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Gordon Institute of Business Science
University of Pretoria

Employee experience of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being

22957783

A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

01 November 2023

ABSTRACT

The current workforce is experiencing rising work demands and deteriorating well-being. Young employees, in particular, are under-resourced to cope with their demands. This ultimately translates into poor organisational outcomes. Despite the positive impact of leisure on subjective well-being and its importance to young employees, organisational support resources have ineffectively incorporated leisure as a well-being-oriented resource. Support systems are critiqued to prioritise organisational outcomes while treating employee well-being as an afterthought.

This study explored employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being with two objectives. First, to understand the prominent constituents of organisational leisure support and second, to explore the key determinants of employee utilisation. A qualitative, descriptive phenomenology study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 12 skilled South African financial services sector employees between the ages of 25 and 45 years.

Five prominent constituents of organisational leisure support and four key determinants of utilisation were found. Leisure support constituents include time-based, event-based, interest group, leisure facilities and working-from-anywhere support. New findings included calendar management and specialised leave time-based support, cause-based interest groups, facilities supporting quiet time and engagement with the natural environment, and working from other countries.

The four key determinants of utilisation include the nature of support (fit to needs/interests, conditionality, voluntary nature, timing of support, and similarity to work), supportive stakeholders, communication and coordination. New findings included the timing of support and coordination of support (i.e., facilitators to drive support engagement).

Finally, a unique contribution has been made to the JD-R theory regarding leisure-related organisational resources and specifically separating the resources into constituents of support and determinants of utilisation.

KEYWORDS

Organisational leisure support, subjective well-being, Job Demands-Resources model, social exchange theory

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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ACRONYMS

JD-R   - Job Demands-Resources

SET   - Social Exchange Theory

COR   - Conservation of Resources

HRM   - Human Resources Management

1 CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

This research explores employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being within the context of the South African financial services sector. It has been proven that leisure is strongly linked with employee well-being (Abdel Hadi et al., 2021; Duerden et al., 2018; Kurtesis et al., 2017; Kuykendall et al., 2017; Tsaur & Yen, 2018). Furthermore, young employees place greater value on leisure and their well-being and expect organisations to provide support accordingly (Cheng et al., 2021; Duerden et al., 2018; Schroth, 2019). Moreover, younger generations have a greater need for well-being (and specifically leisure) related support compared to older generations, who are argued to employ better coping strategies (Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021).

Despite this need, organisations' Human Resource Management (HRM) policies and practices have given organisational performance the centre stage and treated well-being as a byproduct (Long & Cooke, 2022; Guest, 2017). Consequently, the workforce has experienced rising work demands while well-being has deteriorated, resulting in poor organisational outcomes such as higher turnover intentions (Salas-Vallina et al., 2021; Tessema et al., 2022).

From an academic perspective, leisure as a means of improving well-being remains underexplored in literature (Cheng et al., 2020; De Bloom et al., 2018; Strassburger et al., 2022). The Job Demands-Resources model emphasises the provision of work resources to manage work demands to result in improved performance; however, the perspective taken on resources is narrow and does not explicitly include leisure support. HRM and organisational support literature have only recently begun to explore leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource rather than motivational or reward-based resources (Kuykendall et al., 2017; Strassburger et al., 2022). Therefore, more exploration is needed to understand specific well-being-oriented leisure support in contribution to both leisure and HRM literature.

The following sections detail the research problem and purpose in alignment with the above and the research objectives which guide the scope of the study. Additionally, the significance, delimitations, key terms, and assumptions are outlined.

1.2   The Research Problem

Employees have experienced a decline in levels of work-life balance and overall well-being while job demands have increased (Moss, 2021). This comes after Covid-19 strained the relationship between employees and organisations due to changes in ways of working. More specifically, work demands have intensified (McDonald & Hite, 2018) while flexible working arrangements enabled by digital and technology have more closely intertwined work and non-work domains to create conflict (Guest, 2017; Wood et al., 2020). Therefore, organisations must consider effectively using leisure support resources to improve employee well-being.

Additionally, organisations are expected to align with the expectations of younger generations making up the current and emerging workforce. Deloitte's (2022) gen z and millennial survey and Gallup's (2016) study on millennials indicated that younger generations expect more holistic support from organisations regarding their overall well-being since they view their non-work and work lives as highly integrated. Past studies by Duerden et al. (2018) and Tsaur and Yen (2018) have also indicated that the value of work-life balance and leisure time is more salient for younger generations than older generations.

Schroth (2019) further argued that gen z employees are more likely to be burdened by stress, anxiety, and depression, further highlighting the need to address well-being among this generation. While Schroth supported greater mental well-being challenges among younger employees, Zacher & Froidevaux (2021) discussed the greater physical health issues that impact older generations. However, Zacher & Froidevaux indicated that the older workforce is typically better resourced to practice blended coping strategies (recreation, self-care, and meaningful relationships) to manage work strain. Additionally, Kurtessis et al. (2017) highlighted that younger employees are more likely to reciprocate positively to perceived support. Thus, organisations need to reconsider how they resource well-being programs, especially for younger employees.

Despite this, organisations have placed limited focus on well-being as an overall outcome, and literature in this domain has remained thin (Guest, 2017; Kuykendall et al., 2017). Human Resource Management (HRM) and organisational support literature have strongly emphasised support focused on performance as an outcome with little consideration of well-being (Guest, 2017). More specifically, well-being-

centred leisure benefits as organisational support have not been sufficiently explored beyond being used as a reward mechanism to drive job performance (Cheng et al., 2021; Strassburger et al., 2022). This is particularly important as boundaries between work and personal time have blurred, and work pressures elevate, resulting in a re-emergence of mass resignations, as Tessema et al. (2022) observed.

Thus, there is a misalignment between the support provided by organisations and what the employee values or could most benefit from. The consequence of this misalignment is declining subjective well-being driven by deteriorating psychological (e.g., depression, stress, anxiety), physical (e.g., high blood pressure) and social wellness (Guest, 2017). This translates to poor organisational outcomes (e.g., poorly motivated or a burnt-out workforce) and organisational costs due to declining job performance, absenteeism, and high turnover (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Long & Cooke, 2022).

Contributing to this area of study will thus build the body of literature on organisational support from a leisure perspective and help organisations better leverage leisure support to improve employee subjective well-being and, ultimately, organisational outcomes. Therefore, this study will focus on organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being within the human resource management field.

1.3 Purpose Statement

This study aims to explore employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being in the South African financial services sector. Two objectives underpin the aim of this study.

The first objective is to understand the prominent constituents of well-being-oriented organisational leisure support from the employees' perspective. Advancing literature on organisational support as a resource will help deepen perspectives on resources as part of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. The inclusion of well-being-oriented resources is also called for by Guest (2017), Salas-Vallina et al. (2017) and Tessema et al. (2020). Akgunduz et al. (2019) and Duerden et al. (2018) also highlighted the need for specificity regarding the design of leisure support systems, which has received scant attention in HRM literature. Furthermore, despite the proliferation of organisational support and benefits systems in practice, employees

currently perceive organisational support linked to well-being as insufficient or inadequate (Moss, 2021; Schroth, 2019). This warrants an exploration of the constituents of leisure support that facilitate subjective well-being from employees' perspective.

The second objective is to explore the key determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation by employees. Kuykendall et al. (2017), Saks (2022) and Wood et al. (2020) indicated that employees must perceive the value and availability of support for them to use it, suggesting the presence of usage drivers. Furthermore, Long and Cooke (2022) argued that generic approaches to support and benefit systems in practice result in employees not fully engaging with the organisational support provided. Therefore, research on the constituents of organisational leisure support (objective 1) must be complemented with the determinants of its utilisation by employees (objective 2).

1.4   Significance

1.4.1   Significance in the South African financial services industry

Research on well-being-oriented organisational support is muted in Africa, with much of the attention given to the United States of America (USA) (Caillier, 2017; Fisher et al., 2017; Lien & Cheng, 2022; Richmond et al., 2017; Tessema et al., 2020) and European countries (Abdel Hadi et al., 2021; De Bloom et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022; Tordera et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2020). The South African context is relevant given the hours South African employees work relative to some first-world countries (Statistics on working time, 2023). Additionally, Van Wijk et al. (2021) indicated that the burden of mental disorders such as depression in the South African workplace significantly impacts the economy. Furthermore, the country is struggling with a mass exit of young, skilled employees (Ferreira & Carbonatto, 2020; Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020), which progressive HRM practices could help mitigate.

The financial services industry is relevant as the largest contributor to GDP (Statistics South Africa, 2023a) and the third largest employer (Statistics South Africa, 2023b) in South Africa. Moreover, the financial services industry in South Africa has experienced high turnover intentions linked to poor well-being (Van der Merwe et al., 2020). Coetzee (2018) also added that scarce skills (e.g., in technology, data analytics and risk management) are critical to the future sustainability of the sector.

1.4.2 Advancing scholarly debate

Given the dearth of HRM literature relating to leisure support, this study will help further develop and deepen understanding of the leisure support construct in relation to employee subjective well-being. This adds to the literature on leisure-specific organisational support (Cheng et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022) and helps advance well-being-oriented organisational support literature (Guest, 2017; Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021).

While some studies have been conducted on organisational leisure support in the technology and hospitality industries (Cheng et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022), no studies have been found in the South African financial services industry. Thus, focusing on the South African financial services industry will help advance leisure support literature from a geographic and industry standpoint. This will help broaden the debate to include diverse perspectives and deepen understanding of organisational leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource.

1.4.3 Contribution to business practice

Current organisational efforts to support employees regarding their well-being requires more attention. This is evidenced by the existing workforce expressing that their well-being is compromised for organisational performance (Long & Cooke, 2022; Moss, 2021). Therefore, by understanding employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve their subjective well-being, organisations can complement existing support and benefit systems with well-being-oriented support. The workforce will likely reciprocate by being more engaged and committed to the organisation, translating to desirable organisational outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Kwon & Kim, 2020; Saks, 2022).

The overall intention is to build a deeper understanding of the constituents and determinants of utilisation of well-being-oriented organisational support based on employee experiences and address the dearth of literature on leisure support in varied contexts. This will address the business need to take a more holistic, well-being-centric approach to HRM practices and the academic need to build holistic leisure support literature regarding its constituents and utilisation determinants.

1.5 Delimitations

This study was limited to South African employees in the financial services industry;

therefore, perspectives of individuals falling outside this scope were not considered. Since the focus was on employees of organisations, self-employed individuals or entrepreneurs do not form part of the scope. Additionally, the perspectives of other stakeholders (e.g., HR managers and line managers) linked to the organisational leisure support construct were not explored. This extends to the researcher himself as he was not considered a participant.

From a geographic standpoint, only individuals living and employed in South Africa were considered as research participants. Additionally, only individuals working within the financial services sector in South Africa were considered. This included banks and insurance companies. Furthermore, the study was limited to leisure-related support or benefits derived from the employee's organisation. Therefore, this study did not cover leisure-related support derived through non-work sources.

1.6   Definition of Key Terms

This study deals with leisure as a central construct. Leisure involves activities that employees engage in during their free time to derive some form of benefit (e.g., relaxation, restoration, and personal mastery) (De Bloom et al., 2018; Kuykendall et al., 2017). Their free time refers to time not used up by various demands such as work, family responsibility and studies. Furthermore, free or flexible time can be used to engage in leisure activities at or outside work (Duerden et al., 2018).

Organisational support refers to support or benefit systems organisations implement to help employees cope with their demands and improve their well-being. It can form part of employee assistance programs (Long & Cooke, 2022), caring HRM practices (Saks, 2022) or broader employee value propositions (Tessema et al., 2022). The support may include established policies and practices or informal routines and norms. When employees experience this, they develop a perception of the extent to which the organisation values them and their well-being (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

This study discusses subjective well-being as an outcome of organisational leisure support. Well-being involves an individual's assessment of life satisfaction (Lee et al., 2021; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). It includes an individual's physical (e.g., illnesses), psychological (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression), emotional and social (e.g., quality of relationships) health. Subjective well-being, in particular, refers to an individual's satisfaction assessment as it relates to high-quality experiences in their

various life domains (leisure being one of them) (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2020).

1.7 Assumptions

This research assumed that the participants interviewed had some experience of organisational leisure support and wanted to be supported by their employer regarding leisure. The study also assumed that participants required some level of balance in their lives and did not intend to commit all their time to work only. The underlying assumption was that participants did not view leisure as a distraction but as something that adds value to their lives and overall well-being.

This research assumed that participants were of sound mind and, therefore, rational while being interviewed. Since this study is cross-sectional, it was also assumed that participants' recollection of experiences was fair and unbiased - see a study on recollection bias regarding subjective well-being by Prati and Senik (2022). Furthermore, the participants were assumed to be honest and truthful in the descriptions of their organisational leisure support experiences. Since the research is about employees' experience, it was assumed that participants would answer questions based on their own feelings and experience rather than what was considered generally (socially) acceptable responses. Furthermore, it was assumed that participants would not constrain their views based on what they believed their organisation could realistically provide as support.

From a language perspective, participants were assumed to be comfortable explaining their thoughts and feelings in English and that this would not influence the trustworthiness of the research. Thus, it was assumed that participants were at least conversant, if not fluent in English.

Some assumptions were made about the researcher's role in the study. The researcher was assumed to take a critical stance by not letting his preconceptions of organisational leisure support influence any part of the research. Moreover, it was assumed that the researcher was of sound mind while conducting the research.

The following chapter will unpack the gap in the existing literature on organisational support and leisure as it relates to improved subjective well-being to introduce the research questions being explored.

2   CHAPTER 2: THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

The literature review will explore existing academic debates around organisational leisure support as it relates to improving employee subjective well-being. The JD-R model will be used as the central theory around which the constructs will be discussed. An evaluation of relevant academic debate in leisure and HRM literature will be explored to develop a cogent argument around the need to further explore the organisational leisure support construct as a resource to improve the subjective well-being of employees.

The following sections will unpack the literature by first outlining well-being and linking it to leisure. Secondly, organisational support literature will be discussed to highlight the importance of leisure support and the need for further exploration of the organisational leisure support construct in terms of its constituents and usage drivers. Finally, the relevance of the South African financial services industry will be outlined as the contextual focus of this study. Relevant, recent, and high-quality literature from journals with rankings predominantly three and higher on the Academic Journal Guide (AJG) (Chartered Association of Business Schools, 2021) was used to understand the current academic debate.

The central argument is that the approach to employee support and benefit programs must become more well-being-centric. Leisure-related resources are highlighted as a key means of improving employee subjective well-being by enabling recovery, creating a sense of fulfilment, and mitigating the impact of high job demands. Despite this, it is highlighted that organisational leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource remains understudied in literature, specifically regarding the constituents of leisure support and the determinants of its utilisation.

2.2 Background – Well-being, Leisure and JD-R theory

This section will introduce the concept of well-being and position it in the context of leisure. Additionally, the JD-R theory, as it relates to organisational leisure support and well-being, will be outlined, and critiqued as the focal point of this research. It is argued that well-being remains overlooked in organisational contexts, given the narrow view that the JD-R theory takes on job resources to drive organisational outcomes.

