

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The caring advantage: When and how parenting improves leadership

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manuscript.**Summary**

Leadership research is grounded in one simple principle: leaders care about followers' attitudes and emotions to achieve outcomes. Yet, how leaders develop these caring skills remains unidentified. The current study addresses parenting as a major, previously unaddressed antecedent of leadership effectiveness that involves experiences of care and emotional support to others (the children) transferred to work. Findings from matched field data of leaders who are parents and their employees confirm this approach and point to a fundamental omission in leadership studies: supportive behaviors that are critical for leaders involve experiences of care inherently developed in parenting roles. Consistent with work–family enrichment principles, leaders' parental experiences improved employee outcomes by facilitating supportive leadership behaviors, conditional on time spent in parenting (with supportive parenting styles but little time to be with children, the positive transfer from parenting to work was lower). These findings represent a clear contribution to leadership theory and practice and the many missed associations between leadership and family–work enrichment. They also provide novel insights and questions for advancing management theory with critical practical implications for leaders who are parents, calling for urgent designs of firm practices that are sensitive to parenting and other forms of unpaid care work to unleash leaders' caring potential.

KEYWORDS

emotion, leadership, parenting, work–family enrichment

1 | INTRODUCTION

Being nurturing and emotionally supportive with employees is critical for leadership effectiveness (Allen et al., 2004; Cremer, 2006; Gooty et al., 2010; Patzelt et al., 2021; Rajah et al., 2011). Yet, in management research, the factors that enable these orientations are unclear, with calls to further elucidate the antecedents of supportive behavior of leaders and how effective leadership can emerge (Pescosolido, 2002; Siegel, 2014). Responding to this gap, the current paper points to experiences of care and emotional support provision in parenting as a

distinctive determinant of care behavior and a relevant unaddressed predictor of leadership effectiveness. Providing care and emotional support is a natural process in parenting given that human beings are born helpless and depend on the continuous care of parents (Doepke et al., 2019). Therefore, parenting represents a central domain of care provision with potential effects in leadership. Such analysis is necessary in current societies in which the caretaking and household concerns of employees and managers have become more visible and exacerbated than ever, calling for studies that further investigate the effects of family life for organizations (Hjálmsdóttir & Bjarnadóttir, 2021). Contrasting

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these challenges, the scientific analysis of how experiences of parenting affect managerial life is virtually absent.

In leadership theory, existing research has generally focused on addressing effects of leadership rather than antecedents (Allen et al., 2004; Cremer, 2006; Gooty et al., 2010; Patzelt et al., 2021; Rajah et al., 2011; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). Among those studies addressing predictors, most have pointed to individual dispositions of leaders. For example, Bass (1998) pointed to personality (e.g., conscientiousness or locus of control), attitudes (e.g., optimism), and cognitions (e.g., moral reasoning) as possible general predictors of leadership behaviors. These approaches persist in recent research (Asselmann et al., 2023; Mitchell et al., 2022). Other individual dispositions such as charisma (Antonakis et al., 2022; Beyer & Browning, 1999), emotional intelligence (Barling et al., 2000), and communal identity traits (Gartzia & Baniandr s, 2019; Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012; Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016) have also been positively related to displaying specifically leadership styles with interpersonal components. These studies, however, have been generally ignored whether and how other relevant life dimensions such as family experiences and roles and in particular parenting can predict leadership effects.

For many years, hundreds of studies in developmental psychology have shown how parenting styles based on nurturance and care influence a varied range of outcomes in children, adolescents, and young adults (Spera, 2005; Steinberg et al., 1992). If parents truly care about their children's needs and emotions, their supportive behavior ultimately translates into better well-being, health, and school performance (Gfroerer et al., 2013; Pinquart, 2016). Based on the principles of work–family enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), these experiences acquired in the family role can potentially improve performance in another role. Therefore, a question that arises is whether and how experiences of care and emotional support that parents develop in parenting roles and improve outcomes from children can transfer to work through more effective leadership behaviors. This connection between caring skills developed in parental roles and leadership is a natural one given that leadership is inherently an interpersonal process. However, the analysis of whether and how parenting influences managerial life represents a surprisingly unresearched field

of study in organizational research. Overall, the current work sets out to more specifically answer the following research question: when and how does parenting improve leadership effectiveness?

2 | THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT

I build on enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) and the family and developmental psychology literature assessing effects of parents' relations with children (Baumrind, 2012; Pinquart, 2016; Spera, 2005) to develop a caring advantage model. Managers' experiences of care and emotional support as parents are predicted to translate into more effective leadership behaviors (model illustrated in Figure 1). Identifying the mechanisms through which parenting influences leadership represents an important area of research. Indeed, in the last decades, a growing literature has developed focusing on the economics of parenting and how parenting is a key factor in human development (Doepke et al., 2019). However, the majority of research connecting family and organizational roles in the organizational behavior literature has focused on the work–family conflict—namely understanding the connection between these two domains as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; p. 77; see also Kossek et al., 2023).

In recent years, calls for a more positive approach of the work–family interface have generated more research on the potential benefits of multiple role involvement (Grzywacz & Butler, 2005). Within this positive framework, researchers have examined positive associations between work and family under the concept of work–family enrichment or “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73). Central to work–family enrichment theory is the assumption that experiences and performance achieved in a given role (e.g., family) can potentially improve experiences and performance in another role (e.g., work), and the mechanisms that have been suggested to explain why involvement in multiple roles is beneficial revolve around the idea that multiple roles offer the possibility to use energy of one role in another, to transfer positive learnings and skills, and to increase

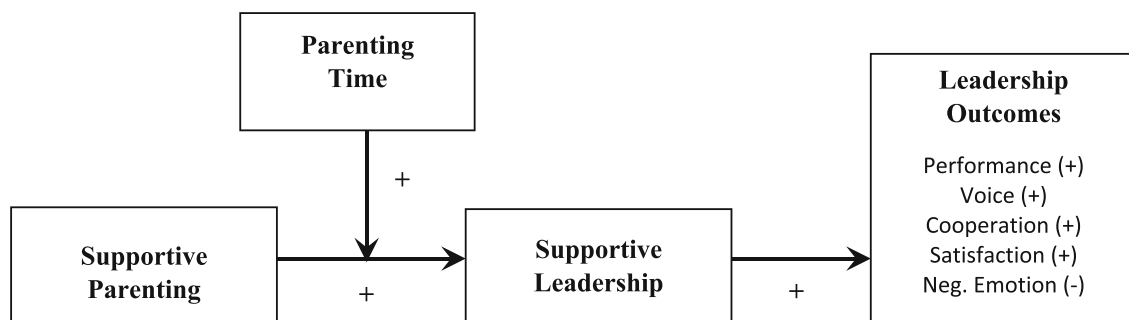


FIGURE 1 Proposed conceptual scheme for the effect of parenting on leadership. *Note:* Unstandardized path coefficients and conditional indirect effects at different levels of the moderator variable are presented in the tables. Specific direct effects and coefficients of supportive parenting on leadership variables are displayed in Table 2, and conditional indirect effects for different levels of the moderator variable are displayed in Table 3.

positive emotions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Although these theoretical standpoints have allowed a more positive approach of the work–family interface (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), the potential role that care work and in particular parenting play in leadership effectiveness remains a major, unaddressed question. This novel approach would make a critical theoretical and practical contribution to our understanding of leadership and the missed connections between leadership processes and work–life balance.

Addressing antecedents of leadership behavior and outcomes, Avolio (1994) provided an interesting framework to link key life personal events to leaders' engagement in different leadership behaviors. Using evaluations of leaders' life history, Avolio (1994) showed that leaders develop certain leadership behaviors based on developmental experiences accumulated over the life span that can result in fundamental changes in one's personal system of attitudes and competences. This approach is connected to psychoanalytic biographic perspectives in leadership research (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Zaleznik & de Vries, 1975) showing how personal experiences of leaders can be addressed as major crises with potential to serve for development, such as personal encounters in economically underdeveloped countries or religious experiences that serve for self-transformation. Extending these approaches with work–family enrichment theoretical foundations (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), I point at the particularly critical role of supportive parenting experiences predicting leadership behavior and outcomes. I posit that managers who develop experiences of parental support to get positive outcomes from children should be able to transfer these experiences to work and improve employee performance. Parenting inherently endorses functions of care provision and affective support, but in leadership research, these experiences have been virtually ignored as antecedents of leadership behavior.

