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Title	Power of good old days: How leisure nostalgia influences work engagement, task performance, and subjective well-being
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**Power of good old days: How leisure nostalgia influences work engagement,  
task performance, and subjective well-being**

*Abstract*

Employees can experience high levels of stress due to excessive job demands, negatively influencing their subjective well-being. Given the crucial role of leisure experience in life, the effects of post-leisure experience on employees' work and subjective well-being were measured in this study. Specifically, this study examined the relationships among leisure nostalgia, work engagement, task performance, and subjective well-being. Data were collected from school teachers in Singapore. Results showed that leisure nostalgia had a positive effect on work engagement, task performance, and subjective well-being. In addition, work engagement positively influenced task performance and subjective well-being; task performance positively affected subjective well-being. The findings of this study extend the theoretical and empirical evidence of the concept of leisure nostalgia and contribute to the understanding of the role of leisure nostalgia in work and life.

**Keywords** leisure nostalgia; work engagement; task performance; subjective well-being; broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions

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### **Introduction**

With dramatic changes to work culture over the decades, work has evolved to occupy a huge and important component in individuals' lives. Researchers noted that work is critical as it can influence their well-being (Avey et al., 2010). Specifically, employees who perform poorly at work experience high levels of negative emotions, taking a toll on their psychological and physiological health (Shimazu et al., 2010). Furthermore, low performance causes a high rate of absenteeism and turnover intention (Naghieh et al., 2015). Therefore, work performance is an important factor in understanding employees' well-being. Besides work, leisure is another significant domain in individuals' lives, which refers to an activity carried out during free time and driven by intrinsic motivation that results in pleasure (Sonnentag, 2012). Yarnal et al. (2008) highlighted the importance of leisure participation on individuals' leisure and well-being. That is, engagement in leisure allows individuals to disengage from work-related thoughts, which benefits their well-being and job performance. Past studies also noted that individuals who are more involved in leisure activities experience lower levels of psychological issues, such as poor sleep and emotional exhaustion (Siltaloppi et al., 2009; Sonnentag et al., 2010).

After participating in leisure activities, individuals may have positive or negative memories based on what they experienced; those memories can influence individuals' future behaviour and decision-making (Cho, 2020a). The relationship between post-leisure experience and future behaviour can be explained by the concept of nostalgia. According to previous research, nostalgia is an emotional factor that is derived from positive past experiences and memories (Cho et al., 2014; Davis, 1979). Recently, in many academic fields, researchers noted that nostalgia could be considered a predominant positive emotion (Cho & Chiu, 2020; Cho et al., 2019d; Sedikides et al., 2004); it has been found that nostalgia had a significant effect on

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individuals' behaviour (Chen et al., 2014; Leong et al., 2015; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2014) and psychological outcomes (Cho et al., 2021a). It indicates nostalgia is a critical factor affecting individuals' behavioural and psychological responses.

Nevertheless, despite its importance, only few studies measured the concept of nostalgia in the context of leisure (e.g., Gvion, 2009). Furthermore, while previous studies have examined the relationships between employees' well-being and other critical constructs, such as daily fluctuations (Simbula, 2010), work environment (Kalliath & Kalliath, 2012), organisational culture, and job demands (Lopez-Martin & Topa, 2019), there is still a limited understanding of the effect of post-leisure experience on work experience and subjective well-being. In addition, employees' leisure nostalgia has not been widely studied in the fields of leisure and occupational health psychology. Therefore, to fill this research gap, the current study aimed to investigate the role of leisure nostalgia on individuals' work environment and well-being. Specifically, this study examined the effects of leisure nostalgia on work-related constructs (i.e., work engagement and task performance) and subjective well-being based on the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001). The findings of this study contribute to identifying how leisure nostalgia ties in with employees' work and life, and management can use the results attained from this study to improve employees' work efficiency and well-being.

### **Literature review**

#### *Leisure nostalgia*

The importance of leisure on an individual's well-being has been clearly established in psychological research. However, the literature on the consequences of post-leisure experience on individuals' well-being is still developing. While reminiscing past leisure experiences,

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individuals may have nostalgic feelings towards them and a sense of yearning to have those leisure-related experiences again (Cho, 2020a). The concept of nostalgia was initially defined as a symptom associated with a medical condition (Hofer, 1934). It later advanced into a concept that involves emotional attachment – a longing to relive a memorable experience filled with positive emotions (Davis, 1979; Sedikides et al., 2004). Following this, researchers highlighted nostalgia to be an emotion that is triggered by past experiences (Cho, 2020b; Cho et al., 2014, 2017, 2019a, 2020b; Connell, 2017). It has been further explained that nostalgia is a predominantly positive emotion that can be experienced when individuals recall a happy moment while comparing it with their unsatisfying present (Cho et al., 2019d). In other words, a present negative situation easily evokes nostalgia and brings to mind the idealised version of satisfied past experiences.

Previous studies provided empirical evidence on the influence of nostalgia on behavioural intentions among individuals (Cho et al., 2019b, 2019c, 2020a, 2021b). For example, Chen et al. (2014) found an influence of nostalgia on consumption intention among individuals who patronised nostalgic-themed restaurants. Similarly, Leong et al. (2015) identified the role of nostalgia to be influential in affecting revisit intention among tourists who visited Macau. Cho (2020a) also demonstrated that leisure nostalgia positively influenced leisure participation intention in a popular leisure event. These findings showed that nostalgia is an important emotional factor that affects individuals' behavioural outcomes. However, the effects of leisure nostalgia on work-related constructs have not yet been studied. Thus, this study explored the role of nostalgia in the contexts of leisure and occupational health psychology.