2.2.1 The perspective taken on well-being

Well-being is a key construct in this study as it is viewed as an outcome of effective organisational leisure support provision and usage. Scholarly debate on well-being is typically based on hedonic or eudaimonic perspectives (Lee at al., 2021; Rahmani et al., 2018). Literature from a hedonic perspective has indicated that well-being is derived through feelings of pleasure or the lack of pain in one's life. This includes experiencing feelings of relaxation and restoration, or pleasure derived from enjoyable activities. Pressman et al. (2019) also outlined the potential of positive affect, resulting in positive health outcomes. In contrast, the eudaimonic perspective argues that well-being is derived from more profound feelings of fulfilment or meaning in one's life through self-exploration, self-development, or the realisation of one's purpose in life (Guest, 2017; Lee et al., 2021).

While hedonic well-being is argued to be based on short-term feelings of indulgence and eudaimonia is viewed as more intrinsic, long-lasting happiness, this research does not take one perspective over another but aligns mainly with the concept of subjective well-being. Subjective well-being posits that well-being is uniquely experienced from one individual to another based on their context and how they evaluate their satisfaction and fulfilment (Kuykendall et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2021). Unlike objective measures like income, subjective experiences allow individuals to assess the quality of their lives. From a leisure perspective, each individual's unique leisure interests contribute to their subjective well-being, which can be linked to either hedonic (pleasure) or eudaimonic (fulfilment) perspectives. For example, Duerden et al. (2018) and Abdel Hadi et al. (2021) discussed purposeful leisure activity as allowing one to develop self-identity (leisure crafting), while De Bloom et al. (2018) discussed pleasant leisure activity that allows for momentary recovery by

disconnecting from work.

2.2.2 The Job-Demands Resources model

Well-being in an organisational context is often viewed as a means to an end. Literature on work-related well-being has focused on how job characteristics impact well-being to create positive organisational outcomes (Lesener et al., 2018). These job characteristics involve work-related demands and resources covered in the JD-R model that Bakker and Demerouti (2006, 2017) developed.

The authors indicated two main impacts on well-being and organisational performance as a result of job characteristics. Firstly, high job demands requiring disproportionate physical or mental effort increase strain, negatively impacting employee well-being and resulting in poor work outcomes (e.g., job performance and turnover intentions). Secondly, if employees are provided with greater job resources in terms of support (psychological, physical, social, and other organisational aspects), this results in improved motivation and therefore enhanced organisational outcomes (Guest, 2017; Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). This further aligns with the value of work supports described by Wood et al. (2020).

The JD-R model, however, is limited due to its sole focus on the work context. It is necessary to consider that employees play multiple roles and thus have multiple demands across their life domains (Super, 1980; Wood et al., 2020). Therefore, the JD-R model can be criticised for taking a naïve view that work-related resources to manage work demands will translate into positive outcomes. The narrow view taken by the JD-R model can be broadened. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides a system-level perspective of the employee, positing that individuals have a limited total resource pool (e.g., time, energy, money) with which to meet the needs and demands of the various domains of their life (work, personal, social) (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Therefore, a more global view of employee resources and demands is required so that work is not viewed as a siloed element of employees' lives.

When individuals perceive their resources as inadequate to meet their various needs, regardless of whether the need is work or non-work-related, the impact is greater stress and poor well-being (Kwon & Kim, 2020; Wood et al., 2020). Thus, well-being and organisational outcomes can be improved by managing the interplay between

employees' various demands and ensuring that the total pool of resources is adequate. Pursuing leisure participation can also be viewed as a demand that needs to be met. If employees feel they do not have sufficient resources to meet that demand, their subjective well-being will be negatively impacted. Therefore, the view on job resources needs to be expanded since employees do not split and manage their resource pools in silos across the different life domains.

From a resource perspective, literature on the JD-R model has focused on work-related resources such as control, autonomy, and manager support (Lesener et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2020). Resource provision enhances work motivation and buffers work demands to improve work-related well-being. However, employee well-being is influenced by more than work demands and work resources. Employees deem leisure as a significant contributor to their subjective well-being. Furthermore, leisure and work roles can conflict and deteriorate well-being (Elbaz et al., 2020; Kuykendall et al., 2017). This raises the need for broader provision of resources to improve well-being holistically. However, leisure-specific support as a resource has not been adequately studied as part of the JD-R model.

Thus, when organisations consider how to better resource employees, it is essential that a systems-level view of resources and demands is taken to drive well-being as an outcome. A holistic approach ensures that employees' lives are not treated as compartmentalised but as integrated and interdependent domains.

2.2.3 Outcomes of improved subjective well-being

The JDR model suggests that providing job resources improves well-being, translating into positive organisational outcomes (Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains the translation of improved well-being into positive organisational outcomes. The theory posits that when organisational support is provided, employees are more inclined to reciprocate with greater organisational commitment and, therefore, improved overall performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Guest, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021).

The social exchange process emphasises the importance of the non-economic benefits to the employee and the resulting benefits to the organisation. Moreover, Saks (2022) stressed that organisations should demonstrate care and Guest (2017) further indicated that employees should perceive that organisations value their well-

being before reciprocating positively. This suggests that employees do not see any benefit to their subjective well-being if the provided resources are not adopted or utilised meaningfully. Therefore, reciprocation and the desired organisational outcomes may not come to fruition.

It is observed that organisations treat well-being as a byproduct or use it to drive behaviours that relentlessly enforce positive work outcomes, making the social exchange process less effective (Guest, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). Therefore, while the JD-R model is the theoretical focal point of this research, it is important to recognise the role of SET in explaining how the provision of resources translates to positive outcomes. The provision of any support as resources must be perceived as valuable by employees for their subjective well-being to be meaningfully improved.

2.3 The Role of Leisure Participation in Improving Well-being

Leisure participation includes activities that individuals voluntarily partake in as a break from their typical routines due to potential well-being benefits (Duerden et al., 2018; Elbaz et al., 2020; Tsaur & Yen, 2018). The characteristics of such activities may vary significantly across physical, non-physical, individual, and group activities (De Bloom et al., 2018). High-quality engagement in these activities supports breaking free from demands, facilitates recovery and relaxation, or triggers feelings of fulfilment, contributing to improved subjective well-being.

Leisure participation plays a critical role in subjective well-being. The pursuit of leisurely activity is also recognised as a role that individuals seek to fulfil in their lives and, specifically for younger generations, is considered an essential element of their life satisfaction (Kelly et al., 2020; Kuykendall et al., 2017). Thus, leisure participation can be utilised to improve employee subjective well-being.

2.3.1 Outcomes of leisure participation

Existing literature on leisure studies has established the relationship between leisure constructs and organisational outcomes. The multiple theoretical lenses employed include the JD-R theory (Abdel Hadi et al., 2021), the COR theory (Elbaz et al., 2020; Kelly et al., 2020; Tsaur & Yen, 2018), the effort-recovery model (De Bloom et al., 2018), and Super's theory (Kuykendall et al., 2017). Findings highlighted that leisure participation positively impacts well-being and organisational outcomes; however, it

depends on the nature of the leisure activity in relation to the other demands (work, home and social) experienced by the individual.

Recent literature on the relationship between leisure activity, well-being and work outcomes shows that leisure participation positively impacts well-being and organisational performance. Tsaur and Yen (2018) found that reducing work-to-leisure conflict improves leisure satisfaction, job satisfaction and psychological well-being. In alignment with this, Elbaz et al. (2020) found that when work-leisure conflict occurs, employee performance is negatively impacted due to burnout. De Bloom et al. (2018) found that active lifestyles resulted in recovery due to psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery, and control. Furthermore, Kuykendall et al. (2017) indicated that the quality of leisure experiences positively impacts overall well-being regardless of whether leisure activity is considered important to that individual. The improved well-being outcomes then spill over into positive work-related outcomes through the social exchange process.

Contrary to the debate that leisure is found to have an overall positive impact on individuals' well-being, it does not always result in positive organisational outcomes. Kelly et al. (2020) made a nuanced contribution that leisure activity only positively impacted work-related self-efficacy if it did not use the same resources required for work. Additionally, Tsaur and Yen (2018) indicated that when the time required for leisure is so excessive that it compromises work time, employees' job satisfaction is negatively impacted. In terms of leisure activity types, De Bloom et al. (2018) found that sedentary, individual leisure activities result in the least favourable outcomes and that risky leisure activity may result in impaired ability to be productive at work. The above studies indicated a negative impact on work, which can be argued to impact job satisfaction and, ultimately, subjective well-being.

This indicates that participating in a leisure activity may not always guarantee positive well-being and organisational outcomes. Therefore, while organisational leisure support can be used as a well-being-centred resource, the nature of the activity must also be considered. Hence, organisations need to develop a deep understanding of the leisure activities of their employees to provide support that promotes positive outcomes for the employee and the organisation.

Organisations should, therefore, be cognisant of providing support to employees

from a leisure perspective, given its potential to create mutual benefits (employee and organisation). While designing such support, organisations should be aware of the interplay between leisure activity and work demands and how that could impact outcomes from an organisational perspective while driving employee well-being.

Literature studies have overwhelmingly focused on proving the relationship between leisure, well-being and job performance. However, a significant gap exists in identifying what specific leisure supports can be used as well-being-oriented resources. As discussed, JD-R-based studies take a narrow view of work resources, leaving broader elements of well-being-oriented support (specifically leisure support) in its shadow. This challenge is discussed through organisational support literature in the section that follows.

2.4 Organisational Support as a Resource

Organisational support can be viewed as a resource provided to employees. In traditional HRM literature, such support forms part of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), High-Involvement Work Systems and High-Commitment Work Systems (HCWS). It is argued that organisational support should evolve to focus on well-being as an outcome rather than a by-product of such systems. Furthermore, perspectives on ethically rooted HRM practices that emphasise care for employee well-being must be addressed. The following sections unpack these arguments and introduce organisational leisure support as a means through which subjective well-being can be improved.

2.4.1 The evolving relationship between employees and organisations

Changing working dynamics triggered by COVID-19 have resulted in overlapping the various domains of employees' lives (Duerden et al., 2018; Guest, 2017). For example, Abdel Hadi et al. (2021) and McDonald and Hite (2018) described digital workplaces that allow for engagement at any time and location, placing strain on work and non-work boundaries. A result of this overlapping is the need to better resource employees to manage the competing demands of various life domains.

Employees recognise that work is an integrated part of life; however, with more time spent working from home, both work and nonwork aspects interact more intensively than before. If this is not managed effectively, the individual's well-being is

compromised through a more strained or depleted resource pool (Hobfoll et al., 1989, 2018; Wood et al., 2020). Consequently, employees are more cognisant of their well-being and consider it a more salient element of their lives, especially after COVID-19 blurred work and non-work boundaries (Long & Cooke, 2022).

In line with higher salience of well-being, the employee-employer relationship is shifting from predominantly economic in the exchange to one in which social benefits are valued. Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) argued that from a social exchange perspective, employees perceive greater value from non-financial benefits. Such benefits may include formal and informal support to engage in leisure or recreational activity. Specifically, work support systems that emphasise care and demonstrate an intimate understanding of the employees' needs are most impactful (Saks, 2022; Wood et al., 2020). Furthermore, Kurtessis et al. (2017) noted that such a relationship is characterised by trust and is, therefore, longer lasting.

Despite the need for well-being-oriented support from organisations, organisational support has been skewed to the employer's benefit. Support and benefit systems are argued to be based on motivational elements that treat the primary outcome as organisational performance. This is evident in the JD-R model, which uses well-being as an intermediate outcome before driving organisational performance. Additionally, reward-based systems that require specific performance outcomes can be counterproductive or exclusionary (Agkunduz et al., 2019). However, for employees to perform, they need to have a positive physical, psychological and social state of well-being. Regardless, well-being is treated as a by-product rather than a primary outcome compared to organisational performance.

A critical reflection on organisational support literature and the JD-R theory is the emphasis on only work demands and work resources. It fails to recognise that work is an integrated part of employees' lives, which results in support systems that are ineffectively or inadequately utilised. Taking a COR perspective on organisational support must recognise that employees have a total resource pool which they use to cope with demands across various aspects of their lives (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

2.4.2 The need for organisational support among younger generations

Organisational support is relevant to the entire workforce; however, young employees have demonstrated a significant need for such support. Cheng et al. (2020), Duerden et al. (2018), and Tsaur and Yen (2018) argued that younger generations place a high value on work-life balance and consequently well-being, with it becoming an expectation rather than a differentiating benefit. Furthermore, Schroth (2019) noted that Gen Z employees struggle more with mental health issues and workplace integration, highlighting the need to resource these employees through well-being-oriented support.

From an organisational point of view, age is positively associated with job satisfaction (Dobrow et al., 2018) and life satisfaction (Lee et al., 2021). Higher satisfaction among older generations is explained by them having more autonomy, control and mastery relating to their environment through knowledge and experience (Fisher et al., 2017). For example, older generations have more sophisticated jobs, higher pay, and a stronger grasp of their role expectations. Therefore, since younger employees are likely to have lower satisfaction and consequently strained well-being, they should be adequately resourced to enhance their well-being.

Furthermore, Wood et al. (2020) and Zacher and Froidevaux (2021) emphasised that younger generations need well-being-oriented support as they have fewer resources to cope with the various demands in their life. More specifically, older generations have been shown to practice a variety of coping strategies (recreation, mindfulness, self-care, and relational) despite higher life demands (e.g., work, household, and parenting demands). Therefore, while older generations have been shown to experience well-being issues relating to personal growth, purpose, and physical health issues (Lee et al., 2021), they are generally better resourced to cope with them than younger generations. Thus, there is a need to explore organisational support as a resource among young employees.

There is significant value in resourcing young employees. Young employees have been shown to struggle with workplace integration (Schroth, 2019) and change jobs more frequently because of compromised well-being (Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021), resulting in increased recruitment costs. Additionally, Tordera et al. (2020) indicated that young employee behaviours are more responsive to HR strategies than older

employees. Taking this further, Kurtessis et al. (2017) highlighted that younger generations have a greater propensity to practice reciprocal commitment behaviour as a response to perceived support. Therefore, organisations are likely to generate greater organisational outcomes by focusing on well-being-oriented resources for younger generations compared to older generations.

From a leisure perspective, Kuykendall et al. (2017) and Duerden et al. (2018) discussed the importance of leisure pursuits (at work and outside work) for young employees. Therefore, leisure-related support targeted at younger employees is an important area to explore in HRM. Therefore, this research focuses on younger employees, specifically ruling out generations older than 45 years.

2.4.3 Using organisational support to drive well-being as an outcome

According to the JD-R model, organisational support can be used as a resource in HRM to drive positive organisational outcomes; however, this has not been the case. Depending on the mix of support provided, a variety of outcomes (positive and negative) may result from different pathways. It is argued that traditional HRM practices (e.g., HPWS, HIWS and HCWS) emphasise organisational outcomes while well-being is neglected or treated as a by-product of such systems (Akgunduz, 2019; Guest, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). More bluntly, Long and Cooke discussed traditional HRM as a tool to drive performance for shareholder returns.

