

Designing Flexibility: How Flexible Work Policies are Associated with Time Adequacy and Employee Well-being

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VID Ambiguous consequences of flexible work

Work-Family Conflict



- Higher, especially among men with time autonomy and WFH (work from home) women (Chung, 2024; Leshchenko & Strauss, 2025; van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020)

Well-Being



- Flexibility can be beneficial for mental health (Li & Wang, 2022; Beaufils & Chung, 2026)
- Higher stress when returning to the office (Fan & Moen, 2023)
- But also have negative outcomes: stress, poor sleep, anxiety (Shaholli et al., 2023)

Behaviour



- Women do more housework and childcare (Wang & Cheng, 2023; Leshchenko & Chung, 2025)
- Men increase paid work hours (Lott & Chung, 2016; Lyttelton et al., 2022)

Availability vs policy design

How is the availability of flexitime and work from home, and its design implementation associated with

time for health-enhancing behaviors and non-work-related activities



employee outcomes in health and work-life integration



What is the variation by gender and parenthood?

Data and Methods (1)

Data: United States National Employee and Workplace Culture Survey (NEWCS)

Year: 2019

Observations: 1421 women (59% have some flexibility) and 1028 men (65%)

Flexible work

Allowed to work from home (WFH) during normal business hours (yes/no)



Allowed to vary or make changes to the times to begin and end work (yes/no)

Design/Implementation

Productivity aim, well-being aim, less feminized, clear guidelines, granting consistency, not case by case, easy to use, supervisor supports employee welfare

Data and Methods (2)

How much time do you usually have for the following activities (1-4)?

Non-work-related activities   

Time for socializing, completing chores, and being together with family

Health-enhancing behaviors   

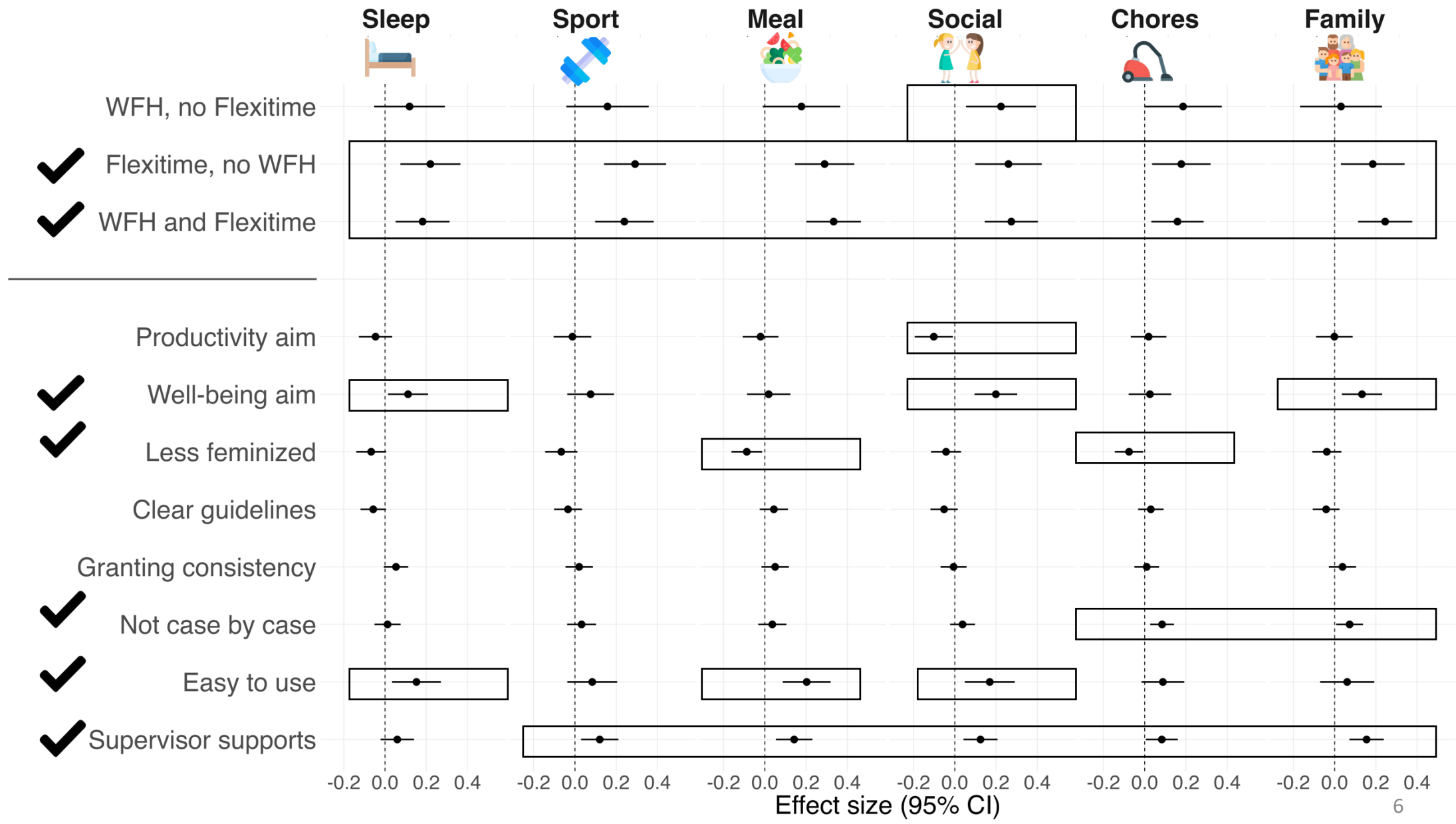
Time for sleep, healthy meals, and sport