### *Work engagement*

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Work engagement does not only reflect employees' level of engagement towards their work, but it is also an active measure of their well-being (Maslach et al., 2001). Engaged employees are defined as those who share an effective bond with their work-related activities and are thus able to cope with job demands (Schaufeli et al., 2008). Further, Bakker and Demerouti (2008) underlined that engaged employees are those who express positive behaviour at work and possess better work performance. In particular, Schaufeli et al. (2002) stipulated it as a positive work-related mental state and explained its three distinct aspects: vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour reflects the high level of energy displayed at work, the inclination to put in more effort, and the resilience against work-related challenges. Dedication refers to the readiness to be involved at work and taking pride in the work produced. Lastly, absorption refers to employees giving full attention to their work to the extent that they lose track of time (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The emphasis placed on understanding work engagement comes from the organisational objective to reduce employees' turnover rate and improve the productivity of the overall organisation. As such, there is no doubt that factors that affect an employee's work engagement have gotten the attention of researchers.

For many years, different characteristics of work environment, such as job resources, have been linked closely with work engagement in previous research. However, Ouweneel et al. (2012) steered in a different direction and highlighted the relationship between experiencing positive emotions and work engagement. According to the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, positive emotions broaden one's thought-action repertoires and facilitates the acquisition of more personal resources (Fredrickson, 2001). From this standpoint, it can be considered that individuals' positive emotions widen their personal resources and increase engagement at work. Given that nostalgia is a positive emotional state (Sedikides et al., 2004),

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the relationship between nostalgia and work engagement can be explained by the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001). That is, it can be inferred that nostalgia has a positive effect on work engagement. Therefore, based on previous research, the current study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Leisure nostalgia positively influences work engagement.

### *Task performance*

Task performance, one of the aspects identified in work performance, is distinguished as a component that highlights individuals' in-role behaviour. In other words, it focuses on the employees' efficiency by observing the necessary behaviours needed to fulfil their responsibilities and ultimately achieve the organisations' goals (Ferris et al., 2003). Becton et al. (2017) noted that task performance is the reflection of an organisation's mechanisms and the processes of achieving its goals. It includes the knowledge of procedures and the ability to handle decision-making situations related to procedural matters (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Hence, it is important to understand the antecedents of task performance for an organisation to improve its employees' efficiency.

While philosophers in the early days perceived emotions to be a hindrance to the human thought process (El-Nasr et al., 2000), employees' emotion is one of the key factors contributing to task performance as it can alter their judgment and decision-making process. Within the context of task performance, emotions are evoked due to psychological factors, such as stress and lack of confidence. For example, when employees are faced with a complex task, it can demoralise and negatively affect their confidence. This lack of confidence can trigger negative emotions, compromising task performance. Similarly, past studies showed a negative

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relationship between stress or anger and work performance (Kontogiannis, 1996). On the other hand, other findings showed that individuals who experienced higher positive affect also possess higher expectancy (Wegner & Petty, 1996) and positivity (Forgas & George, 2001). In addition, employees with positive emotions show greater resilience and explore various problem-solving strategies (Elliott et al., 1995); they also possess coping resources to handle stressful situations (Avey et al., 2009). Kaplan et al. (2009) explained the relationship between affect and job performance by adopting Gray's (1970) two behavioural systems: behavioural activation system and behavioural inhibition system. That is, positive mood yields approach behaviour, while negative mood yields avoidance behaviour. Therefore, the current study proposes that leisure nostalgia, a positive emotion, has the potential to increase task performance and establishes the following hypothesis:

H2: Leisure nostalgia positively influences task performance.

High levels of employees' work engagement can lead to optimal task performance.

According to the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), positive emotions go beyond the experience of it as the onset of positive emotions broadens individuals' cognitive processes and builds their personal resources. Within a work environment, employees with positive emotions are more confident, optimistic, and more open to work challenges (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001). In addition, through the expansion of individuals' thought-action repertoires, individuals who are highly engaged have a high interest in their job, which fosters determination to take up challenges and achieve goals. Bakker and Bal (2010) also noted that highly engaged employees received particular recognition for their task performance from their supervisors. Hence, based on the existing body of literature that has established the influence of work engagement on task performance, the current study proposes the following hypothesis:



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H3: Work engagement positively influences task performance.

### *Subjective Well-being*

The existing literature in positive psychology emphasises positive emotions to be an important indicator of subjective well-being. For example, early research suggested that the balance between positive and negative emotions is the reflection of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2009). From this perspective, positive emotions are responsible for optimal functioning. Nostalgia can be considered as a positive emotion that is triggered by positive past experiences (Sedikides et al., 2004). It also generates various psychological benefits, such as strengthening the meaning of life (Routledge et al., 2011), encouraging social connectedness (Wildschut et al., 2010), and generating positive affect to the present self (Wildschut et al., 2006). With relevance to the context of this study, leisure nostalgia functions as a positive emotion that serves as a time-out for individuals by taking their mind off job-related tasks. In exchange, it allows employees to indulge in positive leisure-related memories and continue with work in a more positive mental state. Therefore, understanding the benefits that yields from the experience of nostalgia, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: Leisure nostalgia positively influences subjective well-being.