Evidence suggests that HRM practices have not yielded favourable outcomes for employee well-being. Richmond et al. (2017) found that after the utilisation of employee assistance programs, employees experienced no reduction in stress, and Caillier (2017) noted increased turnover intentions after some types of assistance programs. Furthermore, Saks (2022) reported that performance-oriented systems increase emotional exhaustion while negatively impacting employee engagement. Finally, Han et al. (2020) suggested that HPWS was positively associated with higher demands while negatively impacting employee well-being.

Organisational support designed for performance outcomes is flawed as they do not consistently deliver favourable outcomes for the employee. This aligns with the critique that the JD-R model is too narrow in its focus on work resources to manage work demands for the sake of organisational outcomes (Strassburger et al., 2022). The exchange relationship strongly emphasises outcomes for the organisation first.

For example, reward and incentive-based benefits require an employee to first meet performance standards before receiving benefits; however, this approach does not consider that the employee may require essential support to perform optimally (Cheng et al., 2020). In such cases, since subjective well-being is not meaningfully impacted, the reciprocal behaviour expected from employees does not always occur.

Some progress has been made in well-being-oriented HRM literature. In their meta-analysis of organisational support literature, Kurtessis et al. (2017) outlined organisational support as the provision of resources and rewards by organisations to create an environment where employees can and choose to make a positive contribution. Furthermore, Long and Cooke (2022) suggested that organisations must play a more active role in supporting employees through comprehensive well-being programs encompassing mental health, physical health and wealth across home, work, and social settings of an employee's life. Saks (2022) further highlighted the importance of organisations employing caring HRM practices to provide adequate resources for employees to cope across all their life demands.

While some studies have specifically unpacked the roles of managerial support and employee assistance programs on well-being (Hsu et al., 2020; Rivera et al., 2018), there are significant gaps that need to be closed. One such gap is exploring leisure-oriented support to drive well-being outcomes. Qualitative research has been conducted by Strassburger et al. (2022) and Cheng et al. (2020) on organisational leisure support; however, the construct remains insufficiently explored. Therefore, HRM literature regarding organisational leisure support focused on well-being requires more focus.

From a SET perspective, leisure-related support becomes critical as a driver of subjective well-being. The theory suggests that for employees to reciprocate, they need to utilise and feel the support authentically. However, Duerden et al. (2018) highlighted that employees perceive existing leisure support as a ploy to drive longer working hours and prevent employees from seeking out other career pursuits. Therefore, in such cases, the support is not received as authentic and consequently, employees do not reciprocate favourably.

Thus, the concept of perceived organisational support (POS) becomes important. The construct captures how employees interpret organisations' acknowledgement of

their contributions and interest in their well-being (Cheng et al., 2020; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Saks, 2022). The authors identified various themes that positively impact POS, including leadership style, supervisor support, working conditions and procedural justice. These themes are, however, focused mainly on providing work resources to manage work demands. Thus, a broader view of resources in an organisational context is required.

This calls for organisations to reassess their responsibility to employees in alignment with SET and for perspectives on job resources to be broadened. The reasons underpinning this include the failure of traditional HRM practices to create consistently positive outcomes for employees, the ethical responsibility to create value for employees and the rising threat to employee well-being in the evolving working context (Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). Bringing a SET perspective into the JD-R model will help expand existing knowledge on leisure-related support as resources needed to drive subjective well-being and, ultimately, organisational performance.

2.4.4   The benefits of well-being-oriented organisational support

Failure to support employees holistically results in adverse organisational outcomes. For example, Tessema et al. (2022) found that there has been a re-emergence of the great resignation due to a fundamental shift in the way employees view their relationship with work. This is due to the pandemic resulting in the various domains of employees' lives being overlapped and employees elevating the importance of work-life balance to protect their well-being. Moreover, employees are becoming more perceptive of employer versus employee-focused value propositions. Thus, they are less likely to reciprocate when organisational support is skewed towards organisational benefit without a meaningful impact on their subjective well-being (Guest, 2017; Saks, 2022; Strassburger et al., 2022). Kwon and Kim (2020) also indicated that employees are more engaged when they have sufficient resources to cope with demands and, consequently, a better state of subjective well-being.

Providing the right mix and level of employee support results in positive organisational outcomes; however, organisational outcomes must not be treated as the primary or only objective. The interest in and care of the employee's well-being results in greater commitment to the organisation, increased motivation and a more confident and engaged workforce. Employers, therefore, need to take a global view

on organisational support to authentically drive improved employee subjective well-being.

2.4.5 Utilisation of Support

The academic debate on HRM practices has explored the resources required to support employees and the enablers to ensure that employees utilise the support provided. This is critical since the proliferation of support practices has been met with utilisation challenges (Wood et al., 2020). Furthermore, Long and Cooke (2022) shared a critical perspective on broad brushed support systems not being utilised by employees.

While some evidence supports the existence of utilisation factors, literature regarding the utilisation of leisure-specific support requires advancement. The utilisation construct is covered as barriers to usage and engagement with workplace programs. Identified factors include leadership and management support (Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021; Strassburger et al., 2022), communication (Long & Cooke, 2022; Strassburger et al., 2022), fit between benefits and needs (Kurtessis et al., 2017), support that is distinct (Tessema et al., 2022) and the mandatory nature of the support (De Bloom et al., 2018; Duerden et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020). Despite existing work, more depth is required to understand leisure support utilisation barriers.

Therefore, the determinants of leisure support utilisation are a gap in academic debate and must be considered while simultaneously understanding the constituents of leisure-related support resources. Consequently, if employees perceive the availability of authentic organisational support with the right enablers, they are more likely to utilise them and respond with favourable behaviours at work.

2.5 Organisational Leisure Support

A comprehensive case has been made to explore organisational leisure support as a resource to facilitate employee subjective well-being. It has been shown that academic debate regarding job resources in HRM literature has taken a skewed focus on organisational outcomes, resulting in the field of leisure support being scant. Therefore, broader perspectives are required on well-being-oriented support, with leisure support being a key gap. The intention is not to motivate abandoning research on traditional HRM practices but instead complement and balance it with practices that prioritise care for employee subjective well-being. As rightfully mentioned by Long and Cooke (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021), the success of HRM does not require new practices to replace old ones. Instead, a bundle of new and tried and tested organisational practices are required to work in a mutually reinforcing way.

Moreover, the organisational leisure support construct has only recently been explored through qualitative studies (Cheng et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022) that have been limited by geography and industry. While Strassburger et al. (2022) explored the role of organisational leisure support in creating work-life balance, Cheng et al. (2020) provided the main constituents of the construct. While this gives initial momentum to academics and practitioners on well-being-oriented organisational support, much remains to be explored in varied contexts to deepen understanding of the construct. Due to the limited generalisability of the studies relating to geography and industry, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted with other geographic and industry samples.

Two gaps emerge out of the current state of leisure and HRM literature:

1. There is a need to explore the constituents of organisational leisure support as a resource to expand the view of well-being-oriented resources in the JD-R model.
2. There is a need to explore the determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation by employees. This ensures that the provision of resources translates into improved subjective well-being.

2.6 Context – South African Financial Services Industry

As positioned in the problem statement, the South African context is identified to be relevant and value-adding to the current academic debate due to the need for greater depth from a geographic standpoint. Recent literature in HRM and leisure studies have overwhelmingly focused on developed markets, skewing towards the United States of America (Caillier, 2017; Fisher et al., 2017; Lien & Cheng, 2022; Richmond et al., 2017; Tessema et al., 2020) and European countries (Abdel Hadi et al., 2021; De Bloom et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022; Tordera et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2020). While there have been some studies at the intersection of leisure and HRM in Asia (Cheng et al., 2020; Lien & Cheng, 2022), barring Egypt (Elbaz et al., 2020), the debate on progressive employee support in Africa has remained relatively mute.

South Africa is relevant due to relatively high working hours (Statistics on working time, 2023) compared to some developed markets in which other studies were conducted. Additionally, poor education systems and a skills migration to developed countries have resulted in a shortage of skilled employees in South Africa (Ferreira & Carbonatto, 2020; Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020). Developing organisational support literature relevant to this context will help create globally competitive and locally relevant employee value propositions that help retain highly skilled workers.

From an industry perspective, leisure research has placed significant focus on the hospitality industry (Akgunduz et al., 2019; Elbaz et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022); however, the financial services industry remains underexplored. This is important in South Africa as Van der Merwe et al. (2020) found that employees in the financial services sector have high turnover intentions linked to well-being challenges. Moreover, the financial services industry is the largest contributor to GDP (Statistics South Africa, 2023a) and the third largest employer (Statistics South Africa, 2023b) in South Africa.

Skilled labour is critical to the future success of the financial services sector. Despite this, South Africa's brain drain is placing pressure on the highly skilled financial services workforce with scarce skills in technology, data analytics and risk management (Coetzee, 2018). Hence, there is a need to understand interventions that could be employed to address the negative impact of high job demands on

employee well-being in the financial services sector.

This study will contribute to the literature by exploring organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being among young, skilled employees in the South African financial services industry.

2.7 Conclusion

Employee subjective well-being is important because it is a perception of an individual's quality of life and, ultimately, impacts work behaviours and outcomes. Leisure is identified as a life domain that can positively impact employee subjective well-being. Leisure-related support, therefore, has the potential to be an impactful organisational resource to drive improved subjective well-being.

Unfortunately, the narrow focus taken by the JD-R model has resulted in a siloed view on job resources. This is evidenced by performance-based support and benefit systems dominating the organisational resource debate in HRM literature. The skewed focus on performance-oriented practices has consequently cast a shadow on well-being-oriented organisational support. Performance-oriented systems treat employee well-being as a secondary or intermediate outcome, resulting in some practices negatively impacting employee well-being.

Organisational leisure support is highlighted as a key resource and, therefore, a construct that requires further exploration concerning improving subjective well-being. Two gaps are identified: (1) determining the constituents of organisational leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource to advance the JD-R model and (2) exploring the determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation by employees to ensure leisure support resources translate to improved subjective well-being.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the gap in the literature and the contextual importance of the South African financial services industry, the following research questions are proposed:

Research question: What are the experiences of young employees in the South African financial sector regarding organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being?

Given the rising well-being concerns and relative importance among younger generations (Schroth, 2019; Wood et al., 2020; Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021), research on well-being-oriented employee support systems is warranted. It is especially important in the leisure domain, which has been underrepresented as a resource in HRM literature (Duerden et al., 2018; Kuykendall et al., 2017). The deficiency in leisure-based HRM literature has resulted in academic debate not keeping up with the proliferation of employee support and benefit programs in practice.

Sub-question 1: What are the constituents of organisational leisure support resources required to improve employee subjective well-being?

Organisational leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource is understudied in literature. Guest (2017), Salas-Vallina et al. (2021), and Tessema et al. (2020) highlighted the need to advance literature in support of developing the right mix of HRM practices. Furthermore, research on well-being-oriented employee resources as part of the JD-R model is scant (Long & Cooke, 2022; Saks, 2022), especially from a leisure perspective (Cheng et al., 2020; Duerden et al., 2018; Strassburger et al., 2022). Therefore, specificity regarding the design of leisure support and benefits systems is still required (Akgunduz et al., 2019; Duerden et al., 2018).

Sub-question 2: What are the determinants of utilisation of organisational leisure support by employees?

The implementation of employee support and benefit systems does not guarantee its usage. Additionally, employees must perceive the value and availability of support for them to use it (Kuykendall et al., 2017; Saks, 2022; Wood et al., 2020). Long and Cooke (2022) and Wood et al. (2020) suggest further exploring the barriers to utilising

employee support systems. Existing debate around the usage of employee support systems indicated that drivers of utilisation exist and include whether it is mandatory or not (De Bloom et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020), its fit to individual needs (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Strassburger et al., 2022; Tessema et al., 2020), leadership and management support (Salas-Vallina et al., 2021) and lack of communication and knowledge of the support (Long and Cooke, 2022). Despite usage drivers being discussed in HRM literature, further research is required on utilising organisational leisure support in particular.

4 CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 Choice of Methodology

Given the nature of the research questions and the lack of maturity of research on organisational leisure support, an exploratory research design was employed. According to Saunders and Lewis (2018), exploratory research is well suited to research in which new information is still being developed. This aligns with the problem, purpose, and research question, which seeks to add depth to the organisational leisure support construct in relation to subjective well-being. The following description of the methodology will unpack the choices made across all layers of the research onion, as outlined by Saunders and Lewis. See **Figure 1** below, mapping out the entire approach.

Figure 1

Research onion outlining overall approach
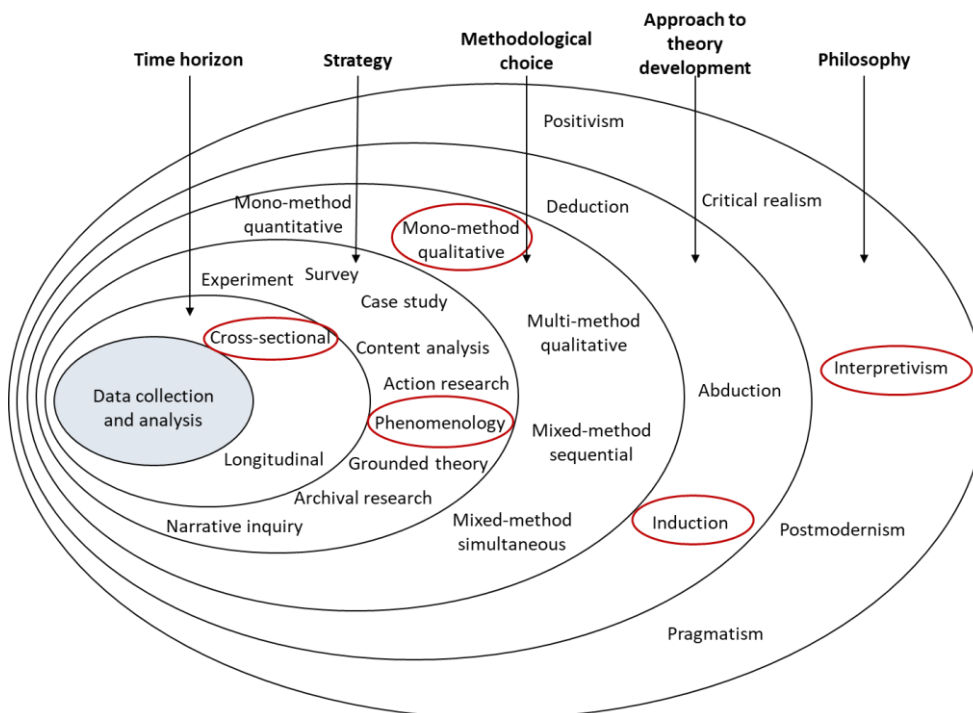
Note. Adapted from Saunders and Lewis (2018).

4.1.1 Research Philosophy

The researcher chose to adopt an interpretivist paradigm. An interpretivist recognises that a single reality does not exist since humans socially construct knowledge based on experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, the researcher was required to interpret the full context to derive meaningful findings. An interpretivist paradigm fits well with the research objectives as the study seeks to understand employees' subjective experiences of organisational leisure support related to their well-being.

Saunders and Lewis (2018) also indicated that interpretivism is highly relevant in research on organisational behaviour and human resources and was, therefore, well suited to the research problem and field in which the study is situated. Additionally, since this study is based on individual experiences of a phenomenon (organisational leisure support), a deep exploration of context and situational factors was required.