2.1 | Supportive parenting

In the family literature, there is evidence that the activities involved in parenting can be enacted in different ways by parents. Baumrind's conceptualization of parenting styles, which represents one of the most widely used models of parenting features, encompasses attitudes and practices that parents use to socialize their children/youth and includes typologies such as authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative styles (Baumrind, 1991). Authoritarian parents often use strict discipline with limited emotional support and nurturance, whereas permissive parents tend to offer only limited guidance and rules (Baumrind, 2012). These styles are generally limited to achieve positive outcomes in children (Baumrind, 1991; Gafoor & Kurukkan, 2014). Contrasting these ineffective styles, a more supportive parenting typology based on care provision and emotional support, also referred to as authoritative and combined with a demandingness/control dimension that involves monitoring and controlling daily activities (Baumrind, 2012; Maccoby & Martin, 1983), involves being nurturing, emotionally attentive, warm, and sensitive with children and assists a more successful development of children compared to authoritarian and permissive styles (Baumrind, 1991; Gafoor &

Kurukkan, 2014). These supportive functions of parents, defined here as supportive parenting, encompass emotional dimensions of support and care that individuals develop in their parenting relations showing affect, talking about feelings, and attending to children's individual needs that go beyond rational knowledge (Ainsworth et al., 1978; De-Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Gómez et al., 2012).

Note that these emotionally supportive functions of parents are important because the overarching function of being a parent inherently involves many emotionally charged activities that require providing children and youth with love, a sense of security, and care (Bowlby, 1977; Doepke et al., 2019). For instance, parenting styles based on love provision, emotional intimacy, and encouragement rather than punishment help develop in children a sense of belonging and understanding that teaches relevant strategies for coping and self-reliance (Gfroerer et al., 2013; Nelsen et al., 2000). These associations are consistent with the basis of attachment theory (Bretherton et al., 1992; Johnson, 2003), based on which children need a close and emotionally supportive relation with a parent or another family member to succeed psychologically. In general terms, parental experiences of care and emotional support allow parents understand and be sensitive to matters of importance to their children/youth, and these supportive orientations of parents generate outcomes in these children and youth that include higher self-esteem (Pinquart & Gerke, 2019), better internalizing symptoms (Pinquart, 2017), lower relational aggression (Kawabata et al., 2011), improved moral reasoning (Pinquart & Fischer, 2021), and decreased obesity (Pinquart, 2014) and delinquency (Hoeve et al., 2009).

Importantly, the outcomes of parental styles with supportive orientations are generated across different developmental stages and include not only young children but also adolescents and youth (Cobb-Clark et al., 2019). In other words, parenting styles of care provision and emotional intimacy have critical effects for children not only in initial stages in life but also through early adulthood (Hawkes et al., 1998). For instance, high levels of warmth and responsiveness of parents are related to academic achievement of adolescents (Pinquart, 2016; Spera, 2005). This is because, compared to other primates, children are helpless for a long period until maturation is reached, with a very late age at maturity that can go from 17 years old to later in young adulthood in which the psychological assistance of parents continues to be critical (Hawkes et al., 1998). Consistent with these varied outcomes in children/youth that supportive parents can generate at all developmental stages, experiences of parental support should also enhance positive outcomes in leader–employee relations.

Greenhaus and Powell's work–family enrichment theory (2006) provides a theoretical basis to understand such a process of leadership enrichment by looking at the drivers of positive influences across role domains. Central to work–family enrichment theory is the assumption that experiences and performance achieved in a given role (e.g., family) can potentially improve experiences and performance in another role (e.g., work). The mechanisms through which these beneficial work–family enrichment processes occur and result in beneficial effects are connected to multiple role involvement and the opportunities that these experiences offer to use energy across roles and to transfer positive learnings and emotions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

According to Greenhaus and Powell (2006) and Sieber's (1974) connected approach of role accumulation, these positive learnings and outcomes acquired from family role experiences include varied benefits such as skills and perspectives (e.g., multitasking skills) and psychological resources (e.g., self-esteem). Therefore, consistent with these varied forms of enrichment, the spectrum of positive effects that supportive parents may get at work with employees from the abovementioned positive transfer processes should be varied.

Developmental research has shown that the outcomes that supportive parents can produce in children include tangible performance outcomes such as academic achievement (Pinquart, 2016; Spera, 2005) and emotional/attitudinal elements (Ainsworth et al., 1978; De-Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997). Therefore, processes of leadership enrichment from parental roles should lead to similar outcomes in employees, including both actual performance and improvement of attitudinal and emotional responses. To test these varied effects in leadership, the current work relies on measurement of a varied number of work outcomes that are well established in the leadership literature. First, I included leader-rated measures of performance, which are common in this field to capture employees' performance on the job. A measure of employees' voice behavior was also included, defined as voluntary communication of work-related ideas that could potentially benefit the organization (Morrison, 2011). This is also a typical measure of employee outcomes reported by managers because they are often the direct target for voice and have a huge impact on their employees' willingness to speak up. Such communication about relevant topics involved at work is important for leadership effectiveness, and it is associated with offering a democratic climate that better allows open and sincere communication. This democratic climate of communication and respect is precisely the type of responsive climate that supportive parents develop with children (Gfroerer et al., 2013; Pinquart, 2016; Popper & Mayseless, 2003).

To capture the effects of supportive parenting in relation to outcomes with clearer attitudinal/emotional components, several measures of employee-rated job outcomes commonly used in the leadership literature were used. These measures often include employees' willingness to cooperate with their leader, which has been underscored as one of the most important leadership functions (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002; Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016), as well as employees' job satisfaction, namely, their "positive or negative evaluative judgment of one's job or job situation" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Negative affect also represents a relevant job outcome with emotional components, and it has shown to be critical at work and closely related to functions of supportive leadership (Patzelt et al., 2021). The prediction is that, to the extent that parents support their children and successfully get outcomes from them, they may be able to use such positive energy at work and transfer these learnings to increase these positive attitudes of employees. If leaders are able to support their children being caring, emotionally attentive, and warm, they are also likely to transfer such positive learnings and energy to work reducing employees' own negative emotions at work. In sum, following these associations, I posit that experiences of leaders supporting and improving outcomes in children extend to positive outcomes on the job, including effectiveness outcomes rated by the leader (employee

performance and employee voice), and emotional and attitudinal responses of employees (likelihood to cooperate with the leader, satisfaction, and negative affect). It is predicted that.

H1. Leaders' parenting is related to positive outcomes from employees. In particular, supportive parenting is positively related to employees' (a) performance (leader rated), (b) voice (leader rated), (c) willingness to cooperate with leader (employee rated), (d) satisfaction (employee rated), and (e) negative emotions (employee rated).

2.2 | The mechanisms of a caring advantage: supportive leadership enrichment

As we have explained, parenting is conceived as a central human activity of care and emotional responsiveness to the psychological needs of children and youth, providing them with love, nurturance, and emotional support (Bretherton et al., 1992; Nelsen et al., 2000). These natural functions of parenting are consistent with the behaviors of social and emotional support that are critical for leadership functions, such as attending to employees' demands, caring about their feelings, listening to their problems, or being emotionally attentive (De-Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Schaubroeck & Shao, 2012). Connected with employees' needs to receive psychological and emotional support from leaders, the concept of supportive leadership has received much attention in the leadership literature (Allen et al., 2004; Kahn & Byosiore, 1992). This supportive function of leadership underscores the key role of managers responding to employees' needs in a sensitive way and supporting them emotionally in a wide range of work situations (Patzelt et al., 2021). In particular, supportive leadership encompasses "behaviors through which leaders communicate emotionally supportive messages and nurturing expressions to employees" (Patzelt et al., 2021; p. 5). These supportive behaviors are acknowledged as an integral component of the leadership role, linked to a broader variety of interpersonal behaviors of leaders such as motivating employees and attending to their needs as well as functions of individualized consideration (e.g., Avolio et al., 2009; House, 1981; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004).