Previous research showed that work engagement was influential in producing positive outcomes at an organisational level and on a personal level, such as improving health (Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009). Unlike excessive work that is done due to compulsiveness, which results in burnout, engaged employees are intrinsically motivated to work hard, and their sense of satisfaction with their job is high (Schaufeli et al., 2008; Shimazu et al., 2008). Therefore, engaged employees are primarily associated with a lack of health problems. Furthermore, Shimazu and Schaufeli (2009) highlighted that engaged employees are positive and equip

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themselves with sufficient job resources. In short, engaged employees were characterised to be recipients of various psychological benefits, and this ultimately contributes to their well-being.

Therefore, this study establishes the following hypothesis:

H5: Work engagement positively influences subjective well-being.

Lastly, task performance can make changes to individuals' psychological states. In other words, given that task performance indicates in-role proficiency (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994), the confidence in performing the tasks can make individuals positive as it validates their capability to carry out job tasks assigned to them (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The onset of being pleased with performing well at work contributes to the betterment of mental health. Past studies outlined that, when employees perform well – that is to acquire and maintain sufficient personal resources that not only allows them to overcome the current circumstances but also to shield them from future stress-inducing situations – they are able to cope with the job demands more easily (Huang et al., 2016), heightening a sense of well-being. Therefore, based on previous studies, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H6: Task performance positively influences subjective well-being.

In addition, based on the hypotheses established above, this study suggests a hypothesised model (Figure 1).

<Insert Figure 1 about here>

### **Methods**

#### *Participants and procedures*

School teachers in Singapore were selected from a diverse group of occupations for several reasons. Firstly, teaching is perceived to be a profession that exposes individuals to a high level of stress that leads to mental and health problems (Naghieh et al., 2015). Furthermore, teachers

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in Singapore were found to work longer working hours on average compared to other teachers around the world (Teng, 2019). That is, the susceptibility to stress and the long working hours emphasise the importance of understanding teachers' lives by looking at the work-related antecedents that contribute to their well-being.

To collect data from public schools' teachers in Singapore, this research had to receive approval from the Ministry of Education in Singapore. Thereafter, emails were disseminated to the principals of a random selection of primary and secondary schools. Out of 239 public schools, five primary and three secondary schools agreed to engage in this research. After scheduling the time and date, the research team members visited each school for data collection. Research participants received a S\$10 (about US\$7.3) cash voucher after finishing the survey. However, this study did not provide the voucher if they do not want to receive it. A total of 489 responses were collected from eight schools. Specifically, 198 responses were collected from secondary school teachers, and 291 were collected from primary school teachers. Among the 489 responses, 30.7% (n = 150) responses were male, while the remaining 68.7% (n = 336) were female respondents. The average age of the respondents was 38.69. The majority respondents were comprised of Chinese ethnicity (67.5%, n = 330) followed by Malay (18.2%, n = 89), Indian (10.4%, n = 51), and others (2.9%, n = 14). Another demographic factor observed was the marital status with 68.7% (n = 336) of the respondents being married and 27.4% (n = 134) of respondents being single; the remaining 2.5% (n = 12) of respondents were separated/divorced, and 0.6% (n = 3) respondents were widowed.

### *Measurements*

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The questionnaire consisted of four sections: (1) leisure nostalgia, (2) work engagement, (3) task performance, and (4) subjective well-being. Firstly, this study employed the term “leisure activity” in the questionnaire as passive and active leisure affect individuals’ well-being differently (Edwards, 2006; Joudrey & Wallace, 2009; Kim & McKenzie, 2014). In addition, before the nostalgia questions, this study used one item to assess whether they have positive memories regarding their favourite leisure activity (i.e., do you have any positive memories regarding your favourite leisure activity in the past?). This item was measured using a 7-point Likert scale, and the mean was 6.1. To measure leisure nostalgia, this study employed Cho et al.’s (2019d) Leisure Nostalgia Scale (LNS). The LNS consists of five factors (i.e., leisure experience, environment, socialisation, personal identity, and group identity) across 33 items. Next, this study borrowed an engagement scale developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The scale features 17 items across three factors of vigour (six items), dedication (five items), and absorption (six items). Thirdly, this study borrowed a scale from Goodman and Svyantek (1999) to measure task performance, which has nine items. Lastly, this study measured subjective well-being using the Personal Well-Being Index (PWI) (International Wellbeing Group, 2005). This scale has seven items. All constructs were measured using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

### *Data analysis*

This study firstly conducted data screening. To treat the missing values, this research employed the Expectation-Maximisation (EM) technique. In addition, four multivariate outliers were identified and deleted based on the Mahalanobis distance; 485 responses were employed for the data analyses. The current study identified Mardia’s (1985) multivariate kurtosis coefficient to

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confirm the multivariate normality. According to the result, Mardia's multivariate kurtosis coefficient was 168.64, indicating non-normality (Bentler, 2005). Therefore, this study employed Satorra and Bentler's (S-B's) method (Satorra & Bentler, 1994) and robust standard errors (Bentler & Dijkstra, 1985). Following that, this study conducted Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis. Lastly, Hu and Bentler's (1999) standard fit criteria was used to test measurement and structural models (i.e., comparative fit index (CFI) and non-normed fit index (NNFI) > .90, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < .06, and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) < .08).