4.1.2 Approach to theory development

In inductive research, the researcher builds up to a theory by interpreting data to ultimately formulate a proposition or hypothesis (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Corley et al. (2021) also stated that inductive research allows for emergent findings about context-based phenomena. Therefore, an inductive process was followed based on the study's purpose, philosophy and strategy. This approach allowed the researcher to take a fresh perspective on organisational leisure support as a phenomenon experienced by employees in terms of their subjective well-being.

4.1.3 Methodological choice

The research will be conducted using a qualitative, mono method. This choice is supported by the recent literature that uses qualitative approaches to understand organisational leisure support (Cheng et al., 2021; Strassburger et al., 2022). Given the nascency of research on organisational leisure support in the qualitative realm, this research will follow a qualitative approach to add depth to the existing scholarly conversation.

A qualitative approach was further justified by the contexts of employees' lives vastly changing since the COVID-19 pandemic. Pre-established assumptions regarding employee life contexts may have changed, thus warranting a qualitative inquiry into

lived experiences related to leisure support and subjective well-being. For example, ways of working have largely shifted to digital domains, resulting in new interactions between work and employee's leisure practices (Duerden et al., 2018; Long & Cooke, 2022; McDonald & Hite, 2018).

Furthermore, given that research on this topic has not been sufficiently studied in varied contexts, there is a need for more qualitative research to explore nuances and allow for emergent findings that build depth. Specifically, within the South African financial services context, organisational leisure support as a well-being-oriented resource is still an emergent field in HRM.

Therefore, while qualitative studies are criticised for their small sample sizes and researcher bias introduced through data collection, interpretation and analysis, Giorgi (2017) highlighted that criticisms stem from empirical criteria. Qualitative research focuses on developing a deep understanding of experiences and phenomena that do not depend on the number of participants (Giorgi, 2020; Hammarberg et al., 2016).

4.1.4 Research strategy

Since the research problem and purpose are based on employees' experience of organisational leisure support as a phenomenon, a phenomenological study was conducted. This strategy was deemed ideal for answering the research questions since an interpretation of the participants' lived experiences of a single phenomenon was required (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Given that employees are experiencing declining wellness outcomes (Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021) despite the proliferation of HRM practices, a deep reflection on employees' experience of organisational support was warranted. A phenomenological approach, therefore, allows for the perspective of employees to be emphasised and explored without making any assumptions. Vagle (2018, p. 64) emphasises that "phenomenologists love to study the things we tend to assume we know …". Thus, the phenomenon is explored through employees' subjective point of view based on how it presents itself.

Descriptive phenomenology, as outlined by Giorgi (2012), Leigh-Osroosh (2021), and Vagle (2018) will be followed for this research. The descriptive phenomenological approach ensures exploration of what was experienced and how it was experienced to distil the phenomenon's essence through the lens of the

research questions. From a philosophical standpoint, Leigh-Osroosh (2021) discussed that the approach seeks to explain how the subject (employees) exists in relation to others (the organisation), with organisational leisure support being the core phenomenon being experienced and subjective well-being as the outcome.

Leigh-Osroosh (2021) and Vagle (2018) highlighted the importance of the researcher bracketing out his own assumptions and biases from the research to ensure trustworthiness. Since this research was focused on the participant's experience of the phenomenon, the researcher was cognisant not to let his own experience of the organisational leisure support influence the findings. This approach in descriptive phenomenology is referred to as epoché or bracketing, which is discussed in more detail in later methodology sections.

4.1.5 Time horizon

A cross-sectional study was deemed acceptable to answer the research questions. Therefore, the researcher explored employees' experience of organisational leisure support at a single time. Despite the research being conducted at a single point in time, data collection relied, to some extent, on participants' recollections of past experiences relating to the constituents of leisure support provided and its usage barriers. While Prati and Senik (2022) highlight recollection bias as a challenge, the phenomenological approach ensures that interviews are conducted such that participants do not rely on recollections of pre-assigned meanings but rather reconstruct their experiences descriptively (Broomé, 2022; Giorgi, 2020; Leigh-Osroosh, 2021; Roulston & Choi, 2018; Vagle, 2018).

4.2 Proposed Design

4.2.1 Population

The target population was skilled (tertiary educated) and young (25 to 45 year old) employees working in the South African financial services sector. It was found that young employees are not sufficiently resourced to cope with their demands (Wood et al., 2020; Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021), and existing organisational support has not been meeting the expectations of young employees (Tessema et al., 2022). Additionally, younger generations have more working years ahead of them, so it makes sense to invest in creating a conducive environment for them. In this research,

young employees were defined to be between 25 and 45 years old. While it is acknowledged that some skilled employees are under 25 years old, they have had limited exposure to organisational leisure support. Furthermore, a ceiling of 45 years was set to rule out baby boomers from the study.

The South African context was discussed to be relevant due to the country being underrepresented in well-being-focused HRM literature, the relatively long working hours (Statistics on working time, 2023) and the skills shortage challenge (Ferreira & Carbonatto, 2020; Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020). The study narrowed down on the financial services industry due to its significant contribution to employment and GDP in the country (Statistics South Africa, 2023a, 2023b) and high turnover intentions linked to poor well-being (Van der Merwe et al., 2020).

4.2.2 Unit of analysis and unit of observation

In qualitative research, the unit of analysis is the focal point of the research inquiry, which can be either a person or object, while a unit of observation is the source from which primary data are collected (Kumar, 2018). While Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that the unit of analysis in phenomenology is the individual, Vagle (2018, p. 79) was specific that the unit of analysis in descriptive phenomenology is the phenomenon being studied rather than the individual.

The focal point of the research questions was organisational leisure support as it relates to employee subjective well-being. Therefore, the unit of analysis will be organisational leisure support as experienced by the unit of observation – a skilled, young employee working for a financial services company in South Africa.

4.2.3 Sampling method

The researcher used non-probability, purposive sampling. Saunders and Lewis (2018) stated that purposive sampling is suitable when a sampling frame is unavailable. Since there was no sampling frame for the targeted population, purposive sampling was deemed acceptable. Furthermore, recent qualitative research (Cheng et al., 2020) on organisational leisure support also used purposive sampling. The researcher identified individuals who could provide rich insight to answer the research questions regarding the phenomenon. The sampling criteria ensured that the target population was purposefully selected – skilled employees in

South Africa between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five who worked at financial services organisations providing some form of leisure support.

The researcher selected participants to ensure maximum variation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This makes sense for a phenomenological approach, as diverse participants are required to explore the phenomenon from multiple perspectives. Individuals were recruited from the researcher's own network and referrals from participants based on the criteria.

4.2.4 Sample size

Saturation is a concept often used in research to determine the sample size required to ensure that research questions are adequately explored (Saunders et al., 2018). Hennink and Kaiser (2022) and Buckley (2022) also suggest determining sample sizes based on thematic saturation. Additionally, Hennink and Kaiser indicated a mean sample size of twelve to thirteen interviews in qualitative research; however, the authors recognised a lack of clarity in determining sample sizes. Moreover, saturation is argued not to be a relevant procedure to determine sample size in phenomenological research (Broomé, 2022). Phenomenologist Giorgi (2017, 2020) further claimed that applying positivist, empirical techniques (counting the number of new codes generated) goes against the inductive approach and philosophy of qualitative research. Since saturation depends on the researcher's rigour during the analysis, the value of saturation analysis is contested.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selection of twelve participants. At this point, no new or significant insights emerged from participants' discussions of their experiences of organisational leisure support. This gave the researcher confidence that the phenomenon was sufficiently explored. Despite saturation not being a promoted concept in descriptive phenomenology, the researcher conducted a saturation chart to satisfy the call for saturation checks by traditional qualitative approaches (Buckley, 2022; Hennik & Kaiser, 2022). **Figure 2** shows that 98 codes or units of meaning were generated during the analysis, with saturation attained after 12 interviews.

Figure 2

New codes generated per interview
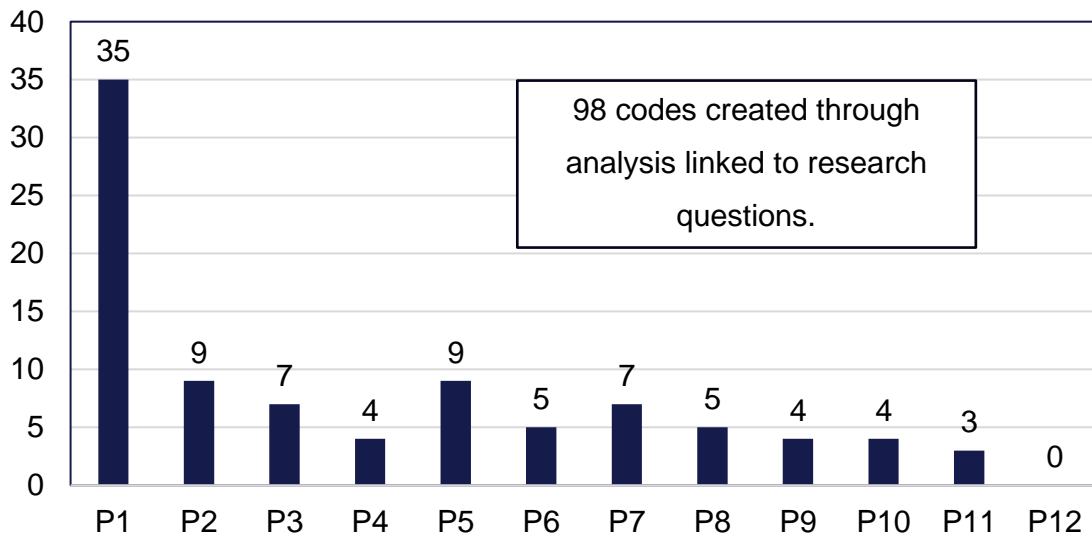
Note. Saturation analysis was limited to codes of meaning units strictly relating to the research questions. Other analyses conducted, not relating to the research questions, were not represented in the saturation analysis.

4.2.5 Measurement instrument

Phenomenological research relies on a deep description of the lived experience of individuals. To solicit such descriptive data, phenomenologists (Giorgi, 2012; Leigh-Osroosh, 2021; Vagle, 2018) recommend using unstructured interviews. However, it is also recognised that the researcher must deeply appreciate the context and be prepared with probes regarding the phenomenon. Therefore, to have the proper contextual questions and probes prepared, the researcher opted for semi-structured interviews as the means of data collection. Roulston and Choi (2018) supported semi-structured interviews, indicating that they provide a high-level questioning guideline; however, the sequencing and probes are based on the participants' direction.

Literature was used to identify areas of interest linked to the research questions while allowing for other open-ended and exploratory questions. A simple interview guide was used to ensure all research questions were explored (see Appendix 9.1). The researcher did not include closed or leading questions to avoid influencing participants' responses (Roulston & Choi, 2018; Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The

interview guide was reviewed with two peers to ensure a natural flow and a conversant approach to the interview. The interview guide review functioned as a pilot interview while allowing for a deep critique of the questions and responses elicited in line with a descriptive phenomenology approach.

While semi-structured interviews were used as the data collection instrument, in qualitative research, the researcher is considered the measurement instrument (McCracken, 1998), significantly impacting the credibility of the data collection process through their preparation and engagement with participants. Therefore, the researcher needed to take a phenomenological stance guided by open-mindedness, bracketing out his preconceptions and having empathetic curiosity in detailed descriptions.

4.2.6 Data gathering process

The researcher conducted primary data collection using semi-structured interviews. As part of the data collection process, it is essential to highlight the ethical considerations upfront. These include ensuring privacy and consent, concern for the participant's welfare, and equitable treatment (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Giorgi, 2020). The data collection process included pre-interview, during-interview, and post-interview phases, which will be discussed below.

The recruitment phase involved identifying and verifying participant fit to the research. For example, Roulston and Choi (2018) recommend learning about recruiting participants using emails, flyers and face-to-face interactions. The authors also mention learning about participants before the interview and verifying their fit. During this phase, the researcher created a list of potential participants that met the sampling criteria from the researcher's networks of networks. The researcher was cognisant of not defaulting to convenience sampling. Therefore, the researcher's network was used to access other networks from which suitable participants could be recruited. A mix of network sources was used, involving academic-based networks, work/professional-based networks and other personal relationships as access points to participants. The researcher then contacted the initial sample of participants via email or text message to confirm their fit based on the sampling criteria. Furthermore, participants were looked up on LinkedIn to verify their qualifications (skills) and employment industry.

Before the interview, the researcher sent participants informed consent letters (see Appendix 9.2) with the high-level context and rationale for the research along with further detail on the time commitment and format of the interview process (Roulston & Choi, 2018) - see Appendix 9.3 for an example of email communication with participants. The informed consent letters ensured the participant that responses would be anonymised and published without identifiers and that the participant may exit the process at any time. Additionally, the interviewer ensured that the required tools and enablers were in place and on hand to conduct a smooth interview. This included an interview guide, note-taking tools, a fully charged laptop and a stable internet connection. Interviews were planned to last one hour, conducted online, and recorded with or without cameras, depending on the participants' preference.

Interviews were conducted over eight weeks. The researcher scheduled online interviews based on the participant's availability with the aim of at least three interviews per week. This allowed sufficient time between interviews for the researcher to reflect on the conversations, conduct preliminary analysis and refine questions to ensure enough clarity for upcoming participants. The interviews lasted between 23 to 44 minutes, with an average duration of 38 minutes. In total, eight hours of interview data were collected.

During the interview, the interviewer introduced the topic, followed by basic contextual questions about the participant's job and type of organisation to make them comfortable and build rapport. The next part of the interview involved the interviewer asking open-ended questions based on the interview guide (Roulston & Choi, 2018). These questions were explored through the participant's experience of organisational leisure support (the phenomenon). The researcher probed further to unpack interesting perspectives and detailed descriptions linked to the research questions. The interviewer took high-level notes of the participant's responses as they described their experiences. Vagle (2018) does not recommend capturing extensive notes to ensure the interviewer can sufficiently connect with the participant to elicit deep, authentic responses. Finally, the interviewer closed by thanking the participant and requesting feedback on the approach that could be applied to the following interviews.

After the interview, all data collected, including recorded interviews, transcripts, and

interviewer notes, were anonymised, and stored (without identifiers) in a secure cloud drive to protect participants' data. Total anonymity was not offered to the participant as the interviewer knew who the participant was through the recruitment process, and the video recording had the participant's face in it. The following section will detail how the data collected was analysed.

4.2.7 Analysis approach

The analysis process included data preparation, perusal of responses, content analysis of responses and outlining findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher used software to speed up the process of preparing and analysing the data while maintaining the integrity of the analysis.

While the transcript function of Microsoft Teams was used to conduct live transcription, a professional transcription service provider was used to ensure the accuracy of the automated transcripts. The transcriptionist also ensured that data was anonymised by replacing participant and company names with identifiers. Transcripts were loaded on Atlas.ti, the researcher's preferred qualitative analysis software. Analysis was then conducted using the descriptive phenomenology approach (Broomé, 2022; Giorgi, 2012; Leigh-Osroosh, 2021; Moustakas, 1994; Sundler et al., 2019; Vagle, 2018).

