-parent stage. Although women are having children much later in life, the health-related risks for both the mother and child increase after the age of 35 (Bewley, Davies, & Braude, 2005). The main modification to the present classification from previous research is the addition of the non-parent group. Although they do not necessarily fit into the classification of family life stage, this group was included to better understand the proposed relationships in employees with and without children. Therefore, an examination of life stage in a more general capacity within the work-family domain was sought in the present research by modifying the Erickson et al. (2010) categorization to allow for a more encompassing, testable, and interpretable model.

As employees move through each stage, work-family conflict is likely to arise, but its presence and severity may be variable depending on the existence of family-friendly practices and programs in the organization. Previous research has found that individuals value workplace flexibility and similar practices in all life stages, but for different reasons (for review, see

Erickson et al., 2010). Parents in the Preschool and School Age stage need help when a child gets sick or when they need to attend a parent-teacher conference or little-league game; whereas, individuals in the Empty Nest stage might value flexibility and practices such as job sharing or a reduced work week in order to visit family members or volunteer while still maintaining interactions at work (Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Erickson et al., 2010; Hill et al., 2008; Moen, Erickson, Agarwal, Fields, & Todd, 2000).

However, no study to date has examined how much employees perceive work-family specific workplace support based on their family life stage. Although, past work-family research has examined and compared employees with children and without (Higgins, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Roehling, Moen, & Batt, 2003), as well as the age of the employee (Matthews et al., 2010a), little research has focused specifically on support and life stage. Paving the way for this blending of constructs, Erikson et al. (2010) appears to have been the first to specifically look at work-family conflict relationships according to family life stage. Although they made strides in determining that organizational practices (i.e. job flexibility and work-family programs) negatively relate to work-family conflict depending on family life stage, an investigation of the impact of family life stage on the relationship between the various kinds of work-place support and work-family conflict is undertaken in the present study.

Because the inclusion of family life stage into the work-family literature is still relatively new and exploratory, research questions rather than hypotheses are proposed. With the present study, the findings of Erickson et al. (2010) are expanded, which is necessary in order to create a theoretical background from which to cross-validate future research. The unique experiences and challenges that accompany each family life stage should provide further insight into the work-family support and conflict relationship. Therefore, several research questions are proposed to

begin the examination of how family life stage serves as a moderator between work-family specific support and work-family conflict.

**Research Question 1:** Does current family life stage influence perceptions of work-family specific support reported by employees?

**Research Question 2:** Does current family life stage influence the amount of work-family conflict reported by employees?

**Research Question 3:** Does current family life stage moderate the relationships between work-family specific support and work-family conflict?

Given that past research supports the potential moderating effect of family life stage between work-family specific support and work-family conflict, it is also proposed that family life stage moderates the relationships between work-family conflict and turnover intentions, and family-to-work conflict and work engagement. Although individual differences are known to affect work-related outcomes in various ways (e.g., older workers are more likely to retire, not turnover, Ng & Feldman, 2009; Eby et al., 2005), no research to date has examined how family life stage specifically influences turnover intentions and work engagement.

In the present study, this new area of research is explored for it is recognized that the attitudes and motivations of individuals may vary based on their current family life stage (Erickson et al., 2010; Martinengo et al., 2010). For example, although teachers with children may often experience more work-family conflict on account of more family role demands, they may not have any intentions to turnover due to their desire to maintain financial stability. Conversely, individuals in later family life stages who experience work-family conflict may be more likely to have turnover intentions as they are no longer trying to establish their career and may be in a better financial position to leave their current job. In terms of work engagement,

teachers might be able to maintain high levels despite experiencing family-to-work conflict during early family life stages when they are just starting out their careers and trying to establish themselves as effective teachers. Therefore, the following research questions are posed in hopes of identifying the intricacies that occur due to moderating effect of family life stage in the relationships of work-family conflict, turnover intentions, and work engagement

**Research Question 4:** Does family life stage affect the relationship between work-family conflict (both directions) and turnover intentions? If so, how?

**Research Question 5:** Does family life stage affect the relationship between family-to-work conflict and work engagement? If so, how?

## METHODS

### Participants

Participants in the present study were 584 full-time teachers of grades 1-5. In order to be included in the study, participants had to work a minimum of 35 hours a week ( $M = 48.69$ ,  $SD = 8.35$ ), and had to be at least 18 years or older ( $M = 40.29$ ,  $SD = 10.93$ ). In general, the participants had been teaching for approximately 13.5 years ( $SD = 9.45$ ) and had taught at roughly 3 schools ( $SD = 1.8$ ) throughout their career. They reported teaching at their current school for an average of 7.40 years ( $SD = 7.25$ ).

The sample was predominately female (96.4%). Approximately 84% of participants identified themselves as Caucasian. Married participants represented 71% of the sample, with a smaller proportion indicating they were single (7.9%) or divorced (8.7%). The majority of the sample reported having at least one child (79.3%) with the average number of children living at home being 2 ( $SD = 1.06$ ). A small number of participants (15.3%) stated that they assisted in the care of dependent adults (i.e. eldercare). When asked whom they currently live with, over half the sample reported living with their spouse or significant other (77%) and/or their children (63.9%).

### Procedure

Data were obtained by asking participants to complete a web-based survey provided through email. Participants were recruited via solicitation to their publicly available Louisiana teacher email addresses. Preliminary research into Louisiana school districts indicated there were approximately 100 public school districts and charter schools in the state. In light of this, a random subsample of 20 school districts was selected. From the school district's website, elementary schools were identified. Each identified school's website was searched for publicly

available email addresses of teachers who taught grades 1-5 (administrative staff was excluded from this search).

The email address, name, gender, and grade level taught of each teacher was obtained through this method. Email addresses of 3,224 teachers from 18 different school districts were collected and contacted (two of the selected school districts were excluded due to the unobtainability of email addresses) through an email from the primary investigator, which invited them to participate in the survey at the link provided. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete; respondents were informed that participation was voluntary. Participants were also assured that their responses were completely confidential and would be used strictly for academic research purposes. A total of 756 teachers participated in the survey for an overall response rate of 23%. However, 142 participants failed to complete the survey, 19 participants did not meet the work hour requirement of 35 hours per week, and 11 could not be accurately coded into a family life stage, resulting in 172 participants being excluded from data analysis.

## **Measures**

**Family-supportive organization perceptions.** Family-supportive organization perceptions (FSOP) were assessed by six items adapted from Allen (2001) by Booth and Matthews (2012) (see Appendix A). The responses for the items were on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree). Samples of the items are “The ideal employee is the one who is available 24 hours a day” and “Employees who are highly committed to their personal lives cannot be highly committed to their work.” The measure was reverse coded with an internal consistency reliability estimate of .89.

**Family supportive supervisor behaviors.** Family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB) were assessed with fourteen items developed by Hammer et al. (2009) (see Appendix B).

The measure consists of four subscales: emotional support, instrumental support, role modeling, and creative work-family management. The responses for the items were on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree). A sample item for emotional support is “My supervisor takes the time to learn about my personal needs,” while a sample item for instrumental support is “I can depend on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it.” A sample role modeling item is “My supervisor is a good role model for work and nonwork balance,” and “My supervisor asks for suggestions to make it easier for employees to balance work and nonwork demands” is a sample item for creative work-family management. The internal consistency reliability estimate was .98 for this measure.

**Family supportive coworker behaviors.** Work-family specific coworker support was assessed using 10 items adapted from Hammer et al.’s (2009) measure of family supportive supervisor behaviors (see Appendix C). Items from the emotional support, instrumental support, and role modeling subscales were altered to reference a teacher’s coworkers rather than their supervisor. A sample item is “My coworkers are willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and nonwork life,” and “My coworkers demonstrate how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job.” The responses for the items were on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability estimate was .96 for this measure.

**Work-family conflict.** Work-family conflict was assessed with six items adapted from Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) by Matthews, Kath, and Barnes-Farrell (2010b) (see Appendix D). Three of the items measure work-to-family conflict while three measure family-to-work conflict. The responses for the items were on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree). Samples of the items are “I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities,” and “Behavior that is effective and necessary for me

at home would be counterproductive at work.” The internal consistency reliability estimate for the work-to-family component was .77, while the family-to-work component was .61 for this measure.