### **Results**

#### *Measurement model*

The measurement model exhibited acceptable fit: S-B  $\chi^2(df) = 2627.91(1246)$ , CFI = .91, NNFI = .91, SRMR = .05, and RMSEA = .05 (90% CI of RMSEA: .045 – .050). This study further assessed the reliability and validity of the measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Specifically, Rho coefficients of factors were .93 for nostalgia-leisure experience, .93 for nostalgia-environment, .95 for nostalgia-socialisation, .95 for nostalgia-personal identity, .96 for nostalgia-group identity, .80 for work engagement, .93 for task performance, and .89 for subjective well-being ( $\alpha > .70$ ). Next, the average variance extracted (AVE) value was used to identify convergent validity. According to the results, the AVE values were .72 for nostalgia-leisure experience, .64 for nostalgia-environment, .76 for nostalgia-socialisation, .74 for nostalgia-personal identity, .77 for nostalgia-group identity, .58 for work engagement, .61 for task performance, and .55 for subjective well-being (AVE > .50) (Table 1). Lastly, this study tested discriminant validity by comparing each factor's correlation with the square root of AVE

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values. This study found that the correlations between factors were less than the corresponding factors' square root of AVE values (Table 2). That is, the results of CFA indicated acceptable reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

<Insert Table 1 about here>

<Insert Table 2 about here>

### *Structural model*

The data fit structural model: S-B  $\chi^2(df) = 2715.96(1263)$ , CFI = .91, NNFI = .90, SRMR = .07, and RMSEA = .05 (90% CI of RMSEA: .046 – .051). Next, using z-statistic, this study examined the six hypotheses. The results showed that leisure nostalgia positively influenced work engagement ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .001$ ), task performance ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and subjective well-being ( $\beta = .13$ ,  $p < .01$ ), supporting H1, H2, and H4. It indicated that individuals' leisure nostalgia promoted their work engagement, task performance, and subjective well-being. In addition, work engagement had a positive effect on task performance ( $\beta = .50$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and subjective well-being ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H3 and H5. In other words, individuals high in work engagement were more likely to show high task performance and well-being. Lastly, task performance positively affected subjective well-being ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H6 (Figure 2). That is, task performance could help individuals achieve well-being. Additionally, this study examined the relationships between five sub-factors of leisure nostalgia and subjective well-being. According to the results, leisure experience ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ ), environment ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p < .001$ ), socialisation ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ ), personal identity ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and group identity ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ ) had significant relationships with subjective well-being (Table 3). This study also compared the effects of subfactors of leisure nostalgia by conducting the constraints test.

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The results showed that the effects of nostalgia regarding environment and personal identity were significantly greater than the effects of leisure experience and group identity ( $p < .05$ ).

<Insert Figure 2 and Table 3 about here>

### **Discussion**

Previous studies have not investigated the influence of leisure nostalgia in a work setting – particularly for teachers who experience high levels of stress due to excessive job demands. Therefore, this study examined the role of leisure nostalgia and its effects on work-related constructs (i.e., work engagement and task performance) and subjective well-being of teachers. The findings of the current study enrich the understanding of subjective well-being (i.e., the overall mental state, including individuals' cognitive and affective states) and its antecedents. In addition, it extends the theoretical and empirical evidence of the concept of leisure nostalgia by showing that nostalgia has an effect on a work setting that is different from the commonly studied industries, such as consumerism (Triantafyllidou & Siomkos, 2014). In particular, this study provides theoretical and empirical advancements in leisure and occupational health psychology research by adopting the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) in explaining the antecedents of well-being.

According to the results, all the relationships identified in the hypothesised model were found to be significant. Firstly, leisure nostalgia positively influenced work engagement. That is, this study found that leisure nostalgia acted as a positive emotion distinctively to influence work engagement. This relationship was informed by the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), which asserts that the experience of positive emotions broadens one's thinking and builds resources, such as social support and optimism (Fredrickson, 2001). Using that concept, Ouweneel et al. (2012) found that positive emotions influenced work

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engagement. Likewise, Schaufeli and Van Rhenen (2006) also highlighted that the presence of positive emotions in individuals widen thoughts and actions and help them build up their personal resources, causing them to be highly engaged employees. Given that leisure nostalgia can be considered a positive emotion, the findings imply that leisure nostalgia may encourage employees to be more open to challenges and help buffer against stress. Hence, the benefits of experiencing leisure nostalgia lead to highly engaged employees.

Besides influencing work engagement, leisure nostalgia was also found to have a significant relationship with task performance. Previous studies illustrated how the experience of positive emotions facilitated the development of problem-solving and coping resources that elevated one's performance at work (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001). That is, when employees have a limited reserve of positive emotions, they tend to be protective and less open to challenges presented at work. In addition, employees who go to work unhappy are less positive and lack confidence. Such consequences of experiencing negative emotions lead to them not performing well at work. On the other hand, Cropanzano and Wright (2001) elaborated that when employees are happy, they receive challenges more openly at work. In a similar vein, Kaplan et al. (2009) found that emotions influenced job performance. However, previous studies have not studied the effects of leisure nostalgia as an emotion in a work setting. The results from this study confirmed that leisure nostalgia boosts performance at work.

Next, the results of this study showed that work engagement positively influenced task performance. Previous studies also showed the apparent connection between the two constructs (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). For example, Hakanen et al. (2006) investigated Finnish teachers and established that the betterment of health that came from being engaged led to better job performance. Other studies found that the positive emotions



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experienced by the highly engaged employees led to better job performance as it made them more receptive towards opportunities presented at work (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Parker & Bindl, 2010). That is, high work engagement contributes to better work performance (Bakker et al., 2012; Schaufeli et al., 2008), indicating that highly engaged employees can produce better task performance.