The first step of this inductive approach was for the researcher to read through all responses. The researcher read transcripts with an open mind while bracketing out his preconceptions, as suggested by Sundler et al., 2019. While doing so, the researcher looked for meaningful sentences or paragraphs to which codes or descriptions could be attached, emphasising novel insights. During this process, the researcher ensured that he bracketed out his own experience to not look for what is already known or assumed based on the researcher's own experience. This is known as epoché in phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2018). It asks the researcher to focus on the participant rather than themselves and take a critical stance when analysing the data.

After reading, first-cycle and second-cycle coding was conducted, as Saldaña (2016, 2021) outlined. The first cycle approach was experimental, allowing the researcher to explore the technique that best answered the research questions. The researcher experimented with in vivo, descriptive, and emotional coding based on significant

meanings during this process. In vivo coding was found to be most beneficial and aligned with the recommendation of Leigh-Osroosh (2021) to stay as close as possible to the participants' descriptions. Saldaña (2016, 2021) described in vivo coding as using direct quotes from the participants that capture their accurate descriptions. The in vivo codes were then reviewed to remove redundant codes and merge similar codes to develop descriptive codes rooted in the in vivo codes.

A second coding cycle was then conducted to roll up the codes to a theme level based on patterns in the emergent codes. Although Vagle (2018) and Leigh-Osroosh (2021) do not recommend further interpretation of codes by theming, Sundler et al. (2019) suggested theming the codes based on emergent patterns. The themes then allow the researcher to describe the structural essence of the experience.

The coding process was iterative and involved the researcher moving between transcripts and between first and second-cycle codes and themes to ensure consistency. During this process, the researcher kept analytic memos and detailed code descriptions as recommended by Saldaña (2016, 2021). The memos helped the researcher keep track of his insights regarding the structure of the phenomenon as the analysis progressed and were later drawn into the results and discussion.

The themes were used to describe participants' experiences of the phenomenon (organisational leisure support) through structural descriptions (Broomé, 2022; Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2018). This covers how the participant experienced the phenomenon in relation to the research questions. The analysis and findings thus relied on direct quotes and rich descriptions. The participant's overall experience of organisational leisure support was then unpacked as it related to their subjective well-being. During the within-participant and between-participant analysis process, multiple theoretical lenses (as covered in the literature review) were used to interpret findings to ensure analytical rigour. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model was used as the core theoretical foundation, with elements of SET and COR theory incorporated to supplement the analysis. **Table 1** summarises the key steps involved in the analysis process.

Table 1

Description of key analysis steps

Analysis step	Description
Step 1: Digesting the transcripts	• Detailed read-through of transcripts with an open mind. • Bracketing of researcher's assumptions and biases.
Step 2: Coding units of meaning	• First cycle of coding using in vivo technique to capture accurate descriptions of meaning. • Clean up coded units by merging codes, removing redundant codes and transforming in vivo codes into descriptive codes.
Step 3: Looking for patterns to group into themes	• Look for patterns in the coded units of meaning and group them into themes that describe the structure of the experience through the lens of the research questions.
Step 4: Review themes	• Review themes and define them in detail.
Step 5: Describe the structure of the phenomenon	• Reflect on themes identified across the research questions and describe the experience of organisational leisure support in an overall structure. • The description starts with the context underpinning the phenomenon and then outlines the themes per research question. • Emphasis is placed on understanding the relationship of the themes making up the phenomenon.

4.2.8 Quality controls

Before conducting research, methodological coherence (Harley & Cornelissen, 2022), to ensure alignment between the research problem, purpose, philosophy and methodological strategy and choices, is vital (see Appendix 9.5 and 9.6 demonstrating coherence among the research objectives, research questions, interview questions and analysis). The researcher ensured scientific rigour throughout the research process to produce trustworthy findings. The researcher implemented checks and controls for validity, reliability, and bias risks (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During the research process, the researcher maintained trustworthiness by following the practical tactics outlined below.

The sampling criteria were critical to ensure validity. Criteria ensured that the

participants had experienced the phenomenon before and fell within the target sample being researched as positioned in the problem and purpose. Additionally, diversity among the target sample helped ensure that multiple perspectives were explored to provide rich content. Sampling criteria were also assessed by screening participants over LinkedIn and pre-communications over email and text to affirm their fit.

As the measurement instrument, the researcher plays a crucial role in the data collection. Therefore, conducting the interview guide peer review and mini pilot was essential, so the researcher was aware of instances that may influence the participant's response. The researcher used the review sessions to sharpen their interviewing skills to ensure that participants were comfortable and open to sharing and exploring their experiences thoroughly. The review of the interview guide was conducted with two peers and involved going through the questions and potential responses that participants would provide to refine the questions and possible probes. During the interviews, the researcher used the refined interview guide to ensure that all research questions and areas of interest were fully explored and probed to produce detailed descriptions.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher established a common understanding of the research context and key terms to be used during the interview process to avoid any misunderstanding (Roulston & Choi, 2018). The terms deemed critical included leisure and organisational leisure support. See below an excerpt from an interview transcript.

> When I use the term organisational leisure support, this is typically any form of leisure-related support or benefits, be it formal HR policies or practices or anything more informally that is in place in the organisation… and really the type and structure of support provided by organisations still remains quite underexplored from employees' perspectives…. (Interviewer)

Additionally, probing techniques, as outlined by Bhattacherjee (2012) and Broomé (2022), were used to ensure that questions were thoroughly explored. Techniques employed included waiting until the participant fully answered the question and gently encouraging them to continue their train of thought. More actively, the researcher asked the participant to elaborate on specific points. The researcher also ensured

that the participants had sufficient opportunities to share their views and perspectives, which should be reflected in the interview questions (Roulston & Choi, 2018). Below is an example of how the researcher practically applied probing and reflection.

> I want to just unpack a little bit further if there are other sort of benefits or support either formally or informally from a leisure perspective. I know you mentioned a few things already around, you know, some of the events that happened at work, and you mentioned facilities at work like gym and so on. But is there anything else in that space? (Interviewer)

Additionally, the interviewer checked that the questions were interpreted correctly by the participant and that the researcher was interpreting the participant's response correctly. Tactics to manage this included pausing and checking for understanding and reflecting on the participants' responses.

> I just want to reflect again on what you mentioned earlier when we were talking about the type of activities your organisation would provide and how you would use some of those activities… is it maybe a little bit more difficult for you to utilise it, or do you prefer not to utilise it because you're not comfortable or you feel in some way it links back to the organisation? (Interviewer)

After the interview, the researcher also reached out to participants to clarify responses that were considered vague to ensure completeness and accuracy.

While conducting the analysis, the researcher checked the analysis approach with his supervisor to confirm that the coding techniques employed and meaning units identified were appropriately applied to the data. Sundler et al. (2019) highlighted that when conducting descriptive phenomenology, the researcher must be open-minded, question any pre-suppositions and critically reflect on the role of their own experience of the phenomenon in influencing the analysis. To address this risk, the researcher ensured that there was a clear linkage of emergent themes with the data and that the themes and meanings/codes were explained using theory as far as possible.

Additionally, the researcher reflected on his prior understanding of organisational

leisure support related to subjective well-being, not to introduce bias into the analysis. While Roulston and Choi (2018) indicated that the researcher should bracket out their own experiences by putting aside their assumptions about the phenomenon, Sundler et al. (2019) argued that it is impossible to do so thoroughly. Instead, it is recommended that the researcher reflect on their assumptions to be aware of instances in which their assumptions prevent them from being open-minded during the research process. Therefore, the researcher critically reflected on his assumptions about organisational leisure support and subjective well-being by capturing memos of his own understandings and experiences. By doing so, the researcher maintained a critical stance.

As part of the interpretation of the analysis, theoretical triangulation was employed using theories to explore the explanation of experiences. Such theories included JD-R theory, SET and COR theory, as outlined in the literature review. Additionally, Harley and Cornelissen (2022) indicated that it is important to consider competing explanations and contrasting reasoning for observations to ensure that conclusions are made on the foundations of rigour. At this stage, the researcher confirmed interpretations with his supervisor and participants where needed.

4.2.9 Limitations

In qualitative research, findings are not generalisable; thus, findings or propositions must be further empirically tested in a separate study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, qualitative research is limited to smaller sample sizes and focuses on deep, rich participant perspectives. Specifically for descriptive phenomenology, generalisability regarding the experience of the phenomenon is a challenge. There is a risk that this study's findings may have related only to a particular sub-group, especially if the selected participants were not diverse enough. For example, all individuals interviewed had no physical impairments; therefore, such a perspective was not represented in this research. The leisure activities and consequent support for abled versus disabled persons may look quite different but are not captured in this study.

As highlighted in the quality controls, the risk of researcher bias was a limitation of this research since findings depended on the researcher's conduct during the interview and his subjective interpretation of the meaning behind responses (Bansal

et al., 2018). The researcher also had personal experience of organisational leisure support and, therefore, was required to bracket out his assumptions throughout the process. Sundler et al. (2019) and Leigh-Osroosh (2021) emphasised the importance of the researcher bracketing out their own experience. However, this was difficult to do since the researcher himself was required to interpret the meaning behind participant statements.

From a validity point of view, this study focused solely on the employee's perspective and lacked triangulation from the perspective of HR managers and business leaders. This was expected as the methodology was exclusively focused on the employee's experience (the employee being the unit of observation). Theoretical triangulation was used as an alternative to ensure that the emergent meanings and themes were sufficiently explained using theoretical lenses.

Since the research was cross-sectional, it relied on employees' perceptions at a single point in time. This presented a limitation for two reasons. Firstly, employee perceptions of organisational leisure support could change over time based on context, and secondly, the quality of responses depended on the respondent's recollection of the phenomenon. Furthermore, Prati and Senik's (2022) study on individuals' recollections of past well-being experiences indicated that, on average, those who are currently happy perceive their past experiences as worse, and those who are unhappy tend to overstate the extent of their well-being having deteriorated. This alludes to the recollection bias of participants, to which the researcher was attentive during the interview process. It is emphasised that in descriptive phenomenology, the researcher is meant to help the interviewee reconstruct their experience rather than depending on their memory of pre-determined meanings of the experience (Broomé, 2022; Leigh-Osroosh, 2021).

4.3 Ethical Considerations

Adherence to strict ethical procedures was critical for this study. Roulston and Choi (2018) highlighted that ethical considerations are pertinent for qualitative research, especially phenomenology (Giorgi, 2020), due to its deep and prolonged interaction with participants. Additionally, this research handled large volumes of individual data through transcripts and videos. Furthermore, the engagement with the participant needed to be carefully considered to ensure that the researcher was not extractive

or exploitative throughout the process.

The researcher followed the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) ethical clearance process to ensure that appropriate ethical considerations were integrated into the research. This process ensured that the research process was free of ethical infringements.

4.3.1 Data collection

The researcher ensured that the data collection process was ethically sound by providing participants with an informed consent letter, which they signed (see Appendix 9.2). The informed consent letter covered the voluntary nature of their participation, interview requirements and personal data treatment to ensure anonymity. Furthermore, the researcher did not employ exploitative techniques during the interview by giving the participant complete control over what to share.

4.3.2 Analysis and reporting

The initial stages of analysis required detailed transcriptions to be quality-checked. This involved the use of a third-party transcription service. During the onboarding process, the transcriptionist was required to sign a non-disclosure agreement found in Appendix 9.4. During the analysis process, the researcher was careful not to misrepresent participants' perspectives of their experiences. As part of the descriptive phenomenology approach, analysis aimed to stay true to original representations and descriptions made by the participant (e.g., in vivo coding in the first cycle of analysis). Finally, the research report did not include identifiers linked to individuals or their organisations.

4.4 Conclusion

To conclude, this qualitative research employed an interpretivist, inductive approach, using a phenomenological strategy to answer the research questions. Organisational leisure support as it relates to employee subjective well-being was the phenomenological focal point and unit of analysis for the study. The unit of observation was skilled employees aged between 25 and 45 years working at organisations in the South African financial services sector.

The design utilised purposive sampling to recruit twelve participants, with whom

semi-structured interviews were conducted over eight weeks. The interview process employed phenomenological best practices as outlined by prominent phenomenologists (Giorgi, 2012; Vagle, 2018).

The analysis involved thorough read-throughs of transcripts and an iterative two-cycle analysis process to produce themes that described the structure of the participants' experiences relating to the research questions. Throughout the process, the researcher ensured that quality was maintained by putting quality controls such as bracketing, probing techniques, piloting, and theoretical triangulation in place. Despite quality controls, this research was not without limitations. Such limitations included limited generalisability, small sample size, researcher bias, reliance on participant recollections of experiences and data source triangulation.

5   CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS/RESULTS

5.1   Introduction

This section focuses on the presentation of results found based on the methodological approach in Chapter 4 to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 3. This section is comprised of four parts. The sample will first be described, followed by a deep dive into the key findings for each sub-research question and, finally, a summation of the structure of the overall phenomenon will be outlined.

5.2   Sample Description

A total of 12 participants were interviewed, summarised in **Table 2**. The sample was selected based on the following criteria: young employees between the ages of 25 and 45 years, part of the skilled workforce defined as having a tertiary qualification, working in the financial services sector in South Africa and having experienced some form of leisure support from their organisations. The sample was selected to ensure diversity among the 25 to 45-year-old age criteria. Gender representation was also balanced. Additionally, participants were recruited from a diverse range of large banks and insurance companies, representing eight companies in the sample. Participants within large organisations were selected due to the organisations' more mature, comprehensive benefit systems.

Table 2

Summary of Participants Interviewed

ID	Age	Gender	Education level	Role	Industry of employment	Years employed
P1	32	Female	Masters	Executive Assistant	Large bank	3.8
P2	25	Female	Degree	Actuarial Analyst	Large insurer	1.8
P3	31	Female	Degree	Associate strategy manager	Large insurer	2.3
P4	42	Female	Diploma	Senior business intelligence analyst	Large bank	10.3

				Group head of integrated communications	Large bank	
P5	42	Male	Masters	Group head of integrated communications	Large bank	5.4
P6	39	Male	Masters	Finance solutions analyst	Large bank	6.2
P7	38	Male	Postgraduate Diploma	Sales development consultant	Large bank	1.2
P8	36	Male	Degree	Regional team lead - real estate finance	Large bank	1.7
P9	40	Male	Degree	Lead developer	Large insurer	4.5
P10	31	Female	Postgraduate Diploma - Business	Customer value management expert	Large bank	8.6
P11	29	Female	Degree	Senior data scientist	Large bank	4.7
P12	26	Female	Degree	Actuarial analyst	Large bank	4.7

5.3   Participant Context

Understanding participant context was essential to this study as context gives rise to the phenomenon. The participants interviewed were asked about their use of leisure time and their work context. The paragraphs below describe the context among the participants interviewed that gives rise to organisational leisure support as a resource to improve their subjective well-being.

5.3.1   Context - Leisure activity profiles

Five types of leisure activity themes defined the leisure context for the participants. A combination of various activity types created unique activity profiles for each participant. Thematically, the activities were characterised as (1) social enrichment, (2) mental enrichment, (3) physical fitness, (4) entertainment, (5) creative pursuits, and (6) resting time. Notably, individuals engaged in a mix of leisurely activities and the leisure interests varied from one individual to another. Therefore, each participant had a unique blend of leisure activity profiles that complemented their life context.