Work-life integration and health    

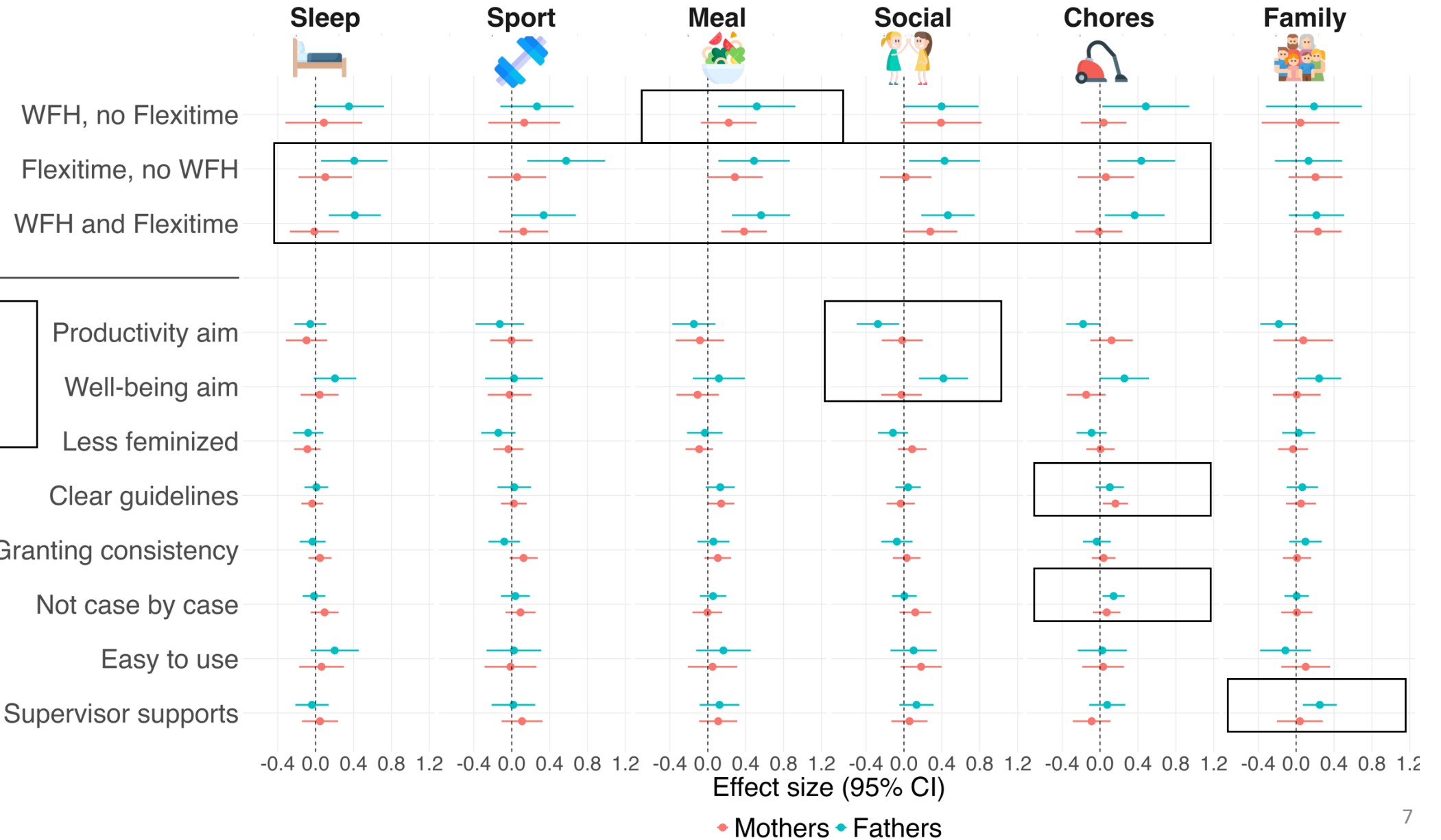
Happiness, health, depression (CESD), work-family conflict (WFC)