The findings from this study showed a positive relationship between leisure nostalgia and subjective well-being; all subfactors of nostalgia had significant relationships with subjective well-being. Specifically, nostalgia regarding environment and personal identity had greater effects on well-being compared to nostalgia regarding leisure experience and group identity. Similarly, Cho (2020) found that leisure nostalgia regarding personal identity and group identity had greater effects on leisure participation intention through life satisfaction compared to other subfactors of leisure nostalgia. These results indicate that while certain factors can show greater effects than other factors, it should be noted that all subfactors of leisure nostalgia play a critical role in enhancing well-being. These findings were supported by past research, which found that nostalgia had psychological benefits (Cho et al., 2021a; Sedikides et al., 2016). In various academic fields, researchers have examined the influence of nostalgia on various antecedents of subjective well-being. However, a direct link between leisure nostalgia and subjective well-being has yet to be established in the contexts of leisure and occupational health psychology. The current study provided substantial evidence to support the claim that leisure nostalgia significantly affected well-being. The relationship between leisure nostalgia and subjective well-being implies that leisure nostalgia has the potential to influence individuals' physiological and psychological states, aside from generating psychological benefits that target different antecedents of subjective well-being.

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Lastly, this study found that work engagement and task performance positively affected subjective well-being. Shimazu and Schaufeli (2009) noted that the level of work engagement positively influences the psychological state of the employees by increasing the experiences of positive emotions. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) suggested that the ability to perform well enhances the psychological state. Similarly, previous studies also showed the effect of employees' work engagement on subjective well-being, particularly the improvement on their psychological state (Schaufeli et al., 2008; Shimazu et al., 2008). That is, when employees recognise themselves to be performing well at work, it gives them confidence; this confidence rewards them intrinsically and generates happiness and pleasure. In the context of the current study, when teachers are highly engaged at work, their engagement positively influences their subjective well-being. Furthermore, based on the significant positive relationship found between task performance and subjective well-being, it suggests that when teachers view themselves as capable of producing results in accordance to their job demands, that awareness affirms them of their own capabilities, which may improve their subjective well-being.

### *Theoretical and practical implications*

The results obtained from this study have theoretical implications that are unique and important. Firstly, it has advanced the existing body of research that measured the effects of nostalgia on psychological and behavioural outcomes. Although nostalgia has been studied in various academic fields (Leong et al., 2015; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2014), its role in employees' work and well-being has not been comprehensively identified in leisure and occupational health psychology. This study found that nostalgia was important in affecting employees' performance and confirmed that the influence of leisure nostalgia is significant in contributing to their well-

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being. The findings also suggest the use of leisure nostalgia in improving efficiency in a working setting and simultaneously enhancing the psychological health of employees. In addition, while previous studies have provided evidence that highlight the influence of nostalgia on factors that enhance well-being (Cho et al., 2021a; Sedikides et al., 2016), this study established the direct relationships among leisure nostalgia, work-related constructs, and subjective well-being, indicating an extension of the literature on nostalgia.

Secondly, to understand the effect of positive emotions, the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) had been applied to observe their effects on learning (Rahimi & Bigdeli, 2014), life satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2005), and employees' resources (Mills, 2010). However, the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) has not been applied to understanding the effect of leisure nostalgia and work engagement among employees. This study successfully applied and extended the framework of the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) by showing its usefulness in explaining how leisure nostalgia – that is identified as a positive emotion – can positively affect work engagement and performance.

In general, the theoretical advancements in understanding the factors influencing employees' work performance and well-being are essential. Work and leisure have been recognised as important life domains that play influential roles in determining individuals' well-being (Avey et al., 2010; Yarnal et al., 2008). Roberts (2019) highlighted that back in the 1970s, working adults were given the luxury of shorter working time and even had the liberty to rearrange the work-time to accommodate leisure. However, the nature of work has evolved over the years, and the evolution in work engagement brought by globalisation, competitiveness, and the shift towards a service-based economy has led to uncertainty in organisations (Gagné &

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Bhave, 2011). The uncertainty and lack of job security caused employers to favour employees who engage in proactive work behaviours (Kooji et al., 2017), and people forgot that leisure should be a part of their daily lifestyle (Taneja, 2013). However, with the empirical evidence, this study showed how leisure is critical to one's work and well-being. That is, it should be noted that individuals should take their leisure into more consideration, and contemporary society should value leisure for its beneficial effect on people's well-being.

The findings of this study also have practical implications. Specifically, examining the role of leisure nostalgia and understanding its influence on the work-related constructs and subjective well-being allow management to look at improving employees' work efficiency from a different angle. Given that leisure nostalgia generates several psychological benefits for individuals (Cho, 2020), it is important to use it as a catalyst. For example, during teachers' meetings or a day dedicated specifically for teachers, school management can set up leisure nostalgic themed downtime for them. Firstly, school management can take note of the age group that most teachers fall in and then consider the types of leisure they would have participated in during their younger days and separate them into different categories. For example, one theme could be the type of entertainment they indulged in during their free time in their early days, such as Gameboy and board games. School management can expose them to these stimuli through media platforms or activities, which would get them to start talking about their favourite leisure moments among their colleagues. Thus, even those who did not share the same type of entertainment and fall into different age groups would still be included. These sharing sessions would stimulate nostalgic feelings and make them recall their past leisure-related experiences. Eventually, this would contribute to their work engagement, task performance, and subjective well-being.