5.3.1.1 Social enrichment

Social enrichment activities were the most prominent. Such activities were centred on participants wanting to "interact with people", and more specifically, participant 4 indicated that it was about "connecting with my family, connecting with my friends". Specific activities included going out for drinks and dinners or hosting gatherings at their homes. Additionally, team-based sports and gaming activities were seen as a way to break free from stressors by engaging with others. Participants 2 and 5 also noted social media time as a means of social enrichment.

Another interesting stakeholder group included under social was spending time with pets. Two participants noted that spending time with their pets was not seen as an obligation but as a leisurely activity. For example, participants 8 and 12 highlighted walking their dogs as leisure activities.

5.3.1.2 Mental enrichment

Mental enrichment activities were also prominent among participants. These activities were seen as a means of enjoyment or attaining a sense of purpose by accomplishing something or deriving meaning from the activity. Activities included reading, personal development (learning something new), meditating and interacting with the natural environment.

> … the completion of it gives you a sense that … you've actively learned something and to some extent mastered that concept … it's just about elevating yourself, elevating my skill set. (Participant 1)

Additionally, some participants found peace and disconnect from work through interactions with the natural environment. The natural environment included both animals and the landscape.

> On our campus, in Sandton … there is a family of ducks, a family of cats, and a family of some other lizards and people … can go and play with these things … during the course of the day. (Participant 1)

> … having the ability to walk my dog in the afternoon at 12:00 o'clock during lunchtime, sitting in the garden, and, you know, just catch my breath. (Participant 8)

5.3.1.3 Physical fitness

Physical fitness-related activities helped participants stay physically healthy while being able to destress. Depending on the nature of the activity, it can be time spent with oneself or others (team sports). Such activities included visiting the gym, walking, hiking, mountain biking and engaging in other sports (e.g., gymnastics, paddle, and cricket).

> So gym is something that's like really important to me. It's a way of kind of destressing, but also, again, getting time to myself. (Participant 1)

> … gymnastics or going for like a walk … that helps a lot to just destress, but more gymnastics, I think, more than anything because I'm just removed from home and I'm in a completely different environment. I get to interact with people and then once I come back, I do feel refreshed. (Participant 2)

5.3.1.4 Entertainment

Entertainment activities included watching television shows at home, consuming online media, or attending theatre productions to watch live performances. These activities serve as a means of disconnecting participants from the realities of their life demands and bringing momentary happiness. It is emphasised that immersing oneself in media consumption is not mentally taxing and allows participants to recover from mental strain.

> … watching different types of series or movies or catching up on things that I've missed out on. So, it's generally that sort of thing. It's really just vegetating a bit in front of the TV, where it just distracts me for a bit. (Participant 4)

> … it's kind of a guilty pleasure. It's to watch kind of mindless YouTube videos on TV where there's no thinking … but, for me, it's having that disconnect or or or complete downtime that is not associated with what I do. (Participant 5)

5.3.1.5 Creative pursuits

Many participants discussed creative hobbies that they were passionate about. Activities included interior design, baking, and playing music. These activities allowed participants to refine their creative talents and build a more holistic individual identity to bring them a sense of accomplishment and fulfilment. Most notably, when

participants immerse themselves in their creative pursuits, they find a great sense of disconnect from work and, therefore, experience recovery.

> … if you're playing a musical instrument, your mind doesn't go to work, like you are focused on that thing, and it gives you a proper break from like the problems or the challenges or whatever you're facing at work. (Participant 9)

> I also do like, you know kind of, dabbling in some interior design stuff, right, which I think I would consider quite niche … being in insurance, not a lot of people tap into their creative sides, right? I consider the creative side almost as a leisure type of activity that I like to do. (Participant 3)

5.3.1.6 Travel

Travel was also mentioned as a significant leisure activity. This included local travel to visit friends and family and international tourism that involved experiencing something new. Travel-related activity allowed participants to distance themselves from their work environments while engaging in enjoyable experiences. This activity has strong linkages to the social enrichment theme, as participants mention it in the context of learning about new people, places and cultures.

> So that can be challenging. But at the same time, I do enjoy it. I do enjoy the exposure, interacting with people from different cultures and seeing a lot more opportunities outside of just the country I live in. (Participant 6)

5.3.1.7 Resting time

Finally, participants mentioned the importance of actively resting by doing nothing. Participants noted that while this might not be an activity, they needed time to rest and recover. Participants referred to "doing absolutely nothing", having "alone time" and "sleeping in".

The following section unpacks the elements of work demands that create tension with participants' leisure lifestyles as part of their context.

5.3.2 Context - Work demands

Participants described several work-related demands. Such challenges were characterised in terms of "what work gets done", "when work gets done", and "where work gets done". These three themes contributed to (1) increased work demands that negatively impacted the participants' subjective well-being and (2) impeded the participant's ability to engage in leisure activity to mitigate the impact of higher work demands.

"When work gets done" was most prominent as a work demand. Lack of control over when work gets done was a significant challenge, as participants noted that they needed to be "on call" for executives. Other constituents of this theme included working abnormal hours, urgency, and seasonality of work (periods of high workload).

When describing "what work gets done", participants referenced high expectations from the organisation, ambiguity, complexity, skill level, and having to work with large volumes of data.

Lastly, participants described "where work gets done" as a theme contributing to work demands. Working from the office and working remotely were two key constituents of this theme. Participants noted how travelling to work offices consumes their time due to the need to dress up for work and travel in heavy traffic (amplified by non-functional traffic lights). Another participant also described working with a dispersed team across Africa, resulting in business travel that was both time-consuming and stressful.

Therefore, work demands negatively impacted participants' subjective well-being while at the same time reducing their capacity to engage in their leisure activities. The interaction between leisure and work domains gave rise to the phenomenon of organisational leisure support, which was required to create space for participants to participate in leisure activities by integrating work and leisure domains of life.

5.4 Results for Sub-research Question 1

Sub-question 1: What are the constituents of organisational leisure support resources required to facilitate employee subjective well-being?

Participants were asked to describe their past experiences of organisational leisure support and discuss the support they still desire from organisations. Five significant themes emerged which included (1) time-based support, (2) event-based support, (3) leisure facilities at work, (4) interest groups, and (5) work from anywhere. Three additional interesting elements were linked to financial support, training and development, and travel. The sections that follow will unpack the findings from each of these themes. **Table 3** summarises the themes and sub-elements as they were coded. Code frequencies are included in parentheses.

Table 3

Themes and coded elements for sub-research question 1

Theme	Codes
1. Time-based support (64)	Respecting work hours (23) Taking leave at leisure (23) Calendar management (5) Workweek management (3)
2. Event-based support (51)	Team events (26) Company events (15) Sponsored events (10)
3. Leisure facilities at work (35)	Physical activity facilities at work (12) Social spaces (8) Natural spaces (5) Pause areas (4) Quiet spaces (3) Childcare (2) Retail spaces (1)
4. Interest groups (37)	Physical activity (21) Non-physical activity (8) Communities with a cause (8)
5. Work from anywhere (27)	Working from home (21) Working from another country (6)
6. Other interesting elements (36)	Financial support (20) Training and development (8) Travel (8)

5.4.1 Time-based support

Time-based support was described as support that allows the participants to switch between work and non-work activities during the day and create more time for leisure activities. Coded elements under this theme related to respecting work hours, taking leave, calendar management and workweek management.

Respecting work hours

When describing support relating to working hours, participants preferred having flexible time to work in their leisure time between work. Additionally, flexible time allowed them to manage other non-work demands like grocery runs, home maintenance and personal care more efficiently to make room for leisure time after work without compromising work outcomes.

> … my manager says, hey, if you, you know, want to go to gym in the morning and you prefer to only have meetings after 8:30, they respect that, right? They also respect if there are times when I … need to go to a show and I need to leave early … I see the major benefit of of of really allowing me to plan leisure activities with work. (Participant 6)

> … we have core hours from 9 to 3 … if I can work in the evenings or whatever, like allow myself to do whatever I want in the mornings and still work my 8 hours … it at least gives me the morning to do whatever I want to and recharge myself. But now, because of that 9 to 3 thing, I'm kind of stuck in the middle of my day that I have to be in front of the computer. (Participant 12)

Additionally, participants want their off-work time to be respected. More specifically, they do not want their "off the clock" time to be taken up by work or to be disrupted by work-related communications.

> I think being in a team that respects highly time after work, so, for example, on a normal day, work ends at like five o'clock. You will never find anyone sending an email after that unless it's just that they wanted to FYI you. Very understanding to your time in the evenings … I think it's just the general respect around people's leisure time, but also just people's home time. (Participant 3)

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Taking leave at leisure

Leave provision was mentioned by almost all participants as a significant contributor to their engagement in leisurely activity. Participants favoured a leave structure that allowed for more time taken off and more flexibility. A critique of existing practice is that participants felt they had to save all their leave for the end of the year or were forced to take leave during a specific period, which prevented them from using it at their own leisure.

> … you almost bank all your leave for the end of the year. And so sometimes the ability to disengage from a work environment on a more frequent basis continuously throughout the year becomes important. But because you're worried about these leave days and amassing them, you almost, yeah, you you forget about your well-being, both physical and mental, in light of that. (Participant 1)

Participants also highlighted that more extended leave periods are required to disengage and recover from work strain fully. For example, participant 5 stated, "… you don't really disconnect from work unless you take two weeks, and I can tell you in the last two to three, maybe in four years, I haven't taken two weeks in a row."

Additionally, other forms of leave are described positively. These include special leave for charity work that allows the participant to contribute positively to society without using up their annual leave. Additionally, leave provisions for "mental days" or "pillow days" were also mentioned by participants.

Calendar management

Participants needed more support in terms of their day-to-day calendars. They felt that days filled with meetings, even cutting across lunch breaks, prevented them from engaging in more productive work or taking time to reset mentally. In this case, the manager's role was vital in orchestrating healthier and more productive workdays for the participants. Meeting free days were also described as an existing support measure, but this was hardly followed in practice due to business needs taking priority at the time.

It might be nice as well if they are able to take some of my stuff … You don't have to join every meeting … I think I'm freeing up more of their time than the other way around, and maybe that's the way it should be from a leader point of view. (Participant 5)

You want to have a set break in your day every day … we should not be spending all of this time in meetings because a lot of the time it's a wastage of of time and so how can we be more productive and how can we make our employees more productive and happy? Again, like they, they should just be these basic principles that we adhere to. (Participant 1)

Work week management

Participants referred to keeping their weekend time for their leisure activities. Specifically, they expressed not wanting to do any work over weekends. Furthermore, four-day working weeks were also mentioned as an opportunity for a competitive employee value proposition at a country level. For instance, participant 3 stated, "We hardly ever work weekends unless we have to. And it is often really like people deter that idea. In fact, they'd rather have you work in the evening than work a weekend."

5.4.2   Event-based support

There was a need for participants to have space created for events at an organisation or team level. These events serve as a means to temporarily disconnect from work and socialise in a non-work context. It also created a stronger sense of community among employees in the organisation. Through these interest groups, participants found that support was felt when training and other resources were made available.

Team events

Team-based events were most frequently mentioned and included team lunches, team building and other social events like team drinks, team sporting activities and cultural events. This allowed for teams to engage in leisurely activities with colleagues while strengthening team relationships. While some had described their positive experiences of team-based events, many had expressed a need for more team event support from organisations.

So we would, you know, go on lunches together or, yeah, or go for a drink or, you know, lately, we've been invited to a wedding of one of them or stuff like that. So it was nice to have a set group of people where we could have lunch together … it seems like there isn't budget for a team building. Now they're asking everyone 250 Rand to go for a team building, and you know, and that's really upsetting to quite a lot of employees (Participant 11)

Company events

At an organisational level, participants mentioned company year-end functions, company trips/getaways and celebrations of significant days. These larger-scale events allowed for networking across teams and departments; in some cases, participants could use these events to showcase talents they worked on during their leisure time.

> … we have the [Company 1] Conference and what this is is that everyone in the organisation from the tea Lady all the way to the CEO is invited … it's basically a big party, so it's a thank you for the year's performance … they use it as a platform to showcase the talent internally within the organisation. So all of the entertainment that you see on stage features only [Company 1] employees. (Participant 1)

Sponsored events

Sponsored events were also a means through which employees could be supported. Such events included festivals, expos or sporting events that participants were interested in. The support included getting first or free access to these events aligned with the participants' leisure interests. Such support allows participants to engage in leisurely activity and creates a stronger commitment between the employee and the organisation.

> … so we sponsor a lot of events, you know it's ladida events like the Polo or the Cape Wine Makers Guild, so people get to go to that. So we get to go to the [Company 5 event] as being part of this team. The golf. So I go and stay over at Sun City for a couple of days. (Participant 5)

> … the team that actually sponsors DSTV Delicious … in the last year's one,

we actually got VIP tickets to be in the marquee, which was really nice. So there was that added benefit to thank you so much for doing work with us … Design Joburg is in a month or two, and so I mean, I haven't received any tickets, but the fact that they are there for me is something that I would want to go and support just out of my own, you know, free will. (Participant 3)

5.4.3 Interest group support

Participants wanted a sense of belonging and a space to share common interests and talents with others. Eleven of the 12 participants interviewed described some form of interest group they either participated in or wanted to participate in. Interest group support involves creating space for people of common interest in physical activity, non-physical activity, and communities with a cause. Participants also noted that a supportive climate for such interest groups could be amplified through training, hosting events and the provision of resources. While some felt supported, others felt that more could be done to cater to broader, non-traditional interest groups.

Physical activity interest groups

Physical activity interest groups were most frequently described. Such activities included cricket, cycling, hiking, netball, running, soccer and paddle. Participants also expressed a need for sponsorship from their organisations linked to specific sports.

> I think more involvement from … corporates in, in the physical health of of their employees. I think it's it's too … detached, you know, like oh, if you come just, we might sponsor your team. You know, that sort of thing rather than, hey, we're really excited about this. Let's host a tournament for you. You know, internally, we've got this many teams; let's make it a big thing across the board. Let's do something. You know there's none of that. (Participant 4)

Non-physical activity interest groups

While physical activity groups were prominent, non-physical activity groups were also of interest among the participants. Such groups connect employees of similar interests that are not sporty in nature. Activities that form part of these interest groups are closely related to hobbies or creative talents that participants were interested in

pursuing. Such groups allow people with similar hobbies to connect. Examples of such activities include knitting, arts and culture (music and painting), board games and mindfulness activities (yoga and meditation). Organisational support in this area also extended beyond simply connecting interest groups to include training (e.g., music lessons) and resource provision (e.g., wool supplies for knitting).

> There is a knitting club. [Company 1] supplies wool; if you are interested in knitting, you join this group. They have monthly meetups in the canteen. You see them sitting there with yarn, and they're knitting away … it's a chance for them to socialise with different people in the bank, but they also trade ideas on patterns, techniques ... (Participant 1)

Communities with a cause

Interest groups described also included connecting people who care for the same cause. This was separated from physical and non-physical activity as it was specifically focused on bringing people together who care for the same cause rather than centring on a specific type of activity. Enabling employees to connect in this manner gave them a greater sense of fulfilment and purpose. Examples include the LGBTQ+ community, women empowerment, disabled persons and other social impact communities. These interest groups prefer to be given extensive support to run events and freedom to create awareness in the workplace.