Method OLS regressions, including controls

Flexible work and behaviors

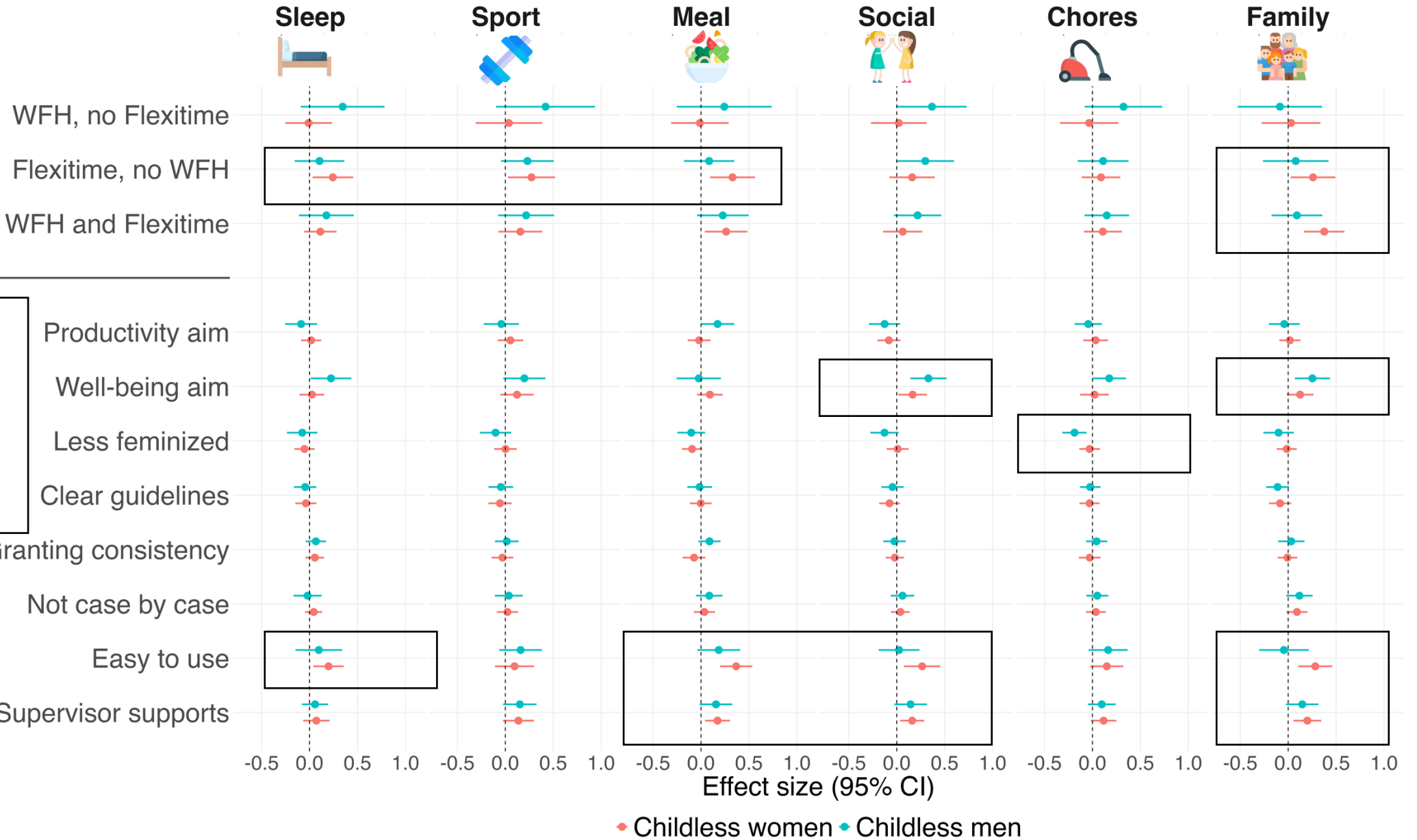


Flexible work and behaviors, parents



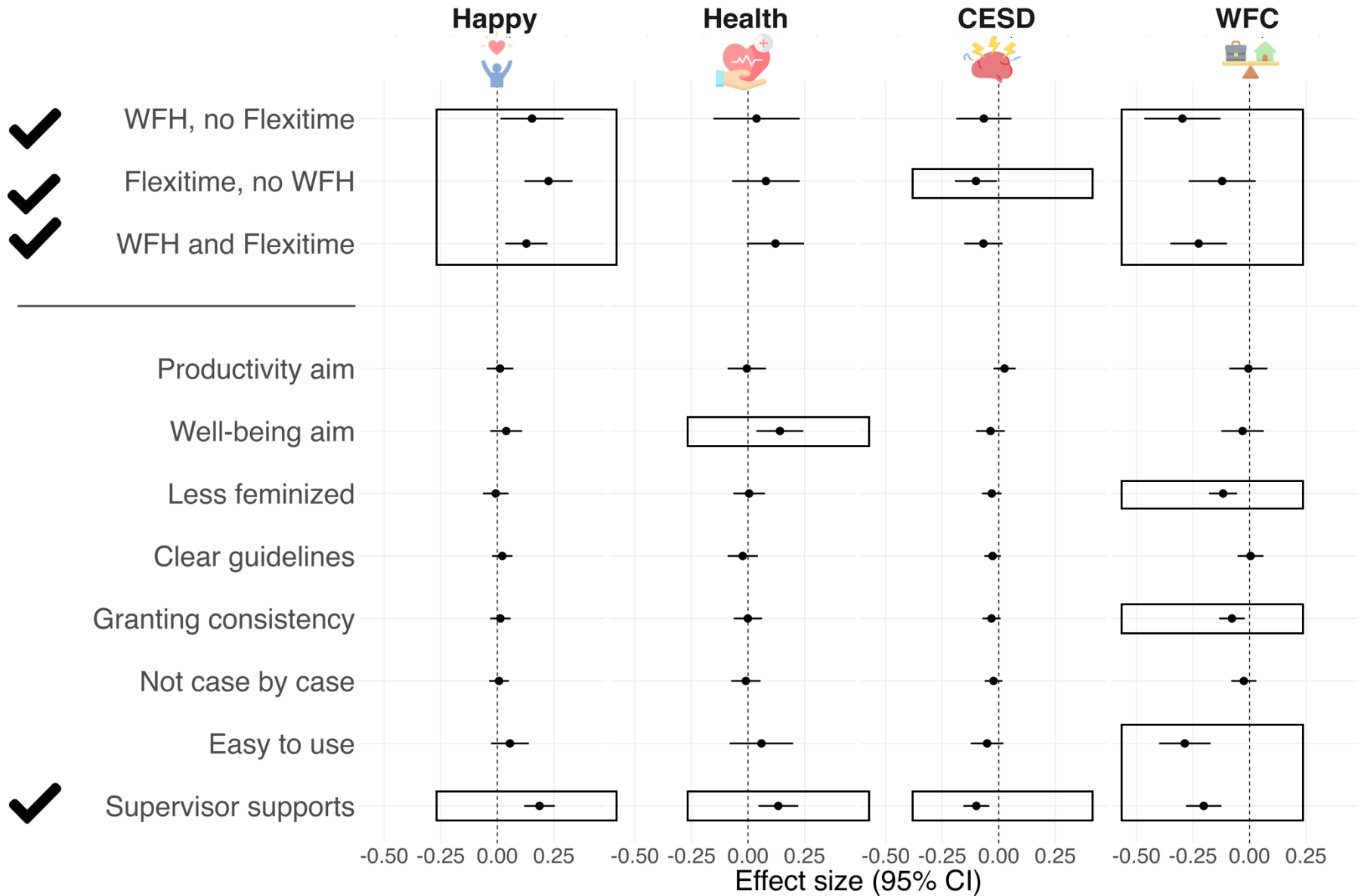
Fathers perceive more time

Flexible work and behaviors, non-parents

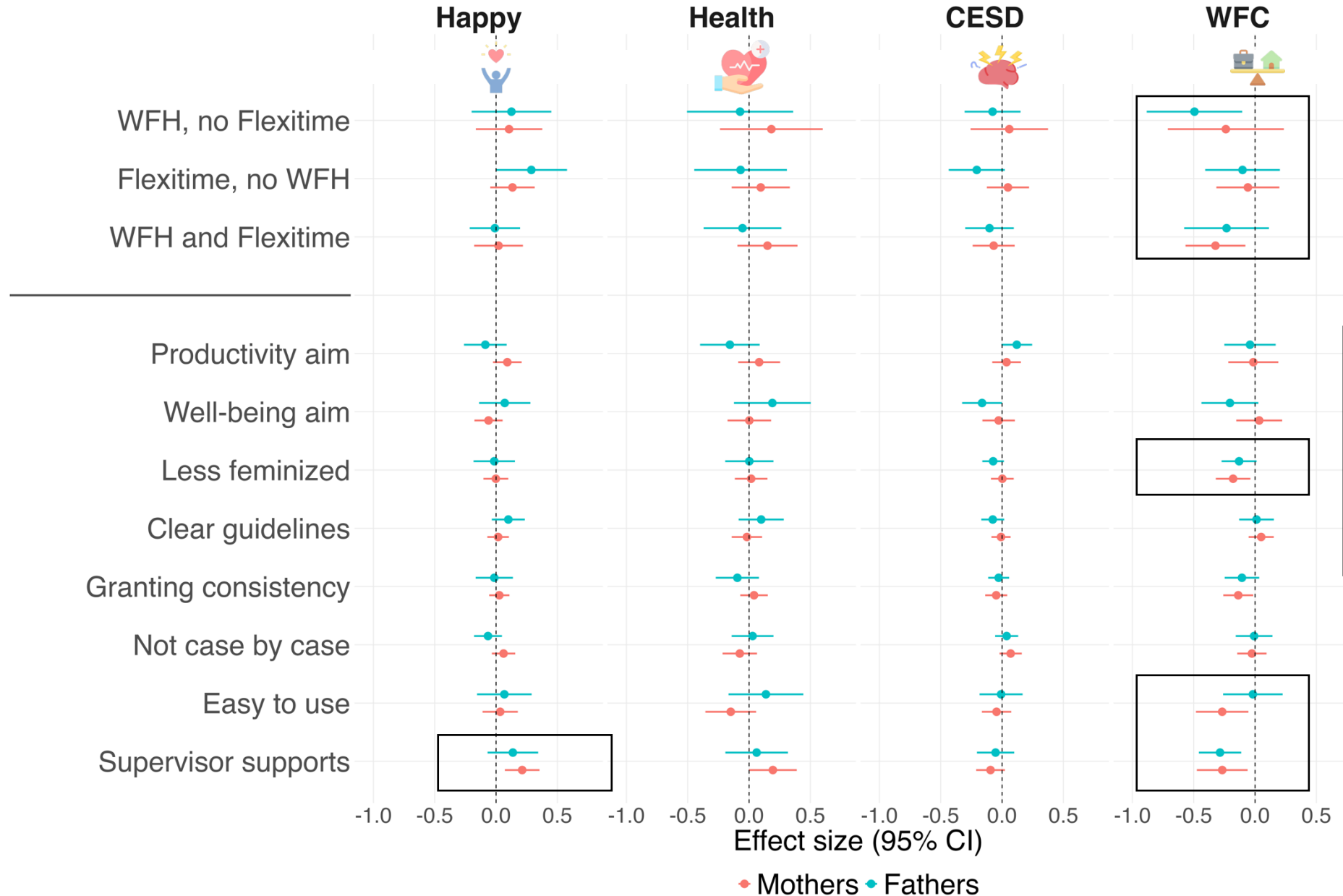


Women without children perceive more time