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In addition, according to the findings of this research, work engagement is an important construct in influencing employees' performance and subjective well-being. Thus, if management attempts to enhance the quality of work produced in their organisations and, at the same time, improve employees' well-being, it is crucial to find strategies that aim to boost the level of work engagement. For instance, the evidence that teachers in Singapore work longer hours than other teachers around the world may be an indicator of them being potential victims of burnout. Thus, school management can set up a system that maintains a balance between job resources and job demands, which can affect individuals' well-being (Bakker et al., 2007). In addition, they could start up a welfare centre in each school to provide in-school counselling sessions for teachers alone. At the same time, they should work on job redesigning to reduce the workload assigned to teachers. Instead of making teachers handle the administrative matters of students, school management could use the help of extra manpower to support the teachers. By doing this, the chances of teachers being engaged at work would be higher, which in turn improves their task performance and subjective well-being. More importantly, management has to be aware that there should be a compromise in the number of hours dedicated for work. That is, understanding that leisure increases employees' work engagement and task performance, employees should be allocated time to participate in leisure and be taught how to manage their leisure time to have a balance between work and leisure. These efforts can create a positive experience for individuals so that they are able to have nostalgic feelings regarding their leisure activities, which will be beneficial in the long-term both at the individual and organisational levels.

### *Limitations and future research*

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Like with any other research, this study comes with limitations as well. The first limitation comes from the target sample for the data collection in this study. While the findings of this study provide a significant breakthrough in the role of leisure nostalgia, the data were only collected from teachers. Hence, the effect of leisure nostalgia may differ in other contexts. To understand the role of nostalgia in the contexts of leisure and occupational health psychology, it is essential for future researchers to collect data from other professions that share a similar stressful environment, such as nurses or police officers, and observe the effects of nostalgia on them. Secondly, the teaching profession does not have a standardised working condition. In other words, teachers from different schools, or even the type of subjects they teach, can create different levels of stress, and consequently, differing levels of well-being. This brings the next limitation, and that is the exclusion of moderating factors in this study. For instance, every school has a set of cultures that are unique to its own history, beliefs, and practices. In addition, the teachers' workload and the amount of free time that they have for leisure activities may vary. Thus, future studies need to include moderating factors and examine their effects on leisure, work, and well-being. The use of additional variables (e.g., perceived threat of COVID-19, mindsets, coping skills) can strengthen the findings of this study and push the research on teachers forward. Lastly, this study could not conduct the multilevel analysis due to the small sample size at level two (i.e., a sample of 50 or less), causing biased estimates of the second level standard errors (Maas & Hox, 2005). Therefore, this study suggests future research to collect data from diverse groups and conduct a multilevel analysis to avoid a bias derived from common characteristics of each group.

### **Conclusion**

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Nostalgia has been studied in a diverse range of industries, with recent work expanding towards nostalgia in the context of leisure. Leisure nostalgia is evoked in individuals who desire to relive their idealised leisure-related experience from the past, and individuals could feel nostalgia easily if they are not able to actively participate in leisure (Cho, 2020a; Cho et al., 2014).

According to previous research, participating in leisure activities has been shown to provide several psychological benefits and, most importantly, act as recovery for individuals' well-being (Newman et al., 2014), reducing the incidence of mental illness, such as depression – especially for employees who work long hours (Zijlstra & Sonnentag, 2006). In addition to this, the current study provides empirical evidence to support the claim that leisure nostalgia generated by positive leisure experiences positively affects work and well-being. These significant relationships have the important theoretical and practical implications. Future studies need to look into the areas recommended in the present study that would help pave the way for stronger evidence in support of the role of leisure nostalgia.

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Table 1. Factor loading ( $\lambda$ ), Rho, and AVE of the measurement model

<i>Factors and items</i>	$\lambda$	<i>Rho</i>	<i>AVE</i>
<b>Nostalgia</b>			
<i>Leisure Experience</i>		.93	.72
Remembering my leisure activity that I enjoyed	.88		
My exciting leisure experience in the past	.89		
Remembering the freedom I experienced during my favourite leisure activity	.85		
Free time I had during my favourite leisure activity	.81		
Recharging myself through leisure activity	.80		
<i>Environment</i>		.93	.64
The food I ate during my favourite leisure time period	.77		
The appearance of my favourite leisure place	.81		
Memorable weather during my favourite leisure time	.82		
The practical design of my favourite leisure place	.88		
The architectural design of my favourite leisure place	.87		
The leisure activity equipment I used	.65		
The size of my favourite leisure place	.79		
<i>Socialisation</i>		.95	.76
Friends participating in leisure activity with me	.82		
Positive memories shared with others during my favourite leisure activity	.82		
Memories of building friendships with others during my favourite leisure activity	.94		
Memories of socialising with others during my favourite leisure	.93		
Memories of making new friends during my favourite leisure	.84		
Entertainments enjoyed with others during my leisure activity	.86		
<i>Personal Identity</i>		.95	.74
Identifying myself as a lover of my favourite leisure activity	.86		
Pride in being a lover of my favourite leisure activity	.89		
A feeling of satisfaction as a loyal leisure participant of my favourite leisure activity	.92		
Positive feelings about myself as a lover of my favourite leisure activity	.89		
My value as a leisure participant	.85		
Sense of accomplishment as a leisure participant	.79		
Being loyal to my favourite leisure activity	.82		
<i>Group Identity</i>		.96	.77
Unique characteristics of my leisure social group	.81		
The traditions of my leisure group	.84		
Group rituals at the leisure place	.83		
Shared memories which affected my group identity at the leisure place	.91		
History of my group that shared a lot in common with my group members	.93		
Pride of being a part of my group at the leisure place	.93		
Experiences of group bonding during my leisure activity	.87		
How important I was to the members of my leisure group	.87		
<b>Work engagement</b>		.80	.58
Vigour	.78		