One of the relevant mechanisms by which supportive leaders help employees have positive work experiences is by generating positive emotions (Patzelt et al., 2021; Rajah et al., 2011). Connected to this, leaders' emotional competences have been associated with employee outcomes such as performance or team and emotional climate (Humphrey, 2002; Kellett et al., 2002). Importantly, studies in developmental psychology also suggest that the positive outcomes that supportive parents can generate in children/youth are associated with providing "a high level of emotional security that provides their children with a sense of comfort and independence and helps them succeed." "These interpersonal skills [...] help children succeed in school, both socially and academically" (Durkin, 1995; all cited in Cobb-Clark et al., 2019). Drawing from and extending these theoretical foundations, I propose that these experiences of care and emotional support developed in supportive parenting can improve the quality of related experiences of supporting employees in the leadership role. To the extent that leaders engage in experiences of supportive parenting being emotionally attentive

and sensitive with children, they are likely to enrich their repertoire of supportive behaviors that are necessary for supportive leadership, resulting in more positive outcomes from employees. Although both parenting and leadership are interpersonal and emotional processes, these effects that parenting experiences can bring to the practice of leadership remain unspecified.

Consistent with the family-work enrichment foundations described before (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), experiences of care and emotional support developed by parents in their parenting role are expected to transfer to leadership by strengthening the basis of supportive leadership behaviors and thus accentuating the processes of emotional and interpersonal support that underlie leadership outcomes. Dimensions of emotional support and care are clearly involved in achieving positive outcomes from children in parenting practices, and thus parenting is likely to be an important factor for activating these supportive leadership behaviors. Given the inherently emotional nature of supportive parenting relations characterized by communication, emotional support, and nurturance, these experiences of supportive parenting may uniquely equip individuals with competences of support and care that are transferred to work. In short, leaders' parental behavior may affect leadership effectiveness by virtue of its influence on caring orientations transferred to the job. Because employees' performance is related to emotional experiences and interpersonal orientations of leaders (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), their outcomes might also be better with leaders who have been able to develop these caring orientations as parents and are able to transfer these learnings to the job. It is proposed that:

H2. Supportive leadership styles mediate the relationship between leaders' supportive parenting and the positive outcomes they generate from employees.

2.3 | Quality versus quantity: the moderating role of parenting time

As explained before, emotional support and care are relevant in parenting functions. However, derived from parenting demands, parents often experience limitations ranging from logistic to budget constraints that may limit their abilities to provide care and emotional support to children. For instance, when one is physically meeting the demands of one role (e.g., spending long hours at work), these time-based requirements may alter behavior and the opportunities for development in another role (e.g., being an emotionally supportive parent), even when one is attempting to be supportive in both roles. In the developmental psychology literature, several studies have revealed positive relationships between time-related parental investment and outcomes in children. For instance, research suggests that not only emotional support from parents but also daily time investments improve grades and result in higher achievement test scores of adolescents at school (Pinquart, 2016; Spera, 2005). Connected to this, the notion of parenting often captures not only the emotional closeness of the parent-child relationship but also the degree of monitoring parents' dedication to children with direct time involvement (e.g., being physically present to

monitor activities, help with school work, or provide meals; Cobb-Clark et al., 2019; Gauthier et al., 2004; Spera, 2005).

Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) role salience argument also suggests that importance placed on a role (salience) is directly associated with time devoted to such role, and it has a direct impact on practices experienced within such particular domain. For instance, as a person's time devoted to career grows, career becomes important and expectations to comply with requirement in the family role may become less salient (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Consistent with this, the work-family conflict literature has long acknowledged how employees' work and family roles strongly depend on how multiple roles compete for a person's time (see Pak et al., 2022), such that "time pressures associated with membership in one role may make it physically impossible to comply with expectations arising from another role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; p. 78). Thus, associations between family and work roles are not only influenced by behavioral components (e.g., the more or less emotionally supportive way in which a parent acts) but also time-based demands (i.e., time devoted to that role). Overall, these relationships reflect the importance that parents are not only emotionally supportive but also have opportunities in terms of actual time to enact such behavior.

Although I argued that the relationship between leaders' supportive parenting styles and their effectiveness as leaders is mediated by activation of interpersonal leadership behaviors, the strength of this association is expected to differ across parents who invest different number of hours in their parenting functions. Consistently paying attention to children, supervising and engaging with them, and monitoring their emotional responses are a combination of both psychological attention and time. So, parental styles and parental time should be closely linked. As leaders' parenting time grows, the parenting role may also become more salient, resulting in more frequent opportunities to display supportive behaviors in the parenting role. In contrast, under situations that result in limited time in parenting functions, the potential of supportive parenting for activating supportive leadership should be constrained. Supportive leadership will be less affected by leaders' parental styles as direct time devoted to parenting decreases (see full model in Figure 1). I propose that.

H3. The positive relationship between leaders' supportive parenting and supportive leadership is stronger when time spent with children is higher.

H4: Leaders' time with children moderates the strength of the relationship between leaders' parenting styles and employees' performance via leadership styles (moderated mediation). Supportive leadership mediates the indirect effect of parenting styles on employee outcomes when time spent with children is high but not when it is low.

3 | METHODS

3.1 | Sampling procedure

Our research questions required collecting data from managers' private family life as well as indicators of their leadership styles and outcomes at work. Thus, data collection implied the challenge of gathering

information from leaders (to capture their parenting styles), while at the same time measuring their leadership role and effectiveness with responses from their actual subordinates. To respond to this challenge, a snowball technique was used in which business administration students in a leadership course provided in exchange for optional extra credit contact information about one supervisor who was at the same time a parent and one subordinate working with her/him full time. This sampling technique has been successfully used in previous research to gather matched data from employees and managers (e.g., Gooty et al., 2010; Martins et al., 2010). Also, according to Podsakoff et al. (2003), these data collected from different sources help minimize the extent to which the findings could be affected by common method bias.

Using this sampling technique, I identified a list of potential dyads of leaders and employees across multiple industries and occupations who met the selection criteria (namely, managers who were parents, responsible for the direct supervision of the employee, and would be potentially available to respond to a confidential online survey). I contacted the leaders and employees separately with a matched nature of the data, providing a confidential code for each dyad that would be used for matching purposes, and explaining that they were participating in a study on organizational behavior and work-life practices. Leaders received an email containing two sections: one part with questions about their family life (parenting styles) and a second part asking them to assess their matched employee's work performance. Employees received an email containing a survey that included evaluating their matched supervisors' behavior as a leader. To ensure reliability, employees and managers were reassured of the confidentiality of their responses, reinforcing the idea that the data would never be shared with their leader/subordinate and only be assessed in an aggregate manner by researchers (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

One hundred eighty-one matched responses were received. After eliminating dyads with missing data from either the leader or employee, this sampling strategy ultimately yielded 140 usable responses, representing 77.4% of the total usable dyads. The final sample thus consisted of 140 dyads of managers (92 male, 48 female) and their female (86) and male (54) employees, with average ages for leaders of 50.51 years ($SD = 6.75$) and 42.62 ($SD = 11.55$) for employees. Average tenure of the leader-employee relationship was 8 years ($SD = 7.25$), with an average tenure of years of work experience in the firm of 19.21 for leaders ($SD = 9.4$) and 13.90 for employees ($SD = 10.85$). Managers were parents at different life stages, with an average number of children of 2.14 ($SD = 0.72$) and an average age of sons/daughters of 17.16 ($SD = 6.52$).

3.2 | Measures from leaders

3.2.1 | Supportive parenting

Leaders were asked to provide data about their parental status and parenting styles as fathers/mothers. To capture the dimensions of parental support described in the theoretical section focused on

emotional support, a composite scale was created from several indicators of relations with children and youth that captured emotional intimacy and support in parenting relations. Following recommendations about the use of composites (Song et al., 2013), the composite index was created with six items taken from adapted versions of (1) emotion-related items from the Social Intimacy Scale (MSIS; Miller & Lefcourt, 1982; example item: "How frequently do you show affect to your children?"; measured with a 10-point scale ranging from "Never" to "Always") and (2) a parenting styles scale measuring specifically emotional expression in parenting (Gómez et al., 2012; example item: "I talk to my children about their feelings"; measured with a 6-point scale ranging from "Not at all" to "Totally"). Based on preliminary analyses, the items proved similar associations with the outcome variables and provided a meaningful conceptual grouping capturing emotion-based parenting styles, so Z-scores were computed for raw scores in the data set and then transformed into standardized t values (for the raw score 10, $z = 1.44$). Cronbach's alpha for the resulting composite was .83.

3.2.2 | Time with children

To measure leaders' time with their children, I followed previous time-use survey research (Rothausen, 1999; INE, 2007; Eurostat, 2023) and asked leaders to directly indicate the average number of week hours that they dedicated to childcare activities in a typical week during the year. On average, parenting time spent with sons/daughters on a regular week was 11.7 h.