**Turnover intentions.** Turnover intentions were assessed using an adapted and expanded version of the four-item scale from Kelloway, Gottlieb, and Barham (1999) (see Appendix E). The alterations to the measure allowed it to more accurately assess both intentions to turnover from a participant’s current school (transfer) and from teaching altogether (exit), as well as general career search intentions, making it a 7-item measure. Items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree). Samples of the items are "I am planning to look for a new job unrelated to teaching," and “I frequently consider teaching elsewhere.” The internal consistency reliability estimate was .83 for this measure.

**Work engagement.** Work engagement was assessed using nine items from the shortened version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) (see Appendix F). The measure consists of three subscales: vigor, dedication, and absorption, each represented with 3 items. A sample vigor item is “At my work, I feel bursting with energy;” a sample dedication item is “My job inspires me;” and a sample absorption item is “I get carried away when I am working.” Items were rated on a 7-point frequency scale (1 = never, to 7 = always) to assess how often an employee feels that way. The internal consistency reliability estimate was .91 for this measure.

**Family life stage.** Family life stage was assessed two ways – through a self-report categorization question completed by respondents and through the coding of several demographic questions (this coding process is discussed shortly). In the self-report method (see Appendix G), participants were asked to choose the category that best described them based on



the following categories: *Younger than 35 years old, no children* (Establishment); *Older than 35 years old, no children* (No Children); *Youngest child is 4 years or younger* (Preschool); *Youngest child is between 5 and 12 years old* (School Age); *Youngest child is between 13 and 17 years old* (Adolescence); *All children have moved out of the home* (Empty Nest). Participants could also choose an “Other” category and provide a brief explanation.

In order to verify and supplement the self-categorization, family life stage was also assessed through participants’ responses on the demographic questions of age, children(s)’ ages, and number of children living at home. The complete coding methodology is outlined below and in Appendix H. Participants were also asked to provide demographic information regarding their work (e.g. job title, work hours, perceived career stage, tenure as a teacher and at their current school, etc.) and their personal life (e.g. gender, marital status, living situation, education level, ethnicity, income level, etc.).

### **Coding of Family Life Stage**

A three part coding process was implemented to accurately evaluate the moderating effects of family life stage. First, the participants’ response to the family life stage question (see Appendix G) was assessed. Respondents were each given a code (1-6), which corresponded to the six stages as delineated above. Individuals who selected the “Other” category were coded as a 0. However, several respondents who chose the “Other” category gave an explanation that actually placed them in a family life stage category. These respondents were recoded into their correct family life stage, rather than as a 0.

At this point in the coding, a trend was identified within the “Other” category. Many of the respondents could not be placed in a family life stage due to the fact that they had children over the age of 17 still living at home. In order to ensure the family life stage framework was

exhaustive, a seventh category was created. This new group was named “Boomerang,” which references a new trend in families where adult children either delay leaving the home after high school or return home after living independently (cf. Okimoto & Stegall, 1987). Therefore, respondents who reported having children 18 years or older who still lived at home were recoded into category 7 (Boomerang) rather than the “Other” category.

A second coding method, using demographic information, was also employed to confirm that the categorization of family life stage for each participant was accurate and reliable. In order to ensure inter-rater reliability, 3 trained undergraduate researchers examined four demographic variables reported by the respondents and assigned that respondent a family life stage code of 1-7 or undetermined (0). The four demographic items examined to determine a participant’s family life stage were 1) whether they had any children, 2) the ages of their children, 3) the age of the participant, and 4) whether their children lived at home. Generally, a coder was able to identify a participant’s family life stage by the age of the youngest child. Respondents with an uncategorizable family situation, as decided by the coder, were placed in the undetermined category (0) and addressed in the third step of the coding process.

Once all three coders finished independently coding the demographic data provided by respondents, the lead author compared the codes for each respondent. The three coders agreed 95.5% of the time. A meeting was held with the coders to discuss the disagreements. Of the 34 cases that produced disagreements, 25 of them were due to coder error, making the true disagreement rate 1.2%. The remaining disagreed upon cases were mostly a result of confusing or contradictory demographic information. In order to retain as many participants in the study, these cases were marked as undetermined within the second coding method and reevaluated against the participant’s self-report data in the next step.

The final step in the coding process entailed comparing the code from the family life stage self-report question and the code produced by the undergraduate coders using other family demographic information. When comparing the two codes, there was 94.7% agreement overall, meaning that the family life stage self-reported by the participant matched their responses to demographic questions pertaining to family. In instances where differences between the two reports for a respondent were observed, the primary investigator referred back to the available data on the respondent’s family and living situation. A substantial proportion of the disagreements (43.6%) were due to the absence of either code for a participant (i.e., participants failed to complete the self-report categorization item, but did provide demographic information, or vice versa). The available code was adopted for these cases. Another source of disagreement occurred with respondents who placed themselves in the “Other” category (for reasons other than having adult children living at home). These disagreements were resolved by examining and comparing the participant’s corresponding description to the other demographic data they provided. When a conclusion could not be confidently reached, those cases were excluded from the dataset; based on this, 11 cases were excluded for an undetermined family life stage.

As a result of this comprehensive coding process, 584 participants were categorized into a family life stage. The frequency and percentage of the sample within each family life stage group can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 - Frequency and Percentage of Participants in Each Family Life Stage

<u>Family Life Stage</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Establishment	87	14.9
No Children	27	4.6
Preschool	121	20.7
School Age	143	24.5
Adolescence	65	11.1
Empty Nest	85	14.6
Boomerang	56	9.6
<u>Total</u>	<u>584</u>	<u>100</u>

## RESULTS

### Analytic Strategy

Means and standard deviations for all variables included in the model are reported in Table 3 (see Appendix J). As reported in Table 4, all measures, with the exception of the family-to-work conflict subscale, demonstrated acceptable internal consistency as calculated by the reliability statistic of Cronbach's alpha (greater than .70; Nunnally, 1978). Additionally, none of the bivariate correlations exceeded a value of 0.9, which suggests that there is no multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 4 - Correlations and Internal Consistency Reliability Estimates for Full Sample

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Family-Supportive Organization Perceptions	(.89)						
2. Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors	.49**	(.98)					
3. Family-Supportive Coworker Behaviors	.12**	.20**	(.96)				
4. Work-to-Family Conflict	-.41**	-.35**	-.13**	(.77)			
5. Family-to-Work Conflict	-.21**	-.16**	-.11**	.40**	(.61)		
6. Turnover Intentions	-.32**	-.44**	-.22**	.42**	.28**	(.83)	
7. Work Engagement	.19**	.30**	.09*	-.31**	-.30**	-.49**	(.91)

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

To analyze the overall fit of the proposed path analytic model (see Figure 1) and test the nine associated hypotheses, analyses were performed using the software package AMOS 17 (Arbuckle, 2008). For purposes of this preliminary analysis, participants were collapsed across life stage in order to test the omnibus model. Four measures of model fit were calculated:  $\chi^2$ , CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR. A non-significant  $\chi^2$  indicates good model fit; however,  $\chi^2$  is sensitive to sample size. A CFI value of .95 or higher, a RMSEA value of .06 or lower, and a SRMR value of .08 or lower are indicative of good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Statistical analyses for the five research questions were conducted in SPSS. To address the first two research questions pertaining to family life stage, MANOVAs were run. Separate multiple regression analyses were conducted for each family life stage group to look for potential moderation effects. The No Children group (older than 35 with no children) was excluded from the multiple regression analyses due to an inadequate sample size ( $n = 27$ ) compared to the other groups and in general. Moderation analyses were initially proposed through structural equation modeling using a multi-groups analysis in order to answer RQ 3, 4, and 5. However, the sample sizes of several of the family life stage groups were not large enough to detect significant differences despite having a more than adequate sample size overall. Kline (2005) suggests that there should be at least 100 participants in each group to conduct path analyses in SEM. In previous research on family life stage and the work-family interface, significant differences were found between groups on several relationships with no group having a smaller sample than 2,610 participants (Erickson et al., 2010). Even though the sample in the current study was not large enough to detect significant moderation effects in SEM, in the interest of answering the proposed research questions and furthering the literature on the intersection of work-family conflict and family life stage, multiple regression analyses were conducted. Given that SEM is a multivariate extension of multiple linear regression, the latter analysis also produces an overall test of model fit and tests of individual parameter estimates, making it a sufficient alternative to SEM which allows for smaller sample sizes.