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Dedication	.84		
Absorption	.64		
<b>Task performance</b>		.93	.61
I achieve the objectives of the job	.74		
I meet criteria for performance	.84		
I demonstrate expertise in all job-related tasks	.84		
I fulfil all the requirements of the job	.86		
I could manage more responsibility than typically assigned	.72		
I appear suitable for a higher level role	.56		
I am competent in all areas of the job, handles tasks with proficiency	.81		
I perform well in the overall job by carrying out tasks as expected	.87		
I plan and organise to achieve objectives of the job and meet deadlines	.74		
<b>Subjective well-being</b>		.89	.55
Satisfaction with standard of living	.73		
Satisfaction with my health	.68		
Satisfaction with my life achievement	.75		
Satisfaction with my personal relationship	.71		
Satisfaction with my personal safety	.77		
Satisfaction with feeling part of the community	.78		
Satisfaction with my future security	.75		

*Note.* All the questions concerning nostalgia (i.e., NST, NE, NS, NPI, and NGI items) were asked in as the following: “(each NE, E, S, PI, or GI item) evoke(s) my nostalgic feelings.”

\* Reverse coded

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Table 2. Correlations among all constructs in the measurement model

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) <i>Nostalgia-Leisure experience</i>	.85 <sup>1</sup>							
(2) <i>Nostalgia-Environment</i>	.63	.80 <sup>1</sup>						
(3) <i>Nostalgia-Socialisation</i>	.52	.54	.87 <sup>1</sup>					
(4) <i>Nostalgia-Personal identity</i>	.71	.64	.54	.86 <sup>1</sup>				
(5) <i>Nostalgia-Group identity</i>	.42	.58	.66	.51	.87 <sup>1</sup>			
(6) <i>Work engagement</i>	.24	.20	.19	.23	.15	.76 <sup>1</sup>		
(7) <i>Task performance</i>	.28	.10	.13	.24	.10	.53	.78 <sup>1</sup>	
(8) <i>Subjective well-being</i>	.27	.17	.19	.27	.11	.48	.45	.74 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Square root of the AVE value

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Table 3. Results of the Proposed Model

<i>Hypothesised path</i>	$\beta$	<i>SE</i>	<i>Z-value</i>
H1: Leisure nostalgia → Work engagement	.27 <sup>***</sup>	.06	4.92
H2: Leisure nostalgia → Task performance	.10 <sup>*</sup>	.04	2.05
H3: Work engagement → Task performance	.50 <sup>***</sup>	.05	9.01
H4: Leisure nostalgia → Subjective well-being	.13 <sup>**</sup>	.05	2.70
H5: Work engagement → Subjective well-being	.31 <sup>***</sup>	.07	5.05
H6: Task performance → Subjective well-being	.26 <sup>***</sup>	.07	4.63
<i>Indirect path from subfactors of nostalgia to subjective well-being</i>			
Leisure experience – Subjective well-being	.24 <sup>***</sup>	.06	4.04
Environment – Subjective well-being	.31 <sup>***</sup>	.08	4.06
Socialisation – Subjective well-being	.28 <sup>***</sup>	.07	4.06
Personal identity – Subjective well-being	.30 <sup>***</sup>	.07	4.09
Group identity – Subjective well-being	.24 <sup>***</sup>	.06	3.93

Note. <sup>\*</sup>  $p < .05$ ; <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < .01$ ; <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .001$