3.2.3 | Employee performance

A two-item scale was used to measure employees' current job performance based on items developed in previous research examining employees' performance from leaders' ratings (Gamero, 2008). The items include the statements: "About the performance of [Employee Name], How well do you think that this person performs?" and "What is the quality of the work done by this person?". Participants were asked to rate their agreement with these statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "very poor" (1) to "very good" (5). Cronbach's alpha was .86.

3.2.4 | Employee voice

An established measure of supervisor-directed voice from employees was used with a four item scale developed by Detert and Burris (2007). An example is "This employee gives suggestions how to make this organization better". The participants were asked to rate their agreement with these statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Not at all" (1) to "Completely" (6). Cronbach's alpha was .90.

3.3 | Measures from employees

3.3.1 | Supportive leadership

Employees' perceptions of their managers' support as leaders was evaluated with the Supportive Leadership scale developed by Rafferty and Griffin (2004), which is widely used in the leadership literature with appropriate reliability. The three items that make up this scale capture employees' perceptions about the extent to which one's direct supervisor considers employees' personal feelings before acting or behaving in a manner which is thoughtful of their personal needs. Employees responded using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Not at all" (1) to "Totally" (6). In addition, acknowledging the particularly relevant role of emotional support underscored in previous research on supportive leadership (e.g., Patzelt et al., 2021), the same scale two items of work support adapted from Xanthopoulou et al. (2008) and Bakker and Bal (2010) were also used capturing more explicitly employees' perceptions about the extent to which their supervisor attended their feelings and problems. All items showed high internal consistency reliability (.95), so a composite score was created to simplify analyses.

3.3.2 | Cooperation with the leader

Employees' willingness to cooperate with the leader was evaluated with a six-item scale used in previous research (Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016; Van Hiel et al., 2008). This scale captures the extent to which an employee would like to cooperate with her/his direct manager in a next project/task. An example is "I would be willing to provide help on additional tasks to this supervisor." The participants rated their agreement using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Not at all" (1) to "Completely" (7). Cronbach's alpha was .88.

3.3.3 | Negative emotions

Employees' negative emotions in experiences with the leader was evaluated with three affect-based items capturing the extent to which their supervisor made them feel "tense," "nervous," and "anxious." These items are based on the "relaxed-tense" dimensions of affective responses (Segura & González-Romá, 2003). Based on this model of negative affect, employees indicated to what extent their supervisor made them feel each of these emotions from "Not at all" (1) to "Very much" (7). Cronbach's alpha was .87.

3.3.4 | Job satisfaction

The participants were asked to rate their job satisfaction with an established three-item scale (Thau et al., 2013; Patzelt et al., 2021). The items include the statements "I am satisfied with my job", "I am happy with my current supervisor", and "I am pleased to work for my

organization." statements using a 7-point Likert-type scale with the end points "Strongly agree" (7) and "Strongly disagree" (1). Cronbach's alpha was .92.

3.4 | Control variables

A number of control variables were included to reduce the likelihood of confounding relationships in our results. First, because parenting functions can vary across ones' lifespan with number and age of children (Cartwright, 1978; Shloim et al., 2015), I controlled for these variables. Second, because on average there are differences in how men and women deal with family functions and also interpersonal orientations (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2014; Gartzia, 2021), I controlled for leaders' and employees' sex. Finally, I controlled for the employee-leader relationship tenure, because higher time in the relationship can lead to higher interactions and specific effects (Litano et al., 2016).

4 | DATA ANALYSES

I conducted ordinary least-squares regression analyses assessing the effects of parenting on leadership outcomes, both directly and indirectly through leadership styles and using standard path-analytic approaches (Hayes & Matthes, 2009). Methodologists have recommended that moderated mediational analyses are based on formal significance tests of the indirect effects through application of bootstrapped confidence intervals (MacKinnon et al., 2004). Thus, mediation and moderation analyses were undertaken using conditional process analysis based on a formal estimate of conditional direct and conditional indirect effects. Although this method can also introduce error in estimates of confidence intervals, given the relatively small nature of the current dyadic sample, this bootstrapping method using 5000 resamples was chosen for the analyses. In mediation analyses, issues of power and outliers can be generally overcome with the implementation of these bootstrapping techniques involving substantial amounts of computational simulations (see Steffener, 2021). I first examined a simple mediation model (Hypotheses 1 and 2) and then generated an integrated analysis into an overall model of conditional indirect effects testing mediating hypotheses capturing moderating effects of time with children and parenting styles on performance outcomes via leadership styles (i.e., including parenting styles and time with children as the independent variables, leadership styles as mediators, and employee outcomes as dependent variables). I tested these hypotheses in interconnected steps using bootstrapping with 5000 sub-samples at 95% confidence interval using the bootstrapping procedure provided in Hayes (2017) PROCESS macro in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Prior to the analyses, all continuous variables that define products were mean centered (Aiken & West, 1991). All models included the control variables presented above, and results of analyses are reported in Tables 2 and 3.

Scholars have provided various arguments about the minimal influence that source variance and common method bias have on self-

reports (Spector, 2006), and importantly, our independent and moderating variables come from a different source (the managers) than our mediator variable (which come from the employees) and dependent variables (which include varied types of outcomes reported from both managers and employees). This design helps reduce common method variance and source variance in our findings. Additionally, to address concerns of reversed causality in our model and the possibility that supportive leadership can predict supportive parenting, in exploratory analyses using the same OLS structure described before, I tested an alternative model predicting leaders' supportive parenting from supportive leadership experiences. In these analyses, non-statistically significant effects were found, providing additional robustness for the model and reducing reversed causality concerns. The only statistically significant path was observed for main effects of leader sex, which predicted supportive parenting, $b = 4.34$, $t = 2.57$, $p = .011$. These analyses showed that leader sex was a significant main predictor of supportive parenting above and beyond parenting time and all other demographic variables, pointing to the critical role of gender in caring orientations. To rule out plausible confounding effects of this and other key demographics (e.g., number of children and children age) on the main study associations, all subsequent analyses in our model were adjusted to control for these variables. Also, to rule out potential moderating effects, additional three-way exploratory analyses were conducted including some of these control variables (e.g., leader sex and children age) as moderators in the model, which resulted in non-significant effects. Although such tests cannot prove that these demographics are not relevant for leadership functions, they do provide support that these potential sources of bias are unlikely to have a significant impact on our findings. These additional tests are available upon request from the first author. Finally, a power analysis using the G*Power software was conducted (Faul et al., 2007) to determine the required sample size and provide statistical evidence that our sample size is enough to detect the predicted effects. I specified a medium effect size ($d = 0.15$), a significance level of $\alpha = .05$, and a desired power of 80% ($1 - \beta = .80$). The power analysis indicated that a minimum sample size of 107 participants was needed to achieve the specified power involving moderated mediation. Our study included a bigger sample of 140, surpassing this requirement. This larger sample size enhances the robustness of our analyses and increases our ability to detect the hypothesized effects.

4.1 | Results

4.1.1 | Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics and correlations are displayed in Table 1. Inspection of bivariate correlational analysis indicates that leaders' experiences of parental support were in general positively associated with performance outcomes of employees consistent with the hypothesized direction ($r = .20$, $p < .05$ for cooperation willingness and $r = -.24$, $p < .01$ for negative emotions), although correlation coefficients were generally weaker and non-significant for leader-rated

outcomes ($r = .14$, $p > .05$ for performance and $r = .15$, $p > .05$ for voice). These supportive styles in parenting were positively and significantly related to leaders' time spent in parenting ($r = .31$, $p < .01$), and negatively related to tenure time in the leader–employee relationship (tenure; $r = -.24$, $p < .01$) and children age ($r = -.29$, $p < .01$). Time spent in parenting was also negatively related to tenure time of the leader–employee relationship ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$), number of children ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$), and children age ($r = -.54$, $p < .01$). Results also revealed significant associations between leader sex and both parenting styles and time with children. Female leaders reported higher levels of weekly hours dedicated to parenting ($M = 16.27$; $SD = 19.35$; $t[138] = -2.62$, $p = .010$) and more supportive parenting styles ($M = 53.02$; $SD = 9.29$; $t[136] = -2.72$, $p = .007$) than male leaders ($M = 9.32$; $SD = 11.93$ for parenting hours and $M = 48.58$; $SD = 8.91$ for supportive parenting).