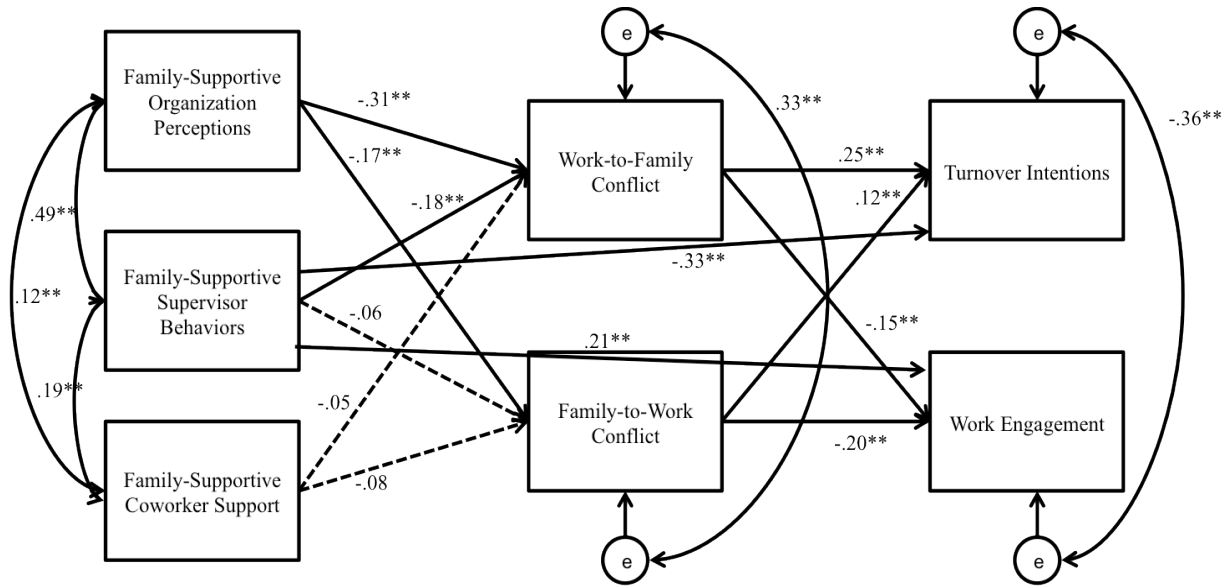
### **Model Fit**

Unfortunately, the conceptualized model presented in Figure 1 demonstrated poor fit [ $\chi^2(7) = 118.70, p < .01, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .16, SRMR = .10$ ]. Therefore, the originally proposed model was respecified to include direct effects between the construct of family-

supportive supervisor behaviors and the two outcome variables, turnover intentions and work engagement (see Figure 2). Previous research has found that family-supportive supervisor behaviors and general supervisor support negatively relate to turnover intentions (Hammer et al., 2009; Ng & Sorenson, 2008). Although no study to date has specifically examined the relationship between family-supportive supervisor behaviors and work engagement, supervisor support has been shown to have a positive direct effect on the work engagement of teachers (Bakker et al., 2007).

An additional path from work-to-family conflict to work engagement was also included. Originally, this relationship was not hypothesized in adherence to the domain specificity hypothesis of the work-family interface, which purports that only outcomes in the domain that is being interfered with (family in work-to-family conflict) will be affected (e.g., family satisfaction; Frone et al., 1992). However, it appears that a source attribution hypothesis takes precedence in this study, where the domain in which the conflict originates is most affected due to attributional processes (Shockley & Singla, 2011). Therefore, work-to-family conflict relates to work engagement because the knowledge that work is interfering with family demands will be detrimental at work.

With the additional paths, the respecified model demonstrated good fit, allowing for its standardized path estimates to be examined for hypothesis testing [ $\chi^2(4) = 13.00$ ,  $p < .05$ , CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .02]. The standardized path estimates for each hypothesized relationship are reported in Figure 2. Overall, six of the nine hypothesized relationships were supported based on the entire sample.



Note.  $** p < .01$ . Dashed arrows indicate nonsignificant paths

Figure 2 - Respecified Path Analytic Model with Standardized Path Estimates for the Full Sample

### Standardized Path Estimates: Antecedents to Work-Family Conflict

Hypothesis 1a and 1b were fully supported; family-supportive organization perceptions negatively related to work-to-family and family-to-work conflict ( $\beta = -.31, p < .01$ ;  $\beta = -.17, p < .01$ , respectively). When participants perceived their organization to be more family-supportive, they reported less work-to-family conflict and less family-to-work conflict. Hypothesis 2a predicted a negative relationship between family supportive supervisor behaviors and work-to-family conflict; it was supported ( $\beta = -.18, p < .01$ ). However, Hypothesis 2b, which predicted that family supportive supervisor behaviors would negatively relate to family-to-work conflict, was not supported ( $\beta = -.06, p > .05$ ). This pattern of significance indicates that having a supervisor who is supportive of work-family management impacts how much work interferes with family. Conversely, family supportive supervisors appear to be unable to affect the family-to-work conflict of participants when other family-specific work supports are considered.

In the third set of hypotheses, it was anticipated that family supportive coworker behaviors would have a negative relationship with work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. Neither Hypothesis 3a or 3b was supported; family supportive coworker behaviors did not significantly relate to work-to-family conflict ( $\beta = -.05, p > .05$ ) or family-to-work conflict ( $\beta = -.08, p > .05$ ), indicating in general that having coworkers who are family supportive is not related to less work-family conflict.

### **Standardized Path Estimates: Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict**

The final two sets of hypotheses address the relationship between work-family conflict and the outcomes of turnover intentions and work engagement. Hypothesis 4a and 4b predicted that both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict would be positively related to turnover intentions; both hypotheses were supported ( $\beta = .25, p < .01$ ;  $\beta = .12, p < .01$ , respectively). Therefore, it can be concluded that experiencing work-to-family conflict and/or family-to-work conflict positively relates to thoughts of turnover from the school, capturing both exit from the profession and transfer to another school. Additionally, Hypothesis 5 was also found to be significant, indicating that higher levels of family-to-work conflict are related to lower levels of work engagement ( $\beta = -.20, p < .01$ ). Although the complementary path of work-to-family conflict to work engagement was not originally hypothesized, subsequent analyses in SEM indicated that it does represent an important relationship in the current study. As such, the respecified relationship between work-to-family conflict and work engagement was shown to be significant in the expected direction ( $\beta = -.15, p < .05$ ).

The respecified model also included two direct effects between the construct of family-supportive supervisor behaviors and the outcomes of turnover intentions and work engagement. Both additional relationships were significant with family-supportive supervisor behaviors



negatively related to turnover intentions ( $\beta = -.33, p < .01$ ) and positively related to work engagement ( $\beta = .21, p < .01$ ). As such, it appears that a principal who is family-supportive has an impact on both the turnover intentions and work engagement of teachers.

### **Research Questions: The Impact of Family Life Stage**

The first research question examined the impact of family life stage on perceptions of work-family specific work support. A MANOVA was conducted to examine if significant differences in family-supportive organization perceptions, family supportive supervisor behaviors, and family supportive coworker behaviors existed for the different family life stage groups (see Appendix J for full results). No significant group differences were detected in the omnibus test,  $F(6, 577) = 1.08, p > .05$ . This indicates that participants perceive relatively similar amounts of family-specific work support regardless of their family life stage.

The second research question pertained to whether the amount of work-to-family conflict or family-to-work conflict reported by teachers would differ based on their family life stage. A MANOVA indicated that work-family conflict (i.e., the linear composite of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict) did not significantly differ between groups,  $F(6, 577) = 1.41, p > .05$ . From this, it can be concluded that teachers in different family life stages experience similar levels of work-family conflict.