> … people that are part of the LGBTQ community, people that are part of disabled communities, this is who they are. This is how they would spend their time outside of a work environment, and they are given full support to, you know, host their events in a workspace, rally support in a workspace. (Participant 1)

> I mean, we have this programme called united for impact where people are able to pack food and all of those things, that's voluntary. You can choose to sign up, or you can choose not to ... (Participant 3)

5.4.4 Leisure facilities at work

Participants expressed the need for leisure facilities that, to some extent, aligned with the interest groups described. The types of facilities included physical activity facilities, social spaces, natural spaces, pause areas and quiet spaces. Furthermore, childcare facilities and retail spaces were raised as support that helped manage other demands and facilitated leisure. For example, childcare facilities helped parents manage parenting demands but were also a form of leisure as they could spend time with their children during a break. The provision of these facilities helped participants better integrate their work and leisure domains rather than managing them in siloes.

Physical activity facilities

While not surprising, the need for physical activity spaces was prominent. Such spaces included a gym at work and sports fields. The provision of suitable physical activity spaces also complemented the interest groups within the organisation.

> …if there was a gym at work, honestly, that would be really nice. Like I think it will cut number one, I probably come to the office every day. Number 2 it would cut a lot of savings for me because it'll be part of my staff benefit, right? Which currently we don't have. (Participant 3)

Social spaces

The provision of social spaces at work allowed participants to switch between work engagement and disengagement to facilitate recovery throughout the day. It also allowed participants to interact with their co-workers in a non-work context and create informal relationships. Significant examples included lunch canteens, coffee shops, restaurants, and bars. As participants described, these facilities could also be used for social activity during non-work hours such as Friday afternoon drinks. Also noteworthy was that the organisation may not own some of these facilities but can be close to or within the same premises. Moreover, participants noted that support could be deepened by subsidising canteens and coffee shops and making healthy food available to complement those with active lifestyles.

… on Fridays, there's the open bar policy … from about three o'clock or so, we all just mellow out, and we go, and we just relax together. So, I don't drink, but it's a nice activity to be amongst people that have just, you know, winding down for the weekend and then once a month, the whole, the entire group of [Company 7], so it's about 5500 of us have one bar policy which is downstairs. (Participant 7)

… if they do subsidise the canteen, but if there was almost like a I don't know more of a benefit than eating at work. Right now, there isn't many healthy options. The options are very, they're not supporting, supportive of somebody who's trying to be healthy. (Participant 3)

Natural spaces

Interestingly, there was a significant need for natural spaces at work. Natural spaces include areas with natural landscapes (green spaces) and the opportunity to interact with animals. Such spaces also allowed participants to remove themselves from their desk spaces and move to an area that had a relaxing effect on them due to getting fresh air, exposure to the sun, enjoying a natural scenery or observing/interacting with wildlife. The facilities required included outdoor benches in green spaces where employees could work and on-site wildlife.

… on our campus … there is a family of ducks, a family of cats, and a family of some other lizards and people; because these things have now been domesticated because we actively feed and almost conserve them, people in the organisation can go and play with these things during the course of the day. (Participant 1)

There are benches across the business … There's open plan everywhere and you book where you where you would like to be. So it's not like you have to be around the same environment and the same people all the time and you can work inside the office or outside the office and have those different environments. (Participant 5)

Pause areas

Participants expressed the need for areas that allowed for a temporary pause from work. Gaming facilities at work, such as table tennis and pool tables, were described. Additionally, smoking areas were also mentioned. These areas complement social spaces but are covered separately as they are described as a means to take a break from work and destress. Interestingly, participants indicated that they sometimes hesitate to use such facilities to manage the perception of their productivity at work. This will be covered in more detail under sub-research question 2, which speaks to the utilisation of support.

> … in our pause area, as an example, we've got a table tennis, and then we've got a pool table. So if you just wanna for me, I don't smoke. I don't go outside to the balcony or the the deck and smoke, so I would rather just maybe have a game of pool maybe once or twice a day. (Participant 7)

Quiet spaces

Another form of taking a break from work included the utilisation of quiet spaces provided by organisations. In this instance, participants highlighted the importance of time with oneself, which they considered a form of leisure. Examples included sleeping bays and silent rooms. Such spaces help employees replenish their personal resources during the workday.

> There are boardrooms or rooms where you can go in like silent rooms for yourself, and there are boardrooms where you have teams who can. You can go in there so you can have your own moment. (Participant 5)

> … there's a what we call Sleeping Bay. So you know, during the day, if you're not feeling too well or if you just need to go lay down, there's no questions asked. You just go into the Wellness Centre, and you can rest. (Participant 7)

Other interesting leisure facility findings

Childcare facilities were highlighted as a form of support from a leisure perspective. In this case, participants indicated that constitutes leisure as parents can spend time with their children during break time. Interestingly, family time was considered a

prominent leisurely activity when describing participant context.

Additionally, retail spaces were also described as leisure facilities. For employees who enjoy shopping, retail stores located in the company building or within the vicinity allows employees to shop at leisure between work.

5.4.5 Work from anywhere

Flexibility in the working location complemented the need for flexible time. Participants described the need to work from anywhere based on their circumstances. This allowed them to switch between work and non-work life effortlessly and optimise their free time. Therefore, working from anywhere facilitated the management of non-work responsibilities and engagement in leisure in between work. Participants found that freedom to move about during work hours allowed them to multitask and tend to other responsibilities rather than differing them for after work. This created more space in their lives for leisurely time.

Working from home

Working from home saved the time it took to get ready and commute to work, which was a substantial amount of time for some participants. Working from home also makes switching between work engagement and disengagement easier. Those who live with other family members can have lunch together and spend time in their gardens or with pets.

> So I'm not one for traffic, so it does save me an hour or two in traffic, so I'm able to get more work done and able to kind of go from that disengagement to engagement a lot quicker … but also my wife and I … tried to have lunch together because she also works at at home … Some of the time, not all of the time I have our TV on in the background when I'm doing some of the work … But I'm also looking into the backyard … play with the cat for five minutes and and and come back in … And I think that that opportunity just to kind of be yourself and if you're having a pyjama day, it's fine. (Participant 5)

Working from another country

Three participants expressed the need to work from another country for various reasons which link to leisure. This covered wanting to get exposure to different

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working environments, experience diverse people and cultures, and spend time with family living in other countries. Participants explained that this would require extended periods of remote work but would significantly contribute to their life satisfaction. These experiences were described as bringing enjoyment (experiencing new places and people) or fulfilment (seeing family members and building relationships).

> … if I could work remotely, like full time for a short stint of maybe six months or something … it would, in turn, have an effect on my leisure, umm, being in a remote location for sure … I'll just outright say that like I want to live in Japan and that's like my mom's home country. So it's more just for me to get the exposure to the living that side because I hadn't lived there … (Participant 2)

Other interesting findings on leisure support

While much of the support described by participants was not directly related to financial provisions, there was mention of a direct financial benefit for leisure. In this case, participants were seeking a form of financial leisure stipend (recreation allowance) or benefits from the organisation that they could use to fulfil their leisure needs.

> I don't think there is a separate financial support for leisure … other than than paying or or making sure that your member fees is much cheaper for those that do use the work gym. I'm not so sure if there are any other explicit financial means … other than your salary and the bonus that you receive. (Participant 6)

Another prominent finding was the need for training and development support as a leisure activity benefit. Participants challenged the traditional definition of leisure, stating that learning new skills or gaining new knowledge is a form of leisure for them. In those cases, short courses or studies (of their choice) were not seen as obligations but rather as an enjoyable activity that contributed to development at their leisure. Participants wanted to receive financial funding or support for short courses they could take during their leisure time. It was also noted that organisations tend only to fund training and development if there is a direct link to the organisation.

> … the organisation does offer financial support for different types of training programmes … as long as you're able to show some form of linkage to your role … I am someone that actively enjoys expanding my knowledge base, and so sometimes my discretionary energy will be spent doing short courses, again in my personal capacity … because I'm interested in that topic … leisure, it's anything, any time, any of my discretionary time spent on something I have an interest in - I have an interest in learning. (Participant 1)

Finally, travel was mentioned several times by participants. Although it is covered as part of working from anywhere, several other forms of travel benefits were also described, such as assistance with holiday planning (flights and accommodation), travel-based rewards for top achievers (e.g., weekends away to luxurious destinations), extension of work trips of leisure travel and rewards programs that offer travel discounts.

> … we have [travel company], which is basically a company that assists with all sorts of holiday destinations. So, it could be Cape Town or a cruise on an ocean liner. Whatever it is. And then they give preferential rates to staff and that. (Participant 5)

5.5 Results for Sub-research Question 2

Sub-question 2: What are the determinants of employee utilisation of organisational leisure support?

To understand the barriers to employee utilisation of leisure support provided by their employers, participants were probed regarding the challenges experienced in using the described leisure supports.

Four significant themes emerged as determinants of utilisation of organisational leisure support. The four determinants were found to be (1) the nature of support, (2) supportive stakeholders, (3) communication and (4) coordination of support. Finally, while not an organisational element, the role of self was a noteworthy utilisation determinant. These determinants are listed in **Table 4**, along with the sub-elements as coded. Participants discussed that the presence or absence of these determinants played a crucial role in how much they would utilise the leisure support provided.

Table 4

Themes and coded elements for sub-research question 2

Theme	Codes
1. Nature of support (69)	Relevance of leisure support (28) Voluntary vs compulsory (13) Conditional support (13) Timing (10) Similarity to work (3) Location (2)
2. Supportive stakeholders (31)	Supportive leadership (24) Supportive team (7)
3. Communication (15)	Communicating about available support (10) Encouraging usage (5)
4. Coordination (10)	Consistency across business areas (5) Coordination resources (5)
5. Role of self (26) *Not an organisational element*	Switching off from work (14) Management of time (8) Communicating upwards (4)

5.5.1 Nature of support

The nature of leisure support provided was the most prominent determinant of whether participants would utilise leisure support. Participants wanted support to be tailored and for them to have the freedom to choose what they utilise. The nature of support, as found from the interviews, includes leisure support aligned to individual needs, conditional support, voluntary participation, timing of support and similarity to work. These elements are discussed in further detail below.

Leisure support aligned to individual needs

Participants felt that they often do not utilise the leisure support provided because it does not align with their needs. For example, some mentioned that they were not interested in visiting company gyms either because they did not want to go to the gym at the work premises or were not interested in exercising. Other participants also noted that they would not participate in activities involving the consumption of alcohol for religious reasons. It was perceived that the leisure support provided was traditional and broad-brushed rather than bespoke to their needs. This results in limiting their freedom of choice in leisure activities that are supported by the

organisation.

> … some of the activities are not appealing to certain individuals. So, for example, an on-site gym, maybe someone doesn't uh doesn't want to go … to the gym to work out. Maybe they prefer to uh to hike, to go for, you know, to go for a walk or whatever it is. (Participant 10)

> … it's usually, you know, that is the easy answer is to is to take something generic, put it in place, and it somehow meets the minimum requirement … how do you make it more bespoke? Because a lot of these can get quite personal … (Participant 6)

It was also noted that where procurement processes needed to be followed, it was usually limited to specific vendors, which constrained the participant's freedom of choice.

> I'm restricted to the vendors within the organisation … so it can be limiting … It would be a lot greater if there was some ability for you to find something external to the organisation … that they would then fund, you know, accordingly within certain limits … (Participant 1)

Participants were, however, appreciative of the current support received, noting the limitations organisations have in terms of the variety of leisure support that can be provided.

> The same with like running or any other like activities that they are economies of scale in terms of the number of people who participate in those types of leisurely activities. (Participant 8)

However, participants also indicated that organisations could create the right platforms for interest groups (as discussed in research question 1) to be formed which come at minimal or no cost.

> I haven't really seen clubs within the within the companies or, you know, general support for the different things that people want to do in terms of leisure … allowing different people of different, umm, with different needs to have a space to go to. (Participant 4)

Conditional support

While not explicitly stated by their organisations, participants perceived that support could only be used when certain conditions were met. Participants felt guilty if they had not done enough work to justify leisure time, indicating that deliverables and productivity levels must first be at acceptable levels. There was also an expectation of some linkage to work benefit. Furthermore, participants described motivational or reward-based benefits that only get provided when extensive work is done or when excelling at performance objectives. For example, one participant noted that they were rewarded extra leave days after working overtime. In these instances, when employees felt they were not delivering at optimal levels, they would not make use of the support provided to them.

> You know, you may need to work overtime hours as and when required to execute a transaction … usually like on a Friday and after like two or three o'clock if I don't have any client meetings or whatever the case may be, I actually don't feel any sense of guilt. (Participant 8)

> You know, having that flexibility to work wherever, whenever it is a privilege … there is a sense of accountability … I observed my working behaviour for the day, and I felt I was probably less productive. Maybe I was less focused in the morning, and my dog was sitting on my lap … play in the garden with him, and I would then be like a bit more conscious to, you know, put in a few extra hours. (Participant 9)

Voluntary participation

The concept of voluntary participation was significant and extends the notion of freedom of choice for participants. Interviewees expressed that they did not want to be forced to participate in leisurely activities. Such compulsory activities included mandatory leave, mandatory team events (especially if it was on a Friday) or interest groups. Therefore, ensuring that leisure support emphasises voluntary participation will translate to more meaningful usage of such supports.

> I don't want to be forced to … spend my Friday night with people that I don't necessarily want to hang out with, you know, not that there's anything wrong with the people from work … (Participant 9)

I'm never forced to participate because I know sometimes you have these interest groups, and they can be quite persistent in recruiting members. And yeah, as long as I don't get forced to do anything, that's cool. (Participant 1)

Timing of support

Similar to the voluntary nature of support, the timing of support provided was key in whether that individual could utilise it. This included flexibility regarding when the support could be used, the frequency at which specific events would take place and whether it conflicted with work priorities at the time. Examples included being unable to use leave at any time in the year and team events not being arranged frequently enough.

I assumed that there would be some sort of social or relaxing event quarterly, but this year has proved otherwise.… We kind of just, you know, organise at a whim almost. (Participant 2)

The reality is that sometimes when those activations happen, I just don't have the time. Umm, you know, it's work commitments that get in the way of that. (Participant 10)

Similarity to work

Finally, participants highlighted that they did not desire to participate in activities similar to work. When engaging in a leisure activity, they did not want to be reminded of work and found that it created more stress. Furthermore, there was a preference for leisure activities to help make them more well-rounded individuals and help them express their individuality.

… psychologically, my computer equals work … that's where I spend all of my time when I'm when I'm at work … it's just more, umm, mental, like exhaustion, you know … so I spend time doing stuff that is enjoyable and different. So it's like a proper psychological break … being a well-rounded person is important. So I don't want to be like a one trick pony … (Participant 9)

5.5.2 Supportive stakeholders

Many responses referred to the need for supportive leaders and team members to engage with the provided support effectively. Supportive leaders and team members created an organisational climate and culture that promoted engagement in leisure and utilisation of leisure support.