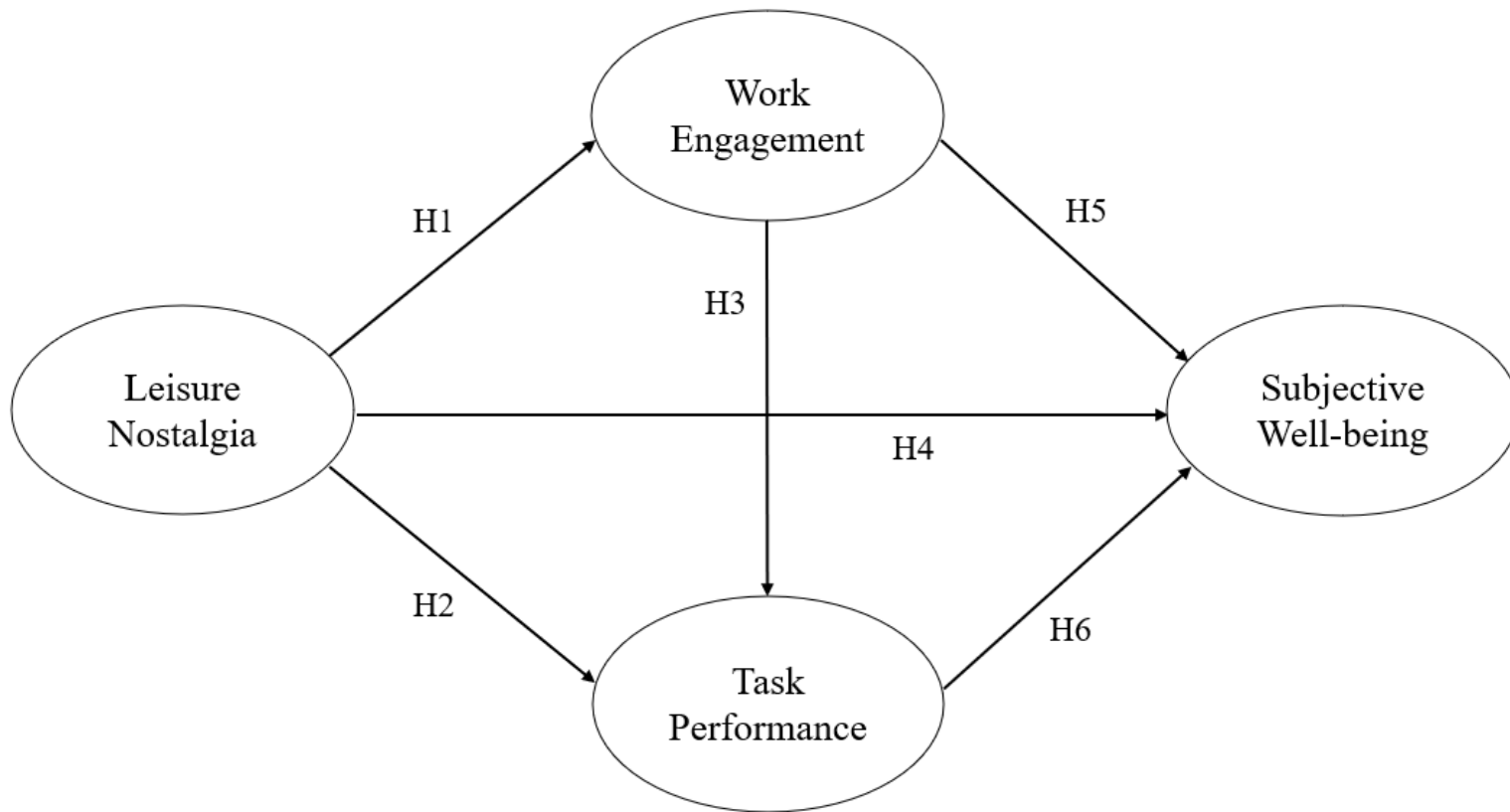


Figure 1. A hypothesised model

LEISURE NOSTALGIA AND WELL-BEING

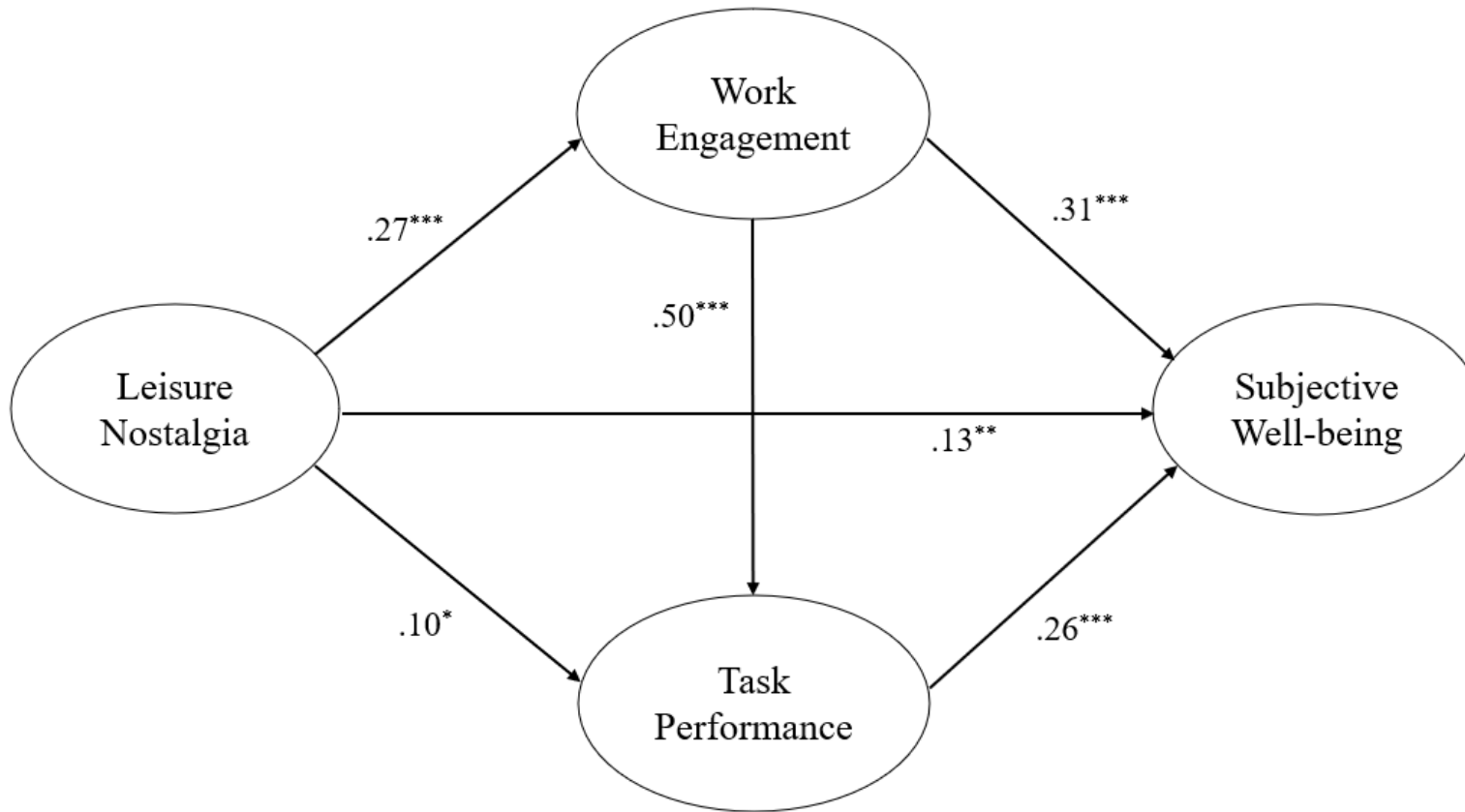


Figure 2. Standardised coefficients of the structural model

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$