4.1.2 | Direct and indirect effects of parenting on leaders' outcomes

Hypothesis 1 posits that experiences of supportive parenting would be positively and directly related to positive outcomes from employees including performance (H1a), voice (H1b), willingness to cooperate with the leader (H1c), satisfaction (H1d), and negative emotion (H1e). These effects were tested using regression equations of parenting predicting these performance outcomes with the PROCESS tool by Hayes (2017). Model 4 allows for a simultaneous analysis of direct effects of X on Y (H1) and mediation hypotheses (H2), so a simple mediation model was used examining direct and indirect effects of parenting styles on performance outcomes through supportive leadership styles. These direct effects were tested using the regression equations of parenting styles predicting performance outcomes in separate analyses, one for each dependent variable outcome (Table 2). Results partially confirm Hypothesis 1 by showing that supportive parenting styles of leaders are positively and significantly related to employee performance ($b = .01$, $t = 1.98$, $p = .049$), employee voice ($b = .02$, $t = 2.02$, $p = .044$), and employee negative reactions ($b = -.03$, $t = -2.15$, $p = .033$). The expected effect on cooperation and satisfaction with the leader was positive but not statistically significant, $b = .01$, $t = 1.61$, $p = .110$ and $b = .01$, $t = .71$, $p = .481$, respectively. Mediation analyses with 5000 bootstrap samples showed that the indirect effects of parenting on leadership outcomes through supporting leadership styles (Hypothesis 2) were statistically insignificant for all outcome variables. Point estimates for bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals included 0 for the product of the paths in all cases, suggesting that simple mediation was not supported.

4.1.3 | Moderating effects of parenting time

Hypothesis 3 predicted that time dedicated to parenting would moderate the relation between parenting and supportive leadership, such

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations.

	M	SD	Correlations											
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Supportive parenting	50.06	9.25	-											
2. Supportive leadership	4.88	0.93	.081	-										
3. Time with children	11.70	15.19	.307**	.026	-									
4. Performance ^a	4.44	0.59	.136	.276**	.133	-								
5. Voice ^a	4.76	0.92	.147	.217*	.113	.489**	-							
6. Negative emotion ^b	1.83	1.29	-.240**	-.265**	-.064	-.107	-.134	-						
7. Cooperation ^b	5.61	0.81	.200*	.616**	.08	.193*	.239**	-.596**	-					
8. Satisfaction ^b	5.18	1.32	.033	.279**	-.05	.124	.161	-.048	.158	-				
9. Children number	2.14	0.72	-.055	-.037	-.192*	-.043	-.01	.069	-.075	.049	-			
10. Children age	17.16	6.52	-.288**	-.045	-.537**	-.118	-.089	.069	-.049	.074	.363**	-		
11. Leader sex	0.34	0.48	.227**	.057	.218**	-.121	-.06	-.042	.106	-.088	.009	-.031	-	
12. Employee sex	0.61	0.49	.041	.05	.204*	.076	.009	-.107	.156	-.103	-.077	.024	.078	-
13. Relation tenure	7.97	7.25	-.239**	-.065	-.226**	-.035	-.006	.133	-.177	.119	.08	.329**	-.209*	-.024

Note: Range of possible values: Performance = 1 to 5; Voice and Supportive Leadership = 1 to 6; Satisfaction, Cooperation, and Negative Emotion = 1 to 7. For supportive parenting Z-scores are provided.
^aRating provided by supervisor.
^bRating provided by employee.
****p* < .001, ***p* < .01, and **p* < .05.

TABLE 2 Regression results for effects of parenting on leadership (PROCESS).

Outcome variable	Results of path analysis	Coeff	SE	t	p
Supportive leadership (mediator) Model 1	Constant	4.80	0.33	14.59	.000
	Supportive parenting	0.01	0.01	1.27	.208
	Parenting time	−0.02	0.01	−1.89	.061
	Supportive parenting * parenting time	0.00	0.00	2.59	.011
	Leader sex	0.14	0.18	0.81	.418
	Number of children	0.01	0.11	0.08	.934
	Age of children	−0.00	0.02	−0.22	.822
	Employee sex	0.17	0.16	1.05	.295
	Relation tenure	−0.01	0.01	−0.81	.421
Employee performance (leader rated)	Constant	3.63	0.34	10.74	.000
	Supportive parenting	0.01	0.01	1.98	.049
	Supportive leadership	0.19	0.05	3.41	.000
	Leader sex	−0.24	0.11	−2.13	.035
	Number of children	−0.02	0.07	−0.29	.774
	Age of children	−0.01	0.01	−0.69	.491
	Employee sex	0.09	0.10	0.85	.397
	Relation tenure	0.00	0.01	0.56	.576
Employee voice (leader rated)	Constant	3.75	0.55	6.79	.000
	Supportive parenting	0.02	0.01	2.02	.044
	Supportive leadership	0.25	0.09	2.68	.008
	Leader sex	−0.31	0.18	−1.69	.092
	Number of children	0.00	0.11	0.02	.982
	Age of children	−0.01	0.01	−0.49	.623
	Employee sex	−0.03	0.16	−0.16	.871
	Relation tenure	0.00	0.01	0.15	.881
Employee cooperation (empl. rated)	Constant	2.74	0.38	7.17	.000
	Supportive parenting	0.01	0.01	1.61	.110
	Supportive leadership	0.58	0.06	9.19	.000
	Leader sex	−0.06	0.12	−0.48	.629
	Number of children	−0.03	0.08	−0.41	.681
	Age of children	0.00	0.01	0.30	.763
	Employee sex	0.17	0.11	1.53	.128
	Relation tenure	−0.01	0.01	−0.98	.326
Employee Satisfaction (empl. rated)	Constant	3.42	0.78	4.38	.000
	Supportive parenting	0.01	0.01	0.71	.48
	Supportive leadership	0.31	0.14	2.36	.02
	Leader sex	−0.23	0.26	−0.88	.629
	Number of children	0.07	0.16	0.46	.645
	Age of children	0.01	0.02	0.44	.659
	Employee sex	−0.20	0.23	−0.86	.390
	Relation tenure	0.02	0.01	1.18	.238
Employee Neg. emotions (empl. rated)	Constant	3.62	0.75	4.83	.000
	Supportive parenting	−0.03	0.01	−2.15	.033
	Supportive leadership	−0.42	0.12	−3.39	.009
	Leader sex	0.21	0.25	0.85	.397
	Number of children	0.06	0.16	0.37	.712

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Outcome variable	Results of path analysis	Coeff	SE	t	p
	Age of children	0.01	0.02	0.38	.706
	Employee sex	−0.20	0.22	−0.89	.374
	Relation tenure	0.01	0.02	0.85	.394

Note: $N = 140$. Level of confidence for all confidence intervals: 95%; 5000 bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals. B refers to unstandardized coefficients.

TABLE 3 Conditional indirect effects and index of moderated mediation (PROCESS, Model 7).

Effectiveness outcome	Conditional indirect effects (via supportive leadership)	Coeff	SE	Bootstrapped CI[95%]	
				LL	UL
Employee performance (leader rated)	Low parenting hours	−0.0028	0.0024	−0.0078	0.0018
	Average parenting hours	0.0024	0.0023	−0.0014	0.0075
	High parenting hours	0.0094	0.0047	0.0020	0.0205
		Index	SE	LL	UL
Moderated mediation	Supportive parent → supportive leader → performance	0.0005	0.0002	0.0001	0.0010
Employee voice (leader rated)	Low parenting hours	−0.0035	0.0034	−0.0110	0.0023
	Average parenting hours	0.0031	0.0031	−0.0018	0.0105
	High parenting hours	0.0120	0.0073	0.0011	0.0284
		Index	SE	LL	UL
Moderated mediation	Supportive parent → supportive leader → voice	0.0006	0.0003	0.0001	0.0014
Cooperation with leader (empl. rated)	Low parenting hours	−0.0074	0.0074	−0.0220	0.0074
	Average parenting hours	0.0084	0.0067	−0.0041	0.0224
	High parenting hours	0.0300	0.0131	0.0066	0.0590
		Index	SE	LL	UL
Moderated mediation	Supportive parent → supportive leader → cooperation	0.0014	0.0006	0.0004	0.0027
Satisfaction with leader (empl. rated)	Low parenting hours	−0.0044	0.0047	−0.0220	0.0074
	Average parenting hours	0.0038	0.0043	−0.0041	0.0224
	High parenting hours	0.0150	0.0106	0.0002	0.0408
		Index	SE	LL	UL
Moderated mediation	Supportive parent → supportive leader → satisfaction	0.0008	0.0005	0.0000	0.0020
Negative emotion (empl. rated)	Low parenting hours	0.0059	0.0060	−0.0040	0.0201
	Average parenting hours	−0.0055	0.0052	−0.0172	0.0033
	High parenting hours	−0.0209	0.0118	−0.0493	−0.0030
		Index	SE	LL	UL
Moderated mediation	Supportive parent → supportive leader → negative emotion	−0.0010	0.0006	−0.0024	−0.0001