The remaining research questions (RQ3, RQ4, & RQ5) were proposed in an effort to examine potential differences in the hypothesized relationships between the family support variables and work-family conflict, and between work-family conflict and the outcomes of interest, due to family life stage. Four multiple regression analyses were conducted to assess these questions. The full results of these analyses can be found in Table 5.1-5.4 (see Appendix K), but a general summary of pertinent findings is provided here.

**Establishment.** Within the Establishment stage, all 3 forms of support significantly predicted work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict, with family-supportive organization perceptions driving the significant negative relationship with work-to-family conflict ( $\beta = -.28, p < .05$ ). It was also found that family-to-work conflict significantly predicted the outcomes of turnover intentions and work engagement over and above the effects of family-specific work support and work-to-family conflict.

**Preschool.** Family-specific work support cumulatively predicted both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict for individuals in the Preschool stage. However, family supportive supervisor behaviors contributed significant incremental variance above family-supportive organization perceptions in its relationship with work-to-family conflict ( $\beta = -.21, p < .05$ ), meaning that a family supportive supervisor could impact work-to-family conflict over and above the influence of a family supportive organization. It also appears that individuals in the Preschool stage gain some significant reduction of family-to-work conflict through family supportive coworker behaviors ( $\beta = -.19, p < .05$ ). In contrast to the Establishment stage, it is the incremental variance of work-to-family conflict that predicts turnover intentions and work engagement in the Preschool group.

**School Age.** Teachers in the School Age stage have lower work-to-family and family-to-work conflict as a direct result of family-supportive organization perceptions, as neither of the other two predictors contribute any incremental variance. In terms of the outcome variables, work-to-family conflict significantly predicts both turnover intentions and work engagement over and above the contributions of family supportive supervisor behaviors and family-supportive coworker behaviors to the model.

**Adolescence.** Within the Adolescence stage, family-specific work support, specifically family-supportive organization perceptions, significantly predicts work-to-family conflict, but no relationship was found with family-to-work conflict. Additionally, work-to-family conflict also has a significant positive relationship with turnover intentions for teachers in the Adolescence group ( $\beta = .44, p < .01$ ).

**Empty Nest.** The cumulative effect of all three family-specific work support variables significantly predicted a negative relationship with work-to-family conflict within the Empty Nest stage. The effect of family supportive supervisor behaviors had significant incremental variance above family-supportive organization perceptions on work-to-family conflict. There was no significant relationship between family-specific work support and family-to-work conflict. Both turnover intentions and work engagement were significantly predicted by the other constructs in the model, but family-to-work conflict appears to be driving this prediction with a significant amount of incremental variance ( $\beta = .31, p < .01$ ;  $\beta = -.26, p < .05$ , respectively).

**Boomerang.** For individuals in the Boomerang stage, all three work-family specific support variables predicted work-to-family conflict, both cumulatively and individually, explaining 51% of the variance within this relationship. Family-specific work support, specifically family-supportive organization perceptions, also significantly predicted family-to-work conflict for these individuals. Although the combination of support and conflict variables significantly predicted turnover intentions and work engagement, the significant individual predictors varied between outcomes. Family supportive supervisor behaviors and work-to-family conflict provided significant incremental variance in the prediction of turnover intentions, whereas family-to-work conflict contributed significantly to a reduction in work engagement of teachers in the Boomerang stage.

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how family-specific workplace support related to the work-family conflict of teachers, as well as how work-family conflict predicted the outcomes of turnover intent and work engagement. Additionally, as part of this study, the relationships between support variables, work-family conflict, and job-related outcomes were examined to identify differences based on a teacher's family life stage. The findings from this study contribute further nomological support for the specification of family-specific work support within work-family literature as well as empirical support for the inclusion of family life stage as an important variable in the field. Key findings and their associated implications regarding the model and the tested hypotheses are discussed first, followed by a broader discussion and interpretation of the impact of family life stage on these relationships. Finally, limitations of the study and areas for future research are discussed.

### **The Model and its Application to Teachers**

It is well known that teaching can be a stressful occupation due to work conditions that are often unavoidable (e.g., workload, student misbehavior, administrative duties; Travers & Cooper, 1996). What is less understood is how schools and principals can help teachers manage stress and prevent it from interfering with the family and personal roles of teachers. The results of this study suggest that teachers who perceive their school to be supportive of their family life, or are part of a school culture that is family-friendly, will potentially be more capable of effectively managing the work-family interface. Similarly, principals who demonstrate family supportiveness, both emotionally and behaviorally, could also have a positive impact on the work-family management of teachers. Although family supportive supervisor behaviors did not have a relationship with family-to-work conflict above and beyond the effects of the organization,

they were related at the bivariate level. This might suggest that general perceptions of family-specific support from the organization are potentially more important than specific perceptions from the principal's behavior. On the other hand, these constructs might function temporally, rather than concurrently, with perceptions of a family-supportive organization preceding the occurrence of family-supportive supervisor behaviors. Future research should examine how family-specific work support functions longitudinally.

Regarding the third family-specific work support, family-supportive coworker behaviors had no significant influence on either direction of work-family conflict. Although this is inconsistent with what was hypothesized, these findings are useful in that family-specific coworker support is somewhat understudied in extant literature of work-family conflict (Kossek et al., 2011b). There are, however, several possible explanations for the lack of relationship. Considering that the measure of family-supportive coworker behaviors was adapted from Hammer et al. (2009) for use in this study, the items may have been inconsistent with the teachers' actual perceptions of supportive coworker behaviors, indicating a lack of content validity. On the other hand, the sample reported very strong agreement with the adapted items ( $M = 4.17$  out of 5). Perhaps there was not enough variance in the teachers' responses for this relationship to produce significant effects.

The term coworker is also subject to interpretation, meaning that one teacher might like working independently from other teachers whereas a different teacher might receive great satisfaction from socializing and collaborating. Nevertheless, teams are becoming increasingly prevalent in schools as a way to enhance professional development and aid student learning (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Given this and the finding from the current study, more research is needed to determine if and how family-specific coworker support affects work-family

conflict and various other teacher outcomes. For future studies of family supportive coworker behaviors, teachers from a wide variety of school environments, including urban, suburban, rural, public and private, should be sampled. Additionally, supplementary measures of coworker relations should be used to tap constructs such as job interdependence, organizational citizenship behaviors, group cohesion, and coworker similarity.

In addition to obtaining empirical evidence for the specific kinds of support that might help teachers manage their work and family lives, the proposed relationships between work-family conflict and turnover intentions and work engagement were also confirmed. This indicates that teachers experience turnover intentions as a result of work-family conflict, extending previous research, which found this to be true in other samples of workers (Allen et al., 2000; Boyar et al., 2003). However, teacher turnover represents a serious issue in today's educational system, especially in low-performing, poor schools, where the annual turnover rate is 7% higher compared to low-poverty schools (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). Ingersoll (2001) concluded after close analysis of the Schools and Staffing Survey from the National Center for Education Statistics that there are several reasons for teacher turnover including school staffing cutbacks, personal reasons, and retirement. Many teachers surveyed also listed dissatisfaction, specifically with administrative support, as a reason to leave. However, work-family conflict was not explicitly mentioned as a reason for teacher turnover. Therefore, this study contributes to the continued conversation on the implications of teacher turnover by providing the additional predictor of work-family conflict, which has not been previously examined or discussed in the educational literature. Future research should make efforts to incorporate the previously studied predictors of teacher turnover (i.e., salary, dissatisfaction, etc.) to determine if work-family conflict contributes additional prediction.

To date, research on the relationship between work-family conflict and work engagement has been sparse and inconclusive (Hasbesleben, 2010; Rantanen et al., 2011). Therefore, the findings that family-to-work conflict significantly predicted lower work engagement as hypothesized, and that work-to-family conflict also had a significant impact on the work engagement of teachers contributes a great deal to both fields of education and work-family research. As a result, school administrators are provided with a potential reason why their teachers might be less engaged at work. Recognizing this relationship is a first step toward improving the morale and burnout of teachers.