Flexible work and well-being



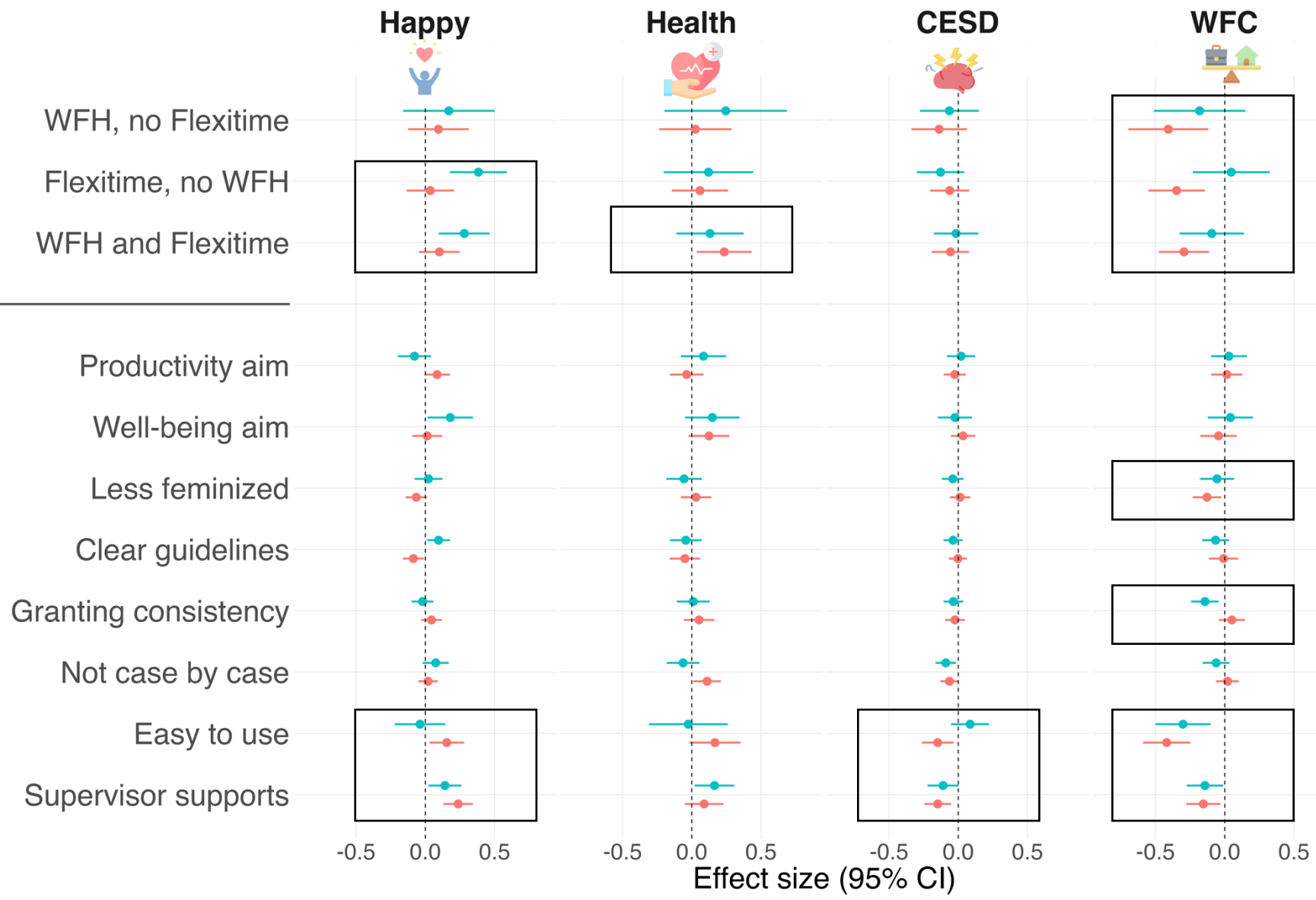
Flexible work and well-being, parents



Mothers' and fathers' work-family conflict is lower

Flexible work and well-being, non-parents

Men without children are happier



Women without children have a lower work-family conflict

Supervisor support matters for all

◆ Childless women ◆ Childless men

Conclusion

Thank you

Behaviors



Greater perceived time availability with flexitime or flexitime + WFH, especially for fathers and women w/o children, and when the supervisor supports, for women w/o children

More perceived time for health-enhancing activities when the policy is easy to use

More perceived time for non-work activities when the policy is universal

Well-being



Flexibility and supervisor support are related to higher happiness, especially for childless men, and lower Work-Family Conflict, especially for women, regardless of parenthood

Availability and effective design of flexible working can improve well-being, partly because it enables healthier, more social, and family-oriented daily behaviors