Note: $N = 140$. Level of confidence for all confidence intervals: 95%; 5,000 bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals. 1 SD below the mean was below the minimum observed in the data for parenting time, so for “low” parenting hours, the minimum measurement on parenting time is used for conditioning.

that supportive leadership would be higher when both supportive parenting (content dimension) and parenting time (quantity dimension) are high, controlling for leader and employee sex, number and age of children, and relationship tenure. In support for such moderating effect, the regression results of the moderated model (Table 3) indicate that the interaction between supportive parenting and parenting time was statistically significant, $b = .002$, $t = 2.59$, $p = .011$. A negative linear relation was also found between time with children and

supportive leadership, $b = -.018$, $t = -2.03$, $p = .045$ for Model 7 with cooperation as the dependent variable. To further qualify the interaction effect and test whether the interaction conform to the hypothesized pattern, a separate moderation analysis was performed excluding leadership outcomes (Process Model 1). Regression results indicate that the interaction between supportive parenting and time was overall statistically significant, $b = .0025$, $t = 2.59$, $p = .011$. Analyses of simple slopes indicated that supportive parenting was

positively related to supportive leadership when number of hours per week were high (+1SD; $b = .0486$, $t = 2.51$, $p = .013$), but not related when parenting time was low (−1SD; $b = -.0143$, $t = -1.20$, $p = .233$). As shown in Figure 2, these findings suggest that the association between supportive parenting and supportive leadership becomes increasingly more positive at higher hours of parenting. Note that for average hours (11.70 h per week), there is no relation between supportive parenting and support in leadership, $b = -.0124$, $t = 1.27$, $p = .208$.

To better understand the nature and regions of moderation, the Johnson–Neyman technique was used, whereby several regions of the moderator variable (i.e., parenting time) are identified that represent the specific number of parenting hours at which the effect of supportive parenting on leadership becomes statistically significant (Hayes & Matthes, 2009). This approach is a complement to simple slope analyses examining statistical significance of the “low” and “high” random levels of the moderator. These analyses using the Johnson–Neyman technique indicated that supportive parenting and supportive leadership are significantly related when spending at least 16 h a week in parenting, $t(120) = 1.98$, $p = .05$, $b = .02$. As number of hours increase, the relation between supportive parenting and leadership becomes more positive with the highest number of hours in our dataset (117 h/week), $b = .272$, $t(120) = 2.62$, $p = .009$. Note that in our dataset, most cases (76.74% of leaders) fell below these values of parenting time. Only 23.26% exceeded the upper bound region above value of 4.463, $t(120) = 1.98$, $p = .05$, $b = .02$, where effects became statistically significant.

4.1.4 | Model of moderated mediation

Collectively, H4 suggested an indirect effects model whereby the relation between leaders' parenting dimensions (children time and support) and their performance is transmitted by altering their behavior as leaders at work (supportive leadership). Such integrated analysis into an overall model of conditional indirect effects captures moderating effects of parenting time and emotional support on performance outcomes via leadership styles (including parenting dimensions as

independent variables, leadership style as mediator, and employee outcomes as dependent variables in Process Model 7). I tested this moderated mediation hypothesis by examining the conditional indirect effects of supportive parenting on outcomes with varying levels of parenting time and the index of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2017; Table 2). Note that, following Hayes (2017), separate moderated-mediation models (Model 7) were run for the different outcomes of leadership. Because these models generated slightly different coefficients in Step 1 (mediator variable model), regression coefficients in Table 2 with mediator variable as the outcome refer to results from simple mediation (Model 1), which yielded almost exactly the same pattern of results than Model 7, with the exception that the coefficient for supportive leadership regressed on parenting time was statistically significant when cooperation was included as the outcome variable, $b = -.018$, $t = -2.03$, $p = .045$. The overall moderated mediation model was confirmed for all types of outcomes, with an index of moderated mediation = 0.005 for performance (95% CI = 0.0001; 0.0010), 0.006 for voice (95% CI = 0.0001; 0.0014), 0.0014 for cooperation (95% CI = 0.0004; 0.0027), 0.0008 for satisfaction (95% CI = 0.0000; 0.0020), and -0.0010 for negative emotion (95% CI = -0.0024 ; -0.0001). Zero is not within the CI, indicating a significant moderating effect. In all cases, the conditional indirect effect was strongest and statistically significant (with no zero within the CI) for leaders with high parenting time (1 SD above average time, namely, around 27 h per week) and weakest and non-significant for leaders with average (11.7 h per week) and low levels (1 SD below the mean, namely, less than 1 h per week) of parenting time.

5 | DISCUSSION

Drawing from work–life enrichment principles and the developmental psychology literature addressing parents' relations with children, the current study provides new insights about a relevant, overlooked precursor of effective leadership: parenting. I hypothesized that leaders' experiences of support provision as parents would positively predict leadership effectiveness via more supportive leadership styles. Results from moderated mediation confirmed the prediction that being a

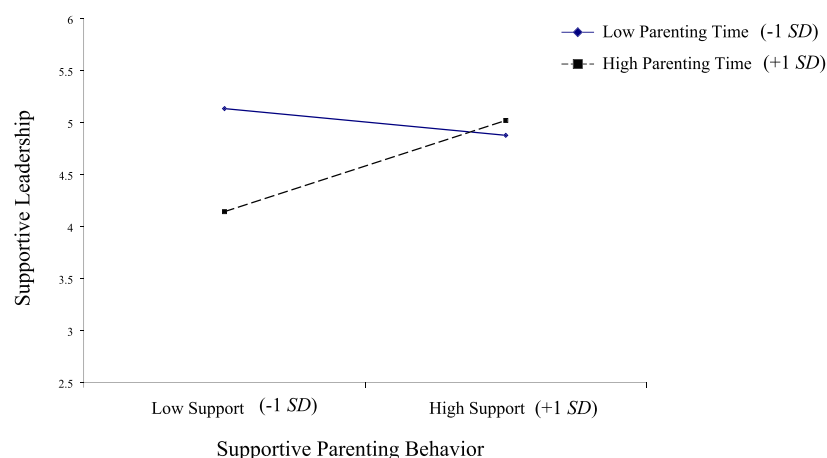


FIGURE 2 Interaction plot of parenting behavior and parenting time predicting supportive leadership.

supportive parent was associated with getting better results from employees via supportive leadership behaviors. This association emerged in relation to relevant outcomes reported both by managers (performance and voice) and employees (cooperation, satisfaction, and negative affect). Effects were stronger for leaders spending at least 16 h a week in parenting functions (2.28 h per day) compared to leaders with lower interaction hours, pointing to a parenting advantage of leaders who are both emotionally supportive and spend sufficient time in parental roles. These findings open an exciting theoretical door for more thoughtful consideration and specific theoretical development about leaders' private, parenting life in management. In particular, our study demonstrates how involved parenting life may affect leadership effectiveness via activation of nurturing competences that are critical for leaders. Theoretical and practical implications for management are discussed below.

5.1 | Theoretical contributions

Research on the work–family interface has begun to focus on positive connections between work and family life (Frone, 2003; Grzywacz & Butler, 2005). However, the varied paths through which family roles influence work outcomes remain unclear (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), with a surprisingly poor understanding and theoretical development of the mechanisms that drive leadership effectiveness from life domains. Our focus on parenting experiences as antecedents of leadership effectiveness provides novel research areas and theoretical questions of what types of domestic processes can improve work outcomes, making a clear theoretical contribution to the leadership and work–life balance literatures and pointing to parenting as a previously unaddressed antecedent of leadership effectiveness. In particular, our findings suggest a greater ability of leaders who address the emotional needs of others outside work (i.e., the children/youth) to also get positive outcomes from employees through activation of leadership behaviors that are critical for work performance. These findings extend Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) approach of role enrichment by demonstrating that positive family role experiences can translate into positive work outcomes by activating connected role behaviors and resources (supportive orientations) that are also critical in organizational roles. These findings contribute to a more systemic and comprehensive portrait of work–family enrichment processes that focus on domestic experiences of parenting and integrates antecedents, underlying mechanisms, and relevant managerial outcomes.