Theoretically, the addition of the path between work-to-family conflict and work engagement shows divergence from the domain specificity hypothesis within the work-family literature, which proposes that outcomes in the domain that is being interfered with will suffer. Although the domain specificity hypothesis proposed by Frone et al. (1992) has been a leading framework in studies of the work-family interface, previous research and a recent meta-analysis by Shockley and Singla (2011) indicate that the “source attribution” hypothesis may actually provide better empirical support. They found consistent results that work-family conflict and enrichment will actually have more consequences in the domain from which they stem, meaning that job satisfaction (rather than family satisfaction) will suffer due to work-to-family conflict (Shockley & Singla, 2011). To this end, the results of the present study are consistent with the meta-analytic results reported by Shockley and Singla (2011). However, more research should be conducted on teachers to see if the domain specificity or source attribution hypothesis is more appropriate in future studies of the work-family interface by including additional work-related (e.g., task performance, contextual performance, job satisfaction) and family-related (e.g., family performance, family satisfaction, marital satisfaction) outcomes in the model.

Initially, work-family conflict was proposed as being the sole direct predictor of turnover intentions and work engagement within the model. However, family supportive supervisor behaviors also emerged as having a significant effect on the engagement and turnover of teachers. From a practical standpoint, the construct of family supportive supervisor behaviors gives schools and principals an actionable solution to high turnover and low work engagement. Whereas work-to-family and family-to-work conflict cannot always be quickly or easily improved, increasing the family supportiveness of principals may be as simple as a day of training and identification of certain behaviors that are missing or needed. However, prior research has found that implementing family-friendly policies and training for supervisors may result in work-family backlash, where employees who are low in work-family conflict end up resenting the organization for focusing resources on an area that is irrelevant to them (c.f. Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, & Zimmerman, 2011). As such, schools that do choose to focus on increasing the family supportive behaviors exhibited by principals should be careful and cognizant of how all teachers are affected. Nevertheless, if applied effectively, family supportive supervisor behaviors have the potential to greatly change how school districts go about engaging and retaining teachers.

### **The Utility and Effects of Family Life Stage**

From an applied perspective, the use of family life stage as a multi-group variable allows employers to pinpoint the needs of employees who have children of certain ages and dependency, a feature that is not possible in studies that rely on dichotomous categorization (e.g., married/not married, parent/non-parent). Family life stage also allows work-family researchers to group individuals based on their current family life experience, with the understanding that people function within larger systems and should be frequently observed as such (Moen & Sweet, 2004).



However, in order for the construct of family life stage to make a lasting contribution to future research, it is imperative that its categorization fully captures the family situations of all participants.

Within the present study, the additional family life stage of Boomerang was created to reflect a common family situation in today's society where young adults choose to remain living at home after high school or return home after living independently. This choice is often fiscally related, with many of these young people unable to find jobs with high enough salaries to support living alone, saving for the future, and/or paying off debt. As a result, 19% of young men and 10% of young women who are 25 to 34 years old report living in their parents' home in 2011, an increase of 5% and 2%, respectively, from 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Furthermore, at least half of all 18-24 year olds live at home, but it should be noted that these figures include college students who live in a dormitory. Nevertheless, the number of families that have adult children living at home has been grossly ignored in previous family life stage conceptualizations (e.g., Erickson et al., 2010; Mattesich & Hill, 1987). Therefore, the addition of the Boomerang stage to the family life cycle is necessary in order to accurately assess the family situations of all employees. It also adds another dimension to the work-family interface, which typically operationalizes child care responsibilities as having at least one child under the age of 18 or simply the number of children at home, disregarding age (e.g., Cullen, Hammer, Neal, & Sinclair, 2009; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

Surprisingly, participants in different family life stages did not report significantly different amounts of family-specific work support (i.e., family-supportive organization perceptions, supervisor behaviors, & coworker behaviors) and work-family conflict (both directions). These findings are a testament to the fact that work-family support and conflict

happens to everyone, not just people with children (Galinsky, Bond, & Friedman, 1996).

Organizations that recognize this will be better equipped to foster a family-friendly culture that will have a positive impact on all employees. Although the lack of mean differences is important, noticeable patterns and differences among family life stage groups were discovered in the relationships between these sets of constructs.

In the final three research questions, the initial inquiry was to recognize how individuals in various family life stages differed in the relationships of the model. However, a strong pattern across groups was seen in the relationship between family-supportive organization perceptions and work-to-family conflict. The consistency in this finding for each group indicates that all teachers who perceive their schools as supportive of family demands are less likely to experience work-to-family conflict. Previous research on teachers and their work environments makes it clear that there are a lot of school characteristics (e.g., overcrowded classrooms, loss of autonomy, workload) that lead to negative outcomes (Berry, Smylie & Fuller, 2008). In a practical sense, interventions intended to foster family-supportive organization perceptions, based on these data, are likely to positively influence the work-to-family conflict of teachers, regardless of their family life stage.

Interestingly, family-specific work support does not appear to have the same systematic effect on family-to-work conflict for the six family life stages. Whereas perceptions of family-supportive organizations, supervisors, and coworkers collectively predicted less family-to-work conflict for the majority of family life stages, teachers in the Adolescence and Empty Nest stage did not see the same significant negative relationship. This lack of relationship provides support for previous assertions that although work-family conflict may not decrease over the life course, individuals in later stages are better able to manage it (Erickson et al., 2010). They may rely less

on support from their organization or their colleagues. Additionally, adolescent children are more self-sufficient and autonomous, requiring less from their parents, which results in fewer hours spent on caring for children (Higgins et al., 1994). On the surface, it is easy to see why the relationship between workplace support and family-to-work conflict for individuals in the Empty Nest stage would be weak since they have no children left at home. However, it is important to recognize that the family-to-work conflict of Empty Nesters may have just shifted from taking care of children to caring for older parents and relatives, a family demand that has not been studied in relation to family-specific work support.

Providing support for the addition of another family life stage not previously conceptualized in extant literature, teachers in the Boomerang stage appear to be potentially gaining the most systematic benefit from family-specific work support in terms of work-to-family conflict. All three forms of family-specific work support negatively related to work-to-family conflict, accounting for 51% of the variance explained in the Boomerang group. None of the other family life stages showed such strong relationships between these constructs. One possible explanation of this finding is that work-to-family conflict of teachers with adult children at home is different than the conflict experienced by parents of younger children. As such, individuals in the Boomerang stage may not experience the instrumental support of supervisors and coworkers the same way parents with younger children do; instead, Boomerang parents may rely more on the emotional support component. Additionally, teachers in the Boomerang stage may have taken on more work responsibilities after their children moved out (Hodson & Sullivan, 2011), which requires more family-specific work support to manage the work-to-family conflict that might arise now that they have moved back. However, all of this rationale necessitates future

research in order to examine the work and family responsibilities of parents in the Boomerang family life stage.

Based on the findings of the present study, the relationship between family-specific work support and work-family conflict does differ depending on family life stage. Although family-supportive organization perceptions are beneficial for all family life stages, the impact of family-supportive behaviors from principals and coworkers is less systematic. These findings require more specific research to disentangle why one source of support is important for individuals in a particular family life stage versus another. On the other hand, the relationship between work-family conflict and turnover intentions in teachers did produce a meaningful pattern across the various family life stages, providing actualized evidence of the usefulness of differentiating between family life stages in work-family research.

Based on this sample of teachers, it appears that individuals who have children living at home, regardless of the children's ages, are more likely to have thoughts of turnover as a result of work-to-family conflict. This is in line with the findings of Huffman, Youngcourt, Payne, and Castro (2008) who compared the relationship between work-to-family conflict and turnover intentions in married employees with children and single, childless employees. Although this is an interesting finding on its own, it becomes even more impactful when family-to-work conflict is considered. Family-to-work conflict was found to only significantly predict turnover intentions for teachers in the Establishment and Empty Nest stage, meaning they have no children living at home. This pattern of results indicates that turnover intentions are often a combination of work-family conflict and family life stage. Teachers who experience work-to-family conflict have more thoughts of leaving their job, perhaps as a way to escape the imbalance and spend more time with their family. It also appears that teachers in the Establishment and Empty Nest stage

want to focus on family needs since they are more likely to have thoughts of turnover due to family-to-work conflict. Changes in the family structure such as marriage and pregnancy in the Establishment group and remarriage, ill parents, and care for grandchildren for Empty Nest individuals could be instances that might engender this relationship (Erickson et al., 2010).