Surprisingly, leadership and management research has virtually ignored this relevant facet of the domestic life of corporate leaders in understanding their behavior. This lack of attention in organizational behavior research to the relation between parenting and managerial life is surprising because leadership involves supportive behaviors such as consideration of individual needs, attention to feelings, and emotional expression that are also critical in parenting to produce positive outcomes (Baumrind, 2012; Benner, 2011; Spera, 2005; Popper & Mayseless, 2003). Overall, our findings suggest that leaders' experiences of nurturance and support beyond the firm can influence

their interpersonal leadership behavior and in turn affect their performance as leaders. These findings extend the corporate social responsibility literature and its underlying arguments that the business community should accept and advance social communities and families to be fully effective (for a comprehensive review, see Carroll & Shabana, 2010; see also Kossek et al., 2023). In particular, our findings that caring skills are aligned and enhanced by competences that supportive parents display with children beyond the work sphere account for the potential benefits of involvement in both managerial and parenting roles and serve to realize potential benefits of corporate social responsibility in relation to children and employees' family life.

Our results also extend theory on experiential roles of leaders (Bass et al., 1987; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) by showing how parental experiences can have a relevant role in leadership behavior and effectiveness. This is important because, although effects of supportive leadership on employees' responses have been widely studied, the antecedents of effective leadership outside work are less well understood (Avolio, 1994; Zaleznik & de Vries, 1975). Analyses of organizational dynamics put a clear emphasis on emotional and relational aspects of work, but surprisingly these competences have not been examined in light of leaders' domestic work and in particular parenting (see Popper & Mayseless, 2003 for an exception with a comprehensive analogy between specific dimensions of transformational leadership and “good” parenting styles or Ladge et al., 2015 for a broader focus on challenges of involved fathering). Because a large body of theoretical and empirical evidence in leadership research suggests that supportive leadership is critical to produce positive effects at work across different settings (Allen et al., 2004; Bass, 1998; Patzelt et al., 2021), and a high number of leaders are parents, a comprehensive analysis of how parenting affects leadership can provide important answers to the question of how people can become better leaders.

5.1.1 | Contingencies for a parenting advantage: time constraints

Our findings suggest that the paths through which parenting can influence leadership effectiveness include enhanced interpersonal and emotional resources that enable more supportive leadership behaviors. Yet, our findings point to the moderating role of salience of the parenting role via actual direct time invested in parenting functions (i.e., a time-related path). With limited parenting time, leaders seem to more poorly benefit from experiences of emotional support in parenting and thus parenting time seems to be a critical contingency for understanding the potential role that parenting can have at work. This multidimensional focus adds specification and richness to the broadly defined challenges of work–life enrichment theory. Although there are many potential conceptualizations of supportive parenting roles, our findings overall highlight the importance of examining caregiving responses that cover not only emotional demands of children but also actual number of contact hours.

These findings are also consistent with developmental research analyzing children and adolescents' academic outcomes based on

parenting support provided by families, which suggests that parents “who provide warmth and support but also appropriate monitoring of adolescents’ day-to-day lives” (Benner, 2011; p. 6) are more effective in helping adolescents improve academic achievements (see also Baumrind, 2012; Spera, 2005). I extend this approach by showing how these two common underlying characterizations of parenting that involve responsiveness/warmth and daily monitoring referred to as demandingness/control (Cobb-Clark et al., 2019; for reviews, see Darling & Steinberg 1993; Spera, 2005) also have different potential interrelated effects at work. This conceptualization based on two factors accounts for both emotional and time investments and allows understanding the process of parenting enrichment more comprehensively. The contingent effects of parenting time also inform extant work–family conflict research highlighting the critical role of time pressures for balancing family and organizational demands. These studies focus on how work schedules and time pressures involving that someone participates extensively in a role (work) leads to higher conflict experienced in the other (family), and our findings identify conditions under which parenting time constraints may be particularly harmful to work and in particular leadership.

Note that, from our data, there is no sufficient evidence to suggest a simply linear relation between a higher percentage of parenting hours and better processes of leadership enrichment. The positive correlation found between parenting time and emotional support suggests that supportive parents may generally be responsive in both dimensions, but the generally neutral correlation between supportive leadership and supportive parenting suggests that employees and children may be competing for leaders’ time and attention. Also, supportive leadership was surprisingly high for leaders with low hours of parenting and emotional support, pointing to a general negative trade-off between the energy dedicated to employees and children/youth, consistent with work–family conflict principles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; see also Kossek et al., 2023).

5.2 | Managerial and policy implications

With dual-earner family models, work–family concerns are growing irreversibly in firms, but organizational action addressing parental concerns is surprisingly limited. The current findings suggest that supportive parenting practices that involve nurturance and care provision beyond the organizational walls have several potential effects at work. This approach opens up a wide array of practical implications building a business case for managers’ parental involvement, encouraging managers and human resource practitioners to integrate parental life in their capacity building strategies and organizational action, including training that assists employees in becoming supportive parents, as well as policies that provide more flexible work schedules. Legal action providing financial support to parenting is likely to assist these effects (Pizarro & Gartzia, 2023); for example, fully paid leaves and incentives for work–life balance and intensive timetables should increase family time and quality of parental roles to ultimately translate into more effective workplace behaviors.

In our sample, managers’ time spent in parenting roles on a regular week was 11.7 h, but these hours could be a result of life, social, and organizational constraints rather than individual preferences (Gartzia et al., 2018). Indeed, in contemporary economic theory, child rearing is rarely characterized as an endogenous investment stemming from parents’ rational choice but as an optimal choice problem (Cobb-Clark et al., 2019; Doepke et al., 2019). If organizations want to truly support family life and parenting functions of employees, there is a need to address models of work commitment and reduce the many time constraints that parents face at work (see Vaziri et al., 2022). As Mandeville et al. (2016) put it, “it is important that managers understand that simply offering family-friendly benefits is not enough” (p. 919). Managers and HR practitioners need to generate a work atmosphere of norms encouraging parental functions and explicitly supporting utilization of HR policies involving child rearing. Also, because supervisors are responsible for monitoring and regulating the domestic needs of employees as well as their own, they should act as role models (Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016; Gartzia et al., 2021), understanding how their own parenting practices can shape others’ behavior and using family benefits.

Note that organizations should allow leaders to allocate both sufficient time and psychological energy to support children and other dependent family members, given that many of the abilities that are involved in supportive parenting behavior such as self-control, emotional stability, or empathy involve much more mental effort and cognitive attention than the more material dimension of money provision or physical presence (Cobb-Clark et al., 2019). Organizational practices providing psychological support in these emotionally charged functions seem worthwhile. Note also that management prototypes generally punish communal orientations associated with nurturance and care (Correll et al., 2007; Gartzia, 2021; Gartzia & Baniandrés, 2019; Ladge et al., 2015). Likewise, without a supportive work–family culture, managers who spend time in parental functions receive more negative evaluations of leadership effectiveness (Gartzia et al., 2018). Practitioners should be mindful of these boundaries and the normative pressures that may prevent managers from bringing supportive orientations developed outside the firm to leadership.

I finally suggest that managers and human resource practitioners address when and how the burden of parenting translates into positive effects at work on an individual basis, because parenting may potentially carry both benefits and costs for psychological well-being depending on a wide range of individual constraints. For instance, parents with financial stress, a low marital relationship quality, poor access to child care, or limited social and organizational support are more likely to experience strain from parenting and decreased well-being compared to non-parents (Umberson et al., 2010). Also, parent–child interactions are shaped by factors including families’ financial resources and values, as well as the broader national context that varies in public investments in children (Jensen, 2009; Solon, 2014). Practice in firms should take these effects into account. Because difficulties to combine parenting functions and career have persisted and intensified after the pandemic (Okuyan & Begen, 2022), parenting should be further supported in these difficult scenarios.