Looking at past research, both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict are related to higher turnover intentions, but work-to-family conflict consistently has a stronger relationship with turnover intentions than family-to-work conflict (Boyar et al., 2003; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). Given the findings of this study, perhaps family life stage has unknowingly played a role in previous examinations of these relationships. Additionally, family life stage is confounded with age, meaning that age is implicit in the operationalization of family life stage. Therefore, the relationship between age and turnover intentions should also be considered when interpreting findings related to family life stage. Based on the meta-analysis by Ng and Feldman (2009), the older an employee is, the less likely they are to voluntarily turnover from the organization. However, in the current study, participants in the Empty Nest and Boomerang stage reported significantly higher turnover intentions than the participants in the earlier family life stages (see Table 3). Although this is counter to what has been found in the general employee population, previous research on teacher turnover shows that teachers are more likely to turnover as they get older (Ingersoll, 2001).

In the current study, turnover intentions were examined globally in order to get a general idea of how family life stage might interact with them within the model. However, teacher turnover is a multifaceted construct that can be broken down into transfer (either going to teach at a different school or teaching in a different grade or subject area) or attrition/exit (leaving the teaching field altogether; Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008). The choice to transfer to another

school or leave the profession permanently may be a function of family life stage. For example, 30% of new teachers leave the profession after only five years (Ingersoll, 2001), suggesting that teachers in the Establishment family life stage are more likely to exit than transfer. The high turnover of novice teachers corresponds with the age-turnover relationship, where young people are more accepting of frequent job changes (Ng & Feldman, 2009). As a person progresses to the Preschool and School Age family life stage, thoughts of leaving the profession may decrease as financial and familial responsibilities take precedence. As such, individuals with young children may be more likely to transfer schools or grade level to obtain a better work environment, one in which they may perceive more family supportiveness from the school or supervisor. Additionally, it is common for teachers to leave the profession for several years in order to raise children or focus on another passion and then return to teaching without much difficulty (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991). These idiosyncrasies warrant future investigation and replication as they may be driving the varied relationships between work-family conflict and turnover intentions and its subcomponents of transfer and exit.

The constructs of turnover intentions and work engagement both reflect a certain degree of work attachment, which is apparent in the similar pattern of how work-family conflict relates to work engagement for teachers in different family life stages. Whereas, work-to-family conflict has a negative effect on work engagement for teachers with children 17 years old or younger, it is family-to-work conflict that negatively affects work engagement in teachers who have no children or adult children living at home. Given that the relationship between work-to-family conflict and work engagement was an addition to the original model, it can be assumed that the strong presence of individuals in the family life stages of Preschool, School Age, and Adolescence is what drove the need to include it. As such, these findings provide important

information to principals who would like to increase the positive outlook and energy of their teaching staff.

For teachers with children in preschool through high school, school administrators could implement policy changes and programs that might decrease work-to-family conflict as a way to improve work engagement. Since family-to-work conflict is based in the family domain, it is more difficult for employers to affect. However, perhaps a stronger emphasis on support and flexibility might be a way to increase work engagement for teachers who have no children or adult children living at home. Being that work engagement has not been studied as function of family life stage prior to this study, future research should be conducted given the high rates of burnout within the field of teaching (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Increasing work engagement by reducing the type of work-family conflict that is most pertinent to individuals in a particular life stage might be one way to improve the stress and well-being of teachers.

### **Limitations**

Despite the contributions of the merger of work-family research and the construct of family life stage outlined above, several limitations of the present study should be considered. To start, the sample was predominantly Caucasian, mid-career females residing in the Southern United States. Although roughly 76% of public school teachers in the U.S. are female (Snyder & Dillow, 2011), making them the majority in regards to the teaching occupation, this does affect the generalizability of findings to other populations. Furthermore, it prevents conclusions from being drawn regarding whether family life stage impacts men and women similarly at work. Future research should replicate this study in a nationally representative sample of teachers, as well as replicate it using other samples of workers in order to validate the family life stage findings.

In addition to issues with generalizability, the data for this study were gathered through self-report. Self-report methodology can contribute to common method bias, mostly due to the fact that participants provide responses for both predictor and criterion variables (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, the measures assessed in the present study are based around the perceptions of the participants, making the use of self-report appropriate and needed in order to truly capture the attitudes and experiences of teachers.

As mentioned earlier, the moderation of family life stage on the proposed relationships may be confounded with age, as well as generational cohort, both of which represent another limitation of the present study. Based on common historical and sociological characteristics, it is possible that a teacher who is a part of the Baby Boomer generation may react to work-family conflict differently than a Millennial teacher when they reach the same family life stage (Erickson et al., 2010). In terms of age, older employees might be more versed in managing work-family conflict so family-specific work support has less of an effect on its reduction. However, none of the family life stages significantly differed in the perception of family-specific work support and work-family conflict at the mean level, only within the relationships between constructs. This juxtaposition of findings may indicate that the construct of family life stage is more applicable when interpreting relationships than aggregated means. Although age cannot be separated from family life stage, future studies should use longitudinal data to examine how generational cohort relates to family life stage and the relationships it moderates. By measuring individuals over time, a richer and stronger case can be made for the importance of family life stage, as well as the ability to confidently separate it from the effects of generation.

Lastly, the internal consistency of the family-to-work conflict measure should be addressed. The Cronbach's alpha for the measure was .61 in the omnibus sample, which falls



short of the accepted level of .70 (Nunnally, 1978). Further analysis of the measure indicated that deletion of any of the items would not significantly improve the reliability of the measure. Interestingly, the internal consistency estimate of the family-to-work conflict scale did vary when examined for each family life stage (see Table 4). Given that the family-to-work conflict construct was measured using an abbreviated, yet valid and reliable version of a longer measure (Matthews et al., 2010b), the less than ideal reliability estimate here is most likely due to its brevity and to the current sample of elementary school teachers. Perhaps this sample does not experience a great deal of family interfering with work, an assumption which is supported by the low mean in Table 3. On the other hand, elementary school teachers might experience different types of conflict that were not captured as part of the 3-item measure. Therefore, future research on teachers should assess family-to-work conflict with a longer scale (e.g., Carlson et al., 2000), which may be better at capturing the full theoretical construct. Using alternative measures of work-family conflict will help determine if the low reliability estimate within this study is systematic or unique to this particular sample.

## CONCLUSIONS

Within the present study, various gaps in the work-family literature were addressed by investigating the influence of family life stage on work-family specific support from organizations, supervisors, and coworkers as it relates to work-family conflict. Family life stage was also found to impact the relationships between work-family conflict and the work-related outcomes of turnover intentions and work engagement. Additionally, family supportive principals were shown to directly decrease thoughts of turnover and increase work engagement in teachers, a finding that could provide schools an actionable solution in the prevention of the attrition and transfer of their teaching staff. The family life stage classification structure was also expanded within the present study to include individuals who have adult children living at home, a societal trend that has not been incorporated in previous research on family life stage. Overall, this study is further evidence that future examinations of the work-family interface should consider the implications of family life stage so that individual differences within the family domain hold equal weight with those in the work domain.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**FAMILY-SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATION PERCEPTIONS MEASURE**

Instructions: “To what extent do you agree that each of the following statements represent the philosophy or beliefs of your organization (*remember, these are not your own personal beliefs—but pertain to what you believe is the philosophy of your organization*).”

1. Work should be the primary priority in a person’s life.
2. Employees who are highly committed to their personal lives cannot be highly committed to their work.
3. Attending to personal needs, such as taking time off for sick children is frowned upon.
4. Individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are not committed to their work.
5. It is assumed that the most productive employees are those who put their work before their family life.
6. The ideal employee is the one who is available 24 hours a day.

Scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**APPENDIX B**  
**FAMILY SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISOR BEHAVIORS MEASURE**

Instructions: "Please choose the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your principal."

**Emotional Support**

1. My principal is willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and nonwork life.
2. My principal takes the time to learn about my personal needs.
3. My principal makes me feel comfortable talking to him or her about my conflicts between work and nonwork.
4. My principal and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and nonwork issues.

**Instrumental Support**

5. I can depend on my principal to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it.
6. I can rely on my principal to make sure my work responsibilities are handled when I have unanticipated nonwork demands.
7. My principal works effectively with teachers to creatively solve conflicts between work and nonwork.

**Role Modeling**

8. My principal is a good role model for work and nonwork balance.
9. My principal demonstrates effective behaviors in how to juggle work and nonwork balance.
10. My principal demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job.

**Creative Work-Family Management**

11. My principal thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit teachers and the school.
12. My principal asks for suggestions to make it easier for teachers to balance work and nonwork demands.
13. My principal is creative in reallocating job duties to help my department work better as a team.
14. My principal is able to manage the school as a whole team to enable everyone's needs to be met.

Scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**APPENDIX C**  
**FAMILY SUPPORTIVE COWORKER BEHAVIORS MEASURE**

Instructions: "Choose the extent to which you agree or disagree with following statements regarding your coworkers."

**Emotional Support**

1. My coworkers are willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and nonwork life.
2. My coworkers take the time to learn about my personal needs.
3. My coworkers make me comfortable talking to them about my conflicts between work and nonwork.
4. My coworkers and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and nonwork issues.

**Instrumental Support**

5. I can depend on my coworkers to help me with scheduling conflict if I need it.
6. I can rely on my coworkers to make sure my work responsibilities are handled when I have unanticipated nonwork demands.
7. My coworkers work effectively with one another to creatively solve conflicts between work and nonwork.

**Role Modeling**

8. My coworkers are good role models for work and nonwork balance.
9. My coworkers demonstrate effective behaviors in how to juggle work and nonwork balance.
10. My coworkers demonstrate how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job.

Scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**APPENDIX D**  
**WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT MEASURE**

Instructions: "Please read each of the following statements and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree."

Work-to-Family Conflict

1. I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.
2. I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.
3. The behaviors I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.

Family-to-Work Conflict

1. I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities.
2. Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.
3. Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.

Scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

**APPENDIX E**  
**TURNOVER INTENTIONS MEASURE**

Instructions: "Please choose the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your future in teaching."

1. I often think of leaving the teaching profession.
2. I am planning to look for a new job unrelated to teaching.
3. I do not plan on being a teacher much longer.
4. I am planning on looking for a new job at a different school.
5. I plan on teaching at my current school next school year.
6. I frequently consider teaching elsewhere.
7. I plan to retire from teaching within the next two years.

Scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

## **APPENDIX F**

### **WORK ENGAGEMENT MEASURE**

Instructions: “The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have had this feeling, please indicate how frequently you feel that way.”

#### Vigor

1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.

#### Dedication

4. I am enthusiastic about my job.
5. My job inspires me.
6. I am proud of the work that I do.

#### Absorption

7. I feel happy when I am working intensely.
8. I am immersed in my work.
9. I get carried away when I am working.

Scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Almost Never, 3 = Rarely, 4 = Sometimes, 5 = Often, 6 = Very Often, 7 = Always



**APPENDIX G**  
**FAMILY LIFE STAGE SELF-REPORT MEASURE**

Instructions: "Which of the following best describes you?" (Check all that apply)

1. Younger than 35 yrs. old; No children
2. Older than 35 yrs. old; No children
3. Youngest child is 4 yrs. or younger
4. Youngest child is between 5 and 12 yrs. old
5. Youngest child is between 13 and 17 yrs. old
6. All children have moved out of the home
7. Other (please specify) - \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX H FAMILY LIFE STAGE CODING MANUAL

Family Life Stage (FLS) categories:

- 1 – Respondent is 34 or younger; no children
- 2 – Respondent is 35 or older; no children
- 3 – Youngest child is 4 years or younger
- 4 – Youngest child is between 5 and 12 years old
- 5 – Youngest child is between 13 and 17 years old
- 6 – All children have moved out of the home

\*New\* 7 – Respondent has children 18 years or older living at home

\*Category 7 was added after seeing a number of participants report having adult children still living at home.

### **Explicit Steps for Coders (also described in Step 3 below):**

a: Look at Columns D-I (Childrens' age)

b: If no childrens' ages are listed, look at participants' age in Column B. If 34 or younger, place a 1 in Column C (FLS); if 35 or older, place a 2 in Column C

c. If ages of children are provided, locate the lowest number (youngest child) and place the appropriate code (3,4,5) in Column C.

d. If **all children** are 18 or older, check Columns J & K to determine if these adult children still live at home. If so, place a 7 in the FLS Column. If they do not live with the respondent, place a 6 in the FLS column. If a child over the age of 18 lives at home, but younger children also live there too, still base the FLS on the age of the youngest child!

e. If you cannot determine the FLS from the above steps or see something out of the ordinary, place a 0 in the FLS column. These participants will be reviewed again later.

## Detailed Coding Instructions

**Step 1:** Within the demographics section of the survey, respondents were asked to choose which family life stage category best described them. They were given the options of categories 1-6 described above, as well as an Other category which was given the code of 0. These responses made up the first part of the coding process, **FLS- Self-Report**. Many respondents who chose the Other category gave an explanation that might actually place them in a FLS category. These respondents should be recoded into their correct FLS, rather than a 0.

-At this point in the coding, a trend was identified within the FLS-SR Other category. Many of the respondents could not be placed in a FLS category due to the fact that they had children over the age of 17 still living at home. In order to ensure the FLS framework was exhaustive, a seventh category was added. Respondents who reported having children 18 years or older who still lived at home will now be recoded into category 7 rather than the Other category.

**Step 2:** Due to the availability of data on the respondent's age and children's ages, as well as the frequency of the Other category, a secondary coding scheme was adopted, titled **FLS – Researcher-Report**. In order to ensure interrater reliability, 3 researchers will look at several demographic variables reported by the respondents (see Step 3) and assign that respondent a FLS code of 1-7 or undetermined (0).

**Step 3:** The most relevant information in determining a participant's FLS is 1) whether they have any children, 2) the ages of their children, 3) the age of the participant, and 4) whether their children live at home. If the participant has children, they were asked to report the age of each child in the survey. Based on the age of the youngest child reported, the researcher should be able to place them in a FLS category. No response to the child question indicates the respondent has no children. If no children are reported, the researcher should look at the age of the respondent and determine whether they are younger or older than 35 and assign them to category 1 or 2. However, if the respondent reports having an uncategorizable family life stage, they should be placed in the undetermined category (0). This is up to the discretion of the researcher. Respondents in this category will be addressed at a later point.

**Step 4:** Once all researchers have done their coding independently, they will compare the codes for each respondent. If any differences exist, the researchers will discuss and decide on a category together (*Need to record % of disagreement between coders before and after addition of new category; also document reasons why disagreement occurred and how it was resolved*). If agreement can't be reached, that respondent will be excluded from the dataset.

**Step 5:** Once adequate interrater reliability between researchers is reached, a final FLS-RR code for each respondent will be documented. The final FLS-Researcher Report and the FLS-Self Report codes will be compared. If differences between the two reports are found for a respondent, the coders will take a closer look at the available data on the respondent's family and living situation (*Document % of disagreement between the 2 codes-expected to be low due to Other/7 category*). For the respondents who place themselves in the Other FLS category (for reasons other than having adult children living at home), their description will be examined and compared to the other data they provided. From this second examination, a decision will be made as to which category is accurate, with the reasoning for this decision being documented as well.