5.3 | Limitations and future research

The current research has several limitations. First, causality may be reversed. In studying parenting life of leaders and their cross-over effects at work using a sampling strategy designed to maximize objectivity in the outcomes produced at work from employees at one point in time, causal effects were not empirically demonstrated. Work-to-family enrichment research has shown that experiences gained in the work role may also benefit experiences in the family role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), so it is possible that experiences of supportive and effective leadership getting positive outcomes from employees occur prior to experiences of supportive parenting. Because caregiving orientations are inherent to parenting functions but rare in the work practice especially for male leaders (Eagly et al., 2014; Gartzia, 2021), and because our exploratory analyses of an alternative model that involved supportive leadership as the predictor variable and supportive parenting as the outcome resulted in non-significant effects, the reverse association is unlikely but longitudinal and experimental designs would be needed to respond to these concerns. Because this is an emerging area of study, the confirmation of associations between these variables is *per se* valuable for future research in this field. As Spector (2019) put it: “The knowledge that many pairs of variables are associated, even without knowing the causal connections, is extremely valuable as a basis for theory and the target of intervention” (p. 136). Note also that supportive parenting may be differently related to a more sympathetic evaluation of employees and their objective work performance. Generally stronger effects were found in the associations between variables in relation to manager-reported measures of leadership effectiveness (e.g., performance and voice) than employee-reported outcomes (e.g., satisfaction and cooperation), so future studies directly addressing differences between effectiveness ratings and attitudinal responses would be valuable (see also Gartzia & Baniandrés, 2019).

Second, our study identified two relevant dimensions (emotional support and time) under which supportive leaders can get positive outcomes from employees. However, attending to the leadership literature pointing to individual dispositions and traits of leaders as antecedents of their behavior (Asselmann et al., 2023; Judge et al., 2002), it is also plausible that personality traits associated with individuals' enduring tendency to be supportive (such as communal personality traits; Gartzia & van Knippenberg, 2016; Gartzia, 2021) is a common driver of supportive parenting and supportive leadership. Recognizing and empirically assessing these interactive antecedents of supportive leadership provides an expanded research agenda for understanding leadership behavior. Note also that the relevance of emotional support was based on the premise that responding to employees in a sensitive, emotionally caring way can have a key role to get outcomes from employees (Patzelt et al., 2021; Popper & Mayseless, 2003). Yet, supportive leadership behaviors also comprise other varieties of employee support such as spending actual time together or information-based support, which occurs when leaders show recognition, appreciation, and positive feedback that provide relational rewards for specific results (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). These latter competences associated

with providing feedback are also involved in parenting functions through, for instance, experiences of rewarding positive behavior of children and information-based support giving feedback.

Future studies could also more closely examine the relations between parenting styles and work outcomes and the possibility that there would be a point after which the positive effects of parenting time would drop (a curvilinear effect) due to very intense emotional demands. This could happen in situations that increase contact time and emotional work, such as taking care of highly dependent children or confinements with children during the COVID-19 crisis, in which the caretaking and household concerns of working parents became exacerbated. The choice of how to be a parent is linked to the choice of how one wants to be in life, but parenting is a very demanding activity of unpaid care and emotional work and thus pressures to spend too many hours in family roles may also increase stress and reduce commitment at work (Benner, 2011; Greenhaus & Powell, 2003). This is in line with the principles of Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 2011) addressing how individuals have limited personal resources that can limit the time and energy put into different roles. Simply put, if leaders invest too much time or energy into supportive parenting, the resources that can be put into work may be insufficient. It is also possible that parents with limited parenting time provide a more “theoretical” self-evaluation of their supportive parenting style than more involved parents and thus result in less impact on employees. Further investigating whether these resource constraints hinder the effects of parenting would be valuable.

Finally, future studies may examine the specific paths through which leadership enrichment occurs at different parenting stages. The survey was conducted with a relatively established sample of managers with a high average age of children (17 years old), after they had experienced the most demanding stages of parenting involved in child rearing (only 3.6% of parents in our sample had children below 2 years old, and only 16.1% below 10 years old). While parenting functions are not limited to small children and assistance of parents continues to be critical until a very late age (Hawkes et al., 1998), for small children (e.g., newborns, infants, and toddlers), emotional and time investments may be particularly important. For adolescents, there is evidence about the relevant role of communication to understand their parents' values and goals and to provide them with explanations about their behavior, which ultimately translates into better well-being, health, and performance of these adolescents (Spera, 2005). It is possible that experiences specifically related to parenting of small children activate emotional processes that are subsequently involved in certain leadership functions (such as individualized consideration), whereas the more cognitive and communication-based experiences that are involved with youths activate perspective taking dimensions or contingent reward behaviors required in transformational leadership. Also, because more time is generally required with newborns and infants, moderating results of parenting time might be altered with a sample of parents/managers with younger children. With around 80% of our respondents having children that had already completed the most demanding developmental stages of child rearing from the perspective of time demands, it cannot be ruled out that

effects differ for other study samples with different demographic and family characteristics. Based on the principles of Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 2011) that individuals have limited time and energy, leaders responding to the very demanding needs of young children and investing higher amounts of resources into parenting than our leaders with youth may result into more limited effects at work. This field represents an exciting area of study for future research.

A theoretical and empirical approach focused on understanding male versus female leaders' work behavior in light of their parenting orientations also represents a relevant extension for our parenting advantage approach and an unexplored facet of "female advantage" proposals (Eagly et al., 2014; Gartzia & Baniandrés, 2019). A critical question that emerges is whether the so-called female advantage might ultimately represent a "caring advantage" and hide nurturing competences involved in supportive child care, as well as whether and how parenting roles differently influence female and male leaders' emergence and effectiveness. It is plausible that the advantages derived from experiences of supportive parenting are particularly marked for male leaders who are generally less likely to be involved in parenting roles and are particularly limited in their interpersonal orientations at work (Gartzia, 2021). Note however that, especially for women whose partners are highly committed to their career, having young children who are in general time demanding (Pleck et al., 1977) or larger families (Cartwright, 1978) translate into more work–family conflict.

Unsurprisingly, female parents in our sample spent more time with children than male parents and evaluated their parenting style as more supportive, which could be associated with their shorter tenure with their employees. Also, a slightly higher percentage of female manager/parents (35.41%, with an average of 33.53 h per week dedicated to children) than male managers/parents (20.65%; with an average of 29.26 h per week dedicated to children) exceeded the 16 h threshold. Consistent with the motherhood penalty and the career problems that women face after having a child (Correll et al., 2007; Tharenou, 1999), this may limit the potential advantages of parenting for female leaders and result in less time to develop a trusting relationship with employees, leading to implicit or explicit negative judgments if they are parents, especially of young children. Future research should explore interconnections of these gendered dimensions with parenting and leadership experiences, as well as exploring additional ways in which complex gender profiles are associated with varied forms of work outcomes and organizational dynamics. Drawing from multicomponent conceptualizations of sex and gender (Gartzia, 2023; Gartzia & Baniandrés, 2019; Gartzia et al., 2012; Kulich et al., 2021; Lindqvist et al., 2021), the effects that gender can have on work and family dimensions are likely not only limited to leader sex (i.e., self-reports as female/male/other) but also to affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of gender experiences of individuals (Gartzia, 2023). These gendered experiences are interconnectedly related to the division of labor and a varied number of caregiving forms (e.g., to elderly, disabled, and sick family members), thereby influencing the way in which gender can determine caring orientations and whether or not these orientations translate into positive effects at work.

5.4 | Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to examine systematically and from multiple informants (i.e., managers and employees) the effects of parenting on effectiveness of leaders at work. I propose a framework that integrates the concept of parenting enrichment into leadership research addressing how the positive effects of caring and support provision in parenting can be transferred to work outcomes. This approach offers insight towards the development of leadership theory that more specifically accounts for managers' private, nurturing life, shining a light on the particular topic of parenting and its many potential effects and challenges at work. By pinpointing these leadership processes and mediating mechanisms, I provide greater precision to the work–home boundary public debate and the emerging literature on work–family enrichment, identifying parenting life as a relevant antecedent of leadership behavior that deserves greater attention in management theory and practice. I have expanded the understanding of these boundaries, pointing to time investments as a distinctive component of support with critical policy implications. These findings clearly contribute to theorizing about leadership effectiveness and organizational behavior and call for stronger connections and public policy bringing together managerial practices and family life.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

I have no potential conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial) to declare.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

ETHICS STATEMENT

I hereby ensure objectivity and transparency in the current research and that principles of ethical and professional conduct have been followed.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Informed consents were provided to participants.

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