**APPENDIX I**  
**CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF FAMILY LIFE STAGE**

Table 1

Classification and Description of Family Life Stage

Family Life Stage	Classification	Description
Establishment	Employee has no children; less than 35 years old	Individuals are no longer dependent on their parents for financial support and have begun to establish themselves.
Pre-School	Employee's youngest child is less than 5 years old	Individuals who have given birth to their first child, as well as individuals with preschool/toddler age children
School Age	Employee's youngest child is between 5 and 12 years old	Individuals with children who are transitioning to school or currently in school
Adolescence	Employee's youngest child is between 13 than 17 years old	Individuals whose youngest child has reached puberty, and is also capable of caring for themselves.
Empty Nest	Employee's children have left the home and are no longer considered dependents	Individuals have effectively launched their children from the home and are no longer responsible for their care. Conceptually, the child would then begin its own family life cycle.
Boomerang	Employee has children 18 years or older living at home	Individuals whose youngest child is 18 years or older, but remains at home after high school or has returned home after living independently
Non-Parent	Employee has no children and is older than 35	Individual is assumed to have chosen not to have children

**APPENDIX J**  
**SAMPLE MEANS AND MANOVA RESULTS**

Table 3

Means for the Full Sample and by Family Life Stage and MANOVA Results

	Full		Establishment		No Children		Preschool		School Age		Adolescence		Empty Nest		Boomerang		$df_a$	$F_a$	$df_b$	$F_b$
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
1. Family-Supportive Organization Perceptions	3.64	0.90	3.67	0.81	3.39	0.90	3.71	0.96	3.65	0.91	3.72	0.86	3.49	0.95	3.62	0.89	6, 577	.99	18, 1627	1.08
2. Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviors	3.50	1.02	3.49	0.93	3.46	1.06	3.51	1.03	3.57	1.00	3.50	1.04	3.52	1.08	3.31	1.03	6, 577	.45		
3. Family-Supportive Coworker Behaviors	4.17	0.68	4.18	0.70	4.09	0.66	4.27	0.71	4.21	0.63	4.20	0.71	4.10	0.56	3.95	0.80	6, 577	1.70	12, 1152	1.41
4. Work-to-Family Conflict	2.92	1.00	2.96	1.03	2.88	0.80	2.84	1.03	2.99	0.99	2.82	0.90	2.97	1.05	2.83	1.10	6, 577	.50		
5. Family-to-Work Conflict	2.02	0.67	2.09	0.68	1.85	0.47	2.16	0.74	2.04	0.66	1.93	0.56	1.94	0.74	1.92	0.61	6, 577	1.93	12, 1152	2.69**
6. Turnover Intentions	2.10	0.85	2.10	0.88	2.12	0.73	1.99	0.86	2.00	0.77	2.00	0.80	2.30	0.89	2.33	0.95	6, 577	2.31*		
7. Work Engagement	5.41	0.81	5.34	0.81	5.37	0.75	5.28	0.81	5.47	0.79	5.52	0.82	5.47	0.90	5.50	0.77	6, 577	1.11		

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .,  $df_a$  and  $F_a$  indicate univariate analysis;  $df_b$  and  $F_b$  indicate multivariate analysis

**APPENDIX K**  
**MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSES AND PATH ESTIMATES**

Table 5.1

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis and Standardized Path Estimates for Variables Predicting Work-to-Family Conflict

Variable	Overall	Establishment	Preschool	School Age	Adolescence	Empty Nest	Boomerang
FSOP	-.31**	-.28*	-.27**	-.33**	-.33*	-.29*	-.37**
FSSB	-.18**	-.12	-.21*	-.10	-.13	-.28*	-.31**
FSCB	-.05	-.10	.03	.10	-.19	-.09	-.25*
<i>F</i>	48.08**	5.08**	7.83**	7.87**	6.85**	9.76**	17.76**
<i>df</i>	580	83	117	139	61	81	52
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.20	.16	.17	.15	.25	.27	.51

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . FSOP = Family Supportive Organization Perceptions, FSSB = Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors, FSCB = Family Supportive Coworker Behaviors.

Table 5.2

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis and Standardized Path Estimates for Variables Predicting Family-to-Work Conflict

Variable	Overall	Establishment	Preschool	School Age	Adolescence	Empty Nest	Boomerang
FSOP	-.17**	-.13	-.11	-.24**	-.26	-.21	-.41**
FSSB	-.07	-.20	-.12	-.05	.13	-.07	.08
FSCB	-.08	-.18	-.19*	-.05	.02	-.04	.03
<i>F</i>	11.29**	4.34**	3.17*	3.72*	1.04	1.87	2.75*
<i>df</i>	580	83	117	139	61	81	52
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.06	.14	.08	.07	.05	.07	.14

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . FSOP = Family Supportive Organization Perceptions, FSSB = Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors, FSCB = Family Supportive Coworker Behaviors.

Table 5.3

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis and Standardized Path Estimates for Variables Predicting Turnover Intentions

Variable	Overall	Establishment	Preschool	School Age	Adolescence	Empty Nest	Boomerang
FSOP	-.04	-.04	-.06	.00	.00	-.01	-.18
FSSB	-.30**	-.24*	-.43**	-.31**	-.26	-.15	-.34**
FSCB	-.11**	-.17	-.06	-.18*	.08	-.09	-.07
WFC	.24**	.17	.23**	.25**	.44**	.17	.31*
FWC	.12**	.27*	.06	.13	-.12	.31**	-.03
<i>F</i>	49.62**	9.30**	13.83**	12.04**	4.58**	5.08**	9.93**
<i>df</i>	578	81	115	137	59	79	50
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.30	.37	.38	.31	.28	.24	.50

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . FSOP = Family Supportive Organization Perceptions, FSSB = Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors, FSCB = Family Supportive Coworker Behaviors, WFC = Work-to-Family Conflict, FWC = Family-to-Work Conflict.

Table 5.4

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis and Standardized Path Estimates for Variables Predicting Work Engagement

Variable	Overall	Establishment	Preschool	School Age	Adolescence	Empty Nest	Boomerang
FSOP	-.03	.13	-.13	-.05	.06	.04	-.25
FSSB	.22**	.21	.43**	.26**	.02	-.01	.24
FSCB	.01	.03	.07	.07	-.17	-.10	.11
WFC	-.16**	.01	-.21*	-.20*	-.39*	-.22	-.19
FWC	-.20**	-.39**	-.02	-.16	.04	-.26*	-.36*
<i>F</i>	23.44**	7.62**	7.36**	6.39**	2.09	3.42**	3.19*
<i>df</i>	578	81	115	137	59	79	50
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.17	.32	.24	.19	.15	.18	.24

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . FSOP = Family Supportive Organization Perceptions, FSSB = Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors, FSCB = Family Supportive Coworker Behaviors, WFC = Work-to-Family Conflict, FWC = Family-to-Work Conflict.

# APPENDIX L IRB APPROVAL

## Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight



Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair  
131 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.6792  
irb@lsu.edu  
lsu.edu/irb

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

-- Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-E, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee. Members of this committee can be found at <http://www.lsu.edu/screeningmembers.shtml>

-- A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:

- (A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of part B thru E.
- (B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1&2)
- (C) Copies of all instruments to be used.  
\*If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.
- (D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
- (E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (<http://phrp.nihtaining.com/users/login.php>.)
- (F) IRB Security of Data Agreement: (<http://www.lsu.edu/irb/IRB%20Security%20of%20Data.pdf>)

1) Principal Investigator:  Rank:   
 Dept:  Ph:  E-mail:

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each

IRB# EO766 LSU Proposal #

- Complete Application
- Human Subjects Training on File

3) Project Title:

Study Exempted By:  
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman  
Institutional Review Board  
Louisiana State University  
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall  
225-578-8692 | [www.lsu.edu/irb](http://www.lsu.edu/irb)  
Exemption Expires: 11-3-2014

4) Proposal? (yes or no)  Yes  No If Yes, LSU Proposal Number

Also, if YES, either  
 This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant  
 OR  
 More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students)

\*Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: (children <18; the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the aged, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature  Date  (no per signatures)

\*\* I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office:

Screening Committee Action: Exempted  Not Exempted  Category/Paragraph 2  
 Reviewer Mathews Signature [Signature] Date 11/4/11



## VITA

Rachel C. Trout is from Petal, Mississippi. She earned her high school diploma from Petal High School in Petal, Mississippi in May 2006. She then attended Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with a minor in Business in May of 2010. Rachel moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in August 2010 to begin her graduate career at Louisiana State University. Rachel is currently a second year graduate student in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology program at Louisiana State University under the direction of her academic advisor, Dr. Russell Matthews.

Rachel has worked on numerous research projects and presented at various conferences, including the Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology annual conference and the Louisiana State University Life Course and Aging Center annual conference. Her primary research interests include family-specific workplace support, work-family conflict, employer-sponsored childcare, and the Boomerang generation.