Supportive leadership

Supportive leaders were described to actively promote and encourage the utilisation of support provided. Moreover, participants found themselves motivated to utilise leisure support when leaders themselves participated in specific activities. Additionally, leaders (including managers) play a crucial role in understanding their employees' leisure preferences and needs to ensure they promote meaningful support.

> … my boss, who is a great boss and who is very, very, you know, appreciative of my needs as an individual and tries his best to ensure I have a work-life balance. (Participant 1)

> … if I like to hike, and let's say the head of the department also likes to hike, and there's other individuals within the team that likes to hike. Then the head of the department actually goes a step further and says, how do we actually create a hiking club within our team? (Participant 10)

Conversely, participants who described their managers as "dictators" or distracted by business priorities felt demotivated or unwilling to engage with any leisure support provided. Such environments made participants feel that they needed to manage the perception of themselves being engaged with work and consequently did not utilise the available support.

> … my managers do have a lot on their plate, and it is not something I see them doing regularly because there's always, there's always fires to put out on their, on their side. So umm yeah, that's one thing I feel could happen outside of actually pushing out our work. (Participant 2)

Supportive teams

Teams also played a crucial role in participants' utilisation of leisure support. Naturally, the behaviour of team members was driven by having leaders displaying pro-leisure behaviour. Supportive teams were described as being aware and appreciative of each other's leisure interests. Furthermore, they respect boundaries when individuals need time to engage in non-work leisure activities and promote leisure at work. This works to create a team environment where leisure support can be utilised without friction.

> … every quarter, we do an analysis where we just talk about, OK, how do you prefer to work to work? Do you want to be contacted on WhatsApp or not? … Every quarter, we are constantly reviewing that, and I think it's just the general respect around people's leisure time, but also just people's home time. (Participant 3)

> So, in our team, we had get-to-know-each-other sessions, where we'll ask each other questions. You know, who enjoys baking, who enjoys cooking, which was awesome. So everyone kind of knows what your hobbies are, etc. (Participant 11)

5.5.3 Communication

Participants noted that a key barrier to their usage of leisure support was linked to their lack of awareness in the first place. This is especially important when informal practices exist, which not everyone knows about across the business. As discussed by participants, examples of such communication include WhatsApp groups, emails, and announcements or discussions in team meetings. There are two elements to communication. Firstly, communication that ensures all employees are aware of the support and benefits available to them.

> … sometimes you only pick up on specific benefits you hear from someone or, uh, maybe there was an internal email that gets sent to highlight that benefit … I feel that the organisation hasn't done enough to highlight what those benefits are. (Participant 10)

Secondly, communication that encourages support usage has also been highlighted as a driver in employees participating in arranged leisure activities.

> … our immediate business unit started like a tennis or a paddle group where everyone who is available can sign up and get together on a Saturday morning to play paddle … It's encouraging of everyone … to come and just try it. (Participant 6)

> … our monthly team meetings where, you know, the head of the business would just draw everyone's attention to these types of things to say, guys, we have these other forums or platforms, you know, participate in it as much as you keen on doing … there's these formal and informal ways of, you know, making employees aware of all of these platforms. (Participant 8)

5.5.4   Coordination of support

Coordination was raised as another reason for the lack of utilisation of leisure support. This worked in parallel with effective communication to drive awareness. To deliver communication effectively, participants expressed a need for dedicated resources to coordinate the communication and relevant support. For example, department personal assistants were raised as a key resource to coordinate team-level leisure support such as team lunches and social events. At an organisational level, social committees and human resource departments were key in coordinating leisure support. A combination of these facilitators was required to garner the right level of engagement with the support provided.

> … there was a PA for the actuarial valuations team, and the PA was responsible for setting up lunches on a regular like cycle and she would also send out little emails to encourage us to get through a very stressful period. (Participant 2)

> … so, for me, it's almost having like a central body that will actually help you with that stuff. And right now, HR isn't that in these companies. It's a lot more, umm, corporate, and they don't know how to explain it. (Participant 4)

The presence of coordinators at multiple levels ensures that support is made accessible to employees and is consistently applied to all departments. They also

play a role in listening to the interests of employees and ensuring the support is tailored to those needs. Otherwise, participants found that the utilisation or engagement with leisure support would be variable depending on management styles in the different departments.

> … if you have like, you know, I don't know, like a scrum master sort of take note of what people are into and, you know, how can, how can we look at kind of enhancing their lives by, you know, looking into that? (Participant 9)

5.5.5 Role of self

It was interesting that participants noted the role that they played in making use of leisure support. Elements that were referred to were the ability to switch off from work, management of own time and communicating upward. Notably, individual behaviour was described as being influenced by the presence or absence of supportive stakeholders.

Switching off from work

Switching off work stress and demands was a challenge when utilising leisure support and engaging in leisure activities. Participants noted that they did not meaningfully engage in leisure activities when they were still mentally plugged into work or were constantly checking their phone or laptop regarding the current or following day activities. This challenge is driven by the behaviour of work teams (e.g., calling team members after hours or sending after-hours emails) and the personality trait (e.g., wanting control of how work gets done and trusting team members) of the individual.

> … if no one would call me umm, that would be in an ideal state and again, maybe that's more work on my side to be able to learn to trust that things will get done and that others will step up … it's just me having that control, and it's more again more personal thing. (Participant 5)

> … you know, at the gym, maybe towards the end of the gym or before the gym session starts. I'm looking at my phone, looking at my schedule to say, hey, what's coming up? Is there anything else outstanding that I need to be thinking about that I need to get to, you know? (Participant 6)

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Management of time

Participants recognised that they needed to actively manage their time to utilise the available support. This required them to prioritise their leisure time by managing their diaries and blocking out time as required. For example, Participant 1 stated, "I think the onus is on the individual to better manage their diary. So, whether it means you block out personal time in your diary, that's your responsibility."

> … on a Thursday afternoon, I'm off from 5 or half past 5 .… I'm the one at the end of the day who makes that call to either stay or go. So, in that area, I do feel like I am at liberty to partake umm, in my leisure activity. (Participant 2)

Communicating upwards

Upward communication with managers was identified as a determinant of utilising leisure support. Participants noted that they needed to effectively communicate with their managers to switch off and have more active control over their time. For example, communicating leave requirements beforehand or setting boundaries regarding availability and communication preferences.

> I also think it's about open communication with your line manager … you are not somebody that that can accommodate a back-to-back day all the time … you want to have a set break in your day every day so that open and honest communication with your line manager, with your team, I think that can be helpful. (Participant 1)

5.6   Describing the Phenomenon

Putting all the findings together helps describe the structure and essence of the phenomenon as experienced by the participants. Participant context is important as it gives rise to the phenomenon. The leisure interests and needs give rise to unique participant leisure profiles characterising their lifestyles. These are used as a coping mechanism to buffer work-related demands. Managing and integrating these two domains of participants' lives requires adequate support.

The need to integrate work and leisure domains gives rise to the phenomenon of organisational leisure support as a resource. Organisational leisure support

comprises constituents of the support itself and determinants of its utilisation. Both constituents and determinants must be in place for employees to feel supported. Psychologically, participants express that the determinants must be in place for constituents to be utilised. It is important to recognise that each element does not exist in isolation but works in a mutually reinforcing way with other elements. Therefore, one type of constituent or determinant is not necessarily more important than another.

Finally, the right mix of support constituents and utilisation determinants results in employees using the provided support in an impactful manner. Consequently, employees can engage in high-quality leisure experiences that improve their subjective well-being.

5.7 Conclusion

Findings show that the phenomenon of organisational leisure support arises from the participant context. The context is characterised by a unique blend of leisure preferences or profiles used to mitigate the strain from work-related demands and replenish personal resources. It is found that to integrate work and leisure lifestyles, appropriate organisational leisure support is required. This was explored through the overarching research question in this study. The research question was addressed by exploring employees' experiences regarding two sub-research questions. The first question sought to describe the constituents of organisational leisure support, and the second sought to explore the determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation by employees.

Findings for research question 1 revealed five significant constituents of organisational leisure support. These were time-based support, event-based support, interest groups, provision of leisure facilities and working from anywhere. Other interesting findings showed that direct financial provisions or stipends, training and development, and travel-related benefits were also viewed as meaningful leisure support. The presence of these constituents made participants feel supported in a meaningful way. Additionally, these constituents were found to be highly interrelated and worked in a mutually reinforcing way. For example, the creation of interest groups (e.g., soccer clubs) could be complemented with the provision of relevant leisure facilities (e.g., a soccer field) and orchestrating events (sponsored soccer

tournaments). Naturally, it was found that for the constituents of leisure support to be utilised and for employees to feel supported, some essential enablers needed to be implemented.

The utilisation enablers, referred to as determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation, answered research question 2. Four prominent themes emerged in this regard. These were the nature of support, the presence of supportive stakeholders (leaders and team members), communication and coordination. Additionally, while not an organisational element, the role of self was found to be a utilisation determinant. Like the constituents, the determinants were also interrelated and worked in a mutually reinforcing way. For example, the role of self in terms of individuals communicating their leisure needs to managers must be complemented with supportive stakeholders to ensure two-way communication and mutual interest. Furthermore, determinants must be in place to ensure that constituents of leisure support are utilised.

At a psychological level, if determinants of utilisation were not in place, participants felt that they underutilised leisure support and consequently felt unsupported. This meant that there was no meaningful impact on their subjective well-being. Therefore, the psychological order of events is the context of leisure needs and work demands giving rise to a need for support; thereafter, the utilisation enablers make employees aware of the support and encourage them to use it, and finally, the right constituents of leisure support in place result in meaningful usage and improved subjective well-being.

6 CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

The following sections discuss the findings in light of the research problem and literature relating to the phenomenon of organisational leisure support as a resource to facilitate subjective well-being. The structure of the phenomenon in line with the overarching research question is first discussed, followed by a deep dive discussion on the two sub-research questions.

6.2 The Overall Structure of the Phenomenon

The overarching research question will be answered by outlining the structure of the phenomenon – organisational leisure support as it relates to subjective well-being.

Overarching research question: What are the experiences of young employees in the South African financial sector regarding organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being?

The structure of the phenomenon, as experienced by employees, is outlined in **Figure 3**. This research showed that employee context requires leisure-work integration and gives rise to the need for leisure-related support. As a resource, organisational leisure support is split into its constituents and determinants of utilisation. The combination of constituents and determinants of utilisation creates well-being-oriented support that employees meaningfully utilise to improve subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is improved through various recovery pathways triggered by high-quality, positive leisure experiences. This is discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Figure 3

Structure of organisational leisure support as it relates to subjective well-being
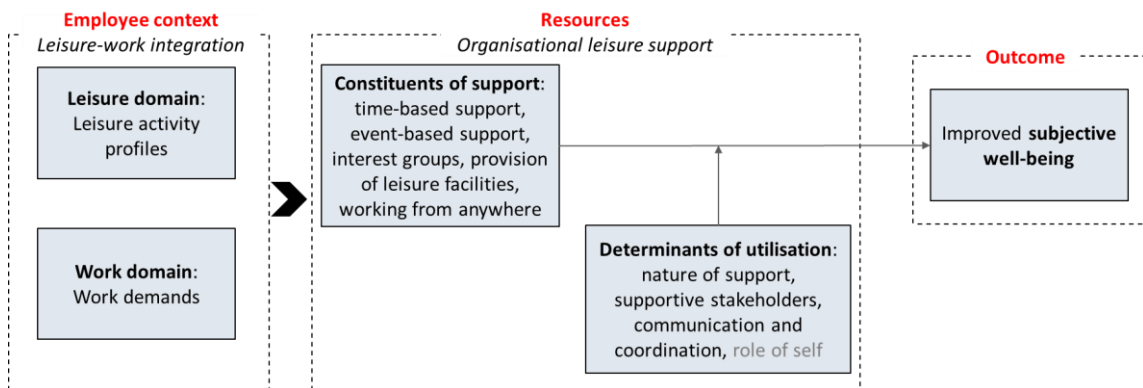
Employee context: Leisure-work integration

Participant context was important for this research. The findings suggest the existence of unique leisure preferences or profiles. Leisure preferences link to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being perspectives, as mentioned by Lee et al. (2021). For example, entertainment activities such as watching TV or having drinks with friends were seen as a short-term means of satisfaction or enjoyment, while activities linked to personal development or learning new skills were linked to a higher sense of purpose and meaning.

It is important to note that leisure was uniquely defined from one participant to another, and their perception of improved subjective well-being was based on the extent to which they meaningfully engaged in these activities. This aligns with the conceptualisation of subjective well-being as an assessment of an individual's satisfaction and quality of life (Lee et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2020). Furthermore, this reinforces Kuykendall's finding that there is a relationship between the quality of leisure and improved subjective well-being. Finally, as posited in Super's theory (Kuykendall et al., 2017; Super, 1980; Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021), employees also saw leisure participation as a role that they needed to fulfil in life, and high-quality engagement with that role determined their subjective assessment of well-being.

This research found that work demands, in alignment with JD-R theory, prevented employees from fully engaging in leisure activities and negatively affected their subjective well-being. Aligning to theory on work demands (Demerouti et al., 2001;

Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), participants found that the characteristics of their job concerning "what work gets done", "when work gets done", and "where work gets done" made it difficult for them to engage in leisure activities. This aligns with Bakker and Demerouti's articulation of job demands that speak to aspects of the job that require sustained effort, resulting in strain and, consequently, a poor assessment of subjective well-being (Lesener et al., 2018). Therefore, leisure participation was required to mitigate the impacts of work demands.

Two effects of leisure participation are therefore evident. Firstly, it has a direct impact on subjective well-being by having quality leisure experiences. Secondly, it plays a buffering role wherein leisure helps mitigate the adverse impacts of work demands on subjective well-being. Furthermore, employees sought to integrate work and leisure domains rather than simply seek balance, as Kurtessis et al. (2017) suggested. Therefore, organisations must effectively support employees to participate in leisure activities and improve their subjective well-being by helping them meaningfully integrate leisure and work domains of life. From a JD-R perspective, this support can be viewed as a resource, as Long and Cooke (2022) posited in their articulation of employee assistance programs and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) in their depiction of well-being-oriented HRM. More pointedly, Strassburger et al. (2022) and Cheng et al. stated organisational leisure support as an addition to the traditional perspective on job resources.

Resources: Organisational leisure support

This research found that organisational leisure support includes the support constituents and the determinants of utilisation that both classify as resources. The constituents ensure that support practices (time-based, event-based, interest group support, facilities at work and working from anywhere) are in place. Determinants, however, ensure that employees can utilise the support meaningfully. The determinants include the nature of support, the presence of supportive stakeholders, communication and coordination. While not a determinant driven by the organisation, the role of self was also determined to be a factor influencing employee utilisation of support. The constituents and determinants needed to be present to ensure that employees perceive the presence of meaningful support and use it. As posited by Guest (2017), Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) and Tessema et al. (2020), there is a need

to have the right blend of resources that work in a mutually reinforcing way. Furthermore, given the unique blend of leisure activity profiles, each employee may use a unique blend of support constituents. To put more structure to the constituents and determinants, it can be proposed that determinants function as a moderator in the relationship between support constituents and subjective well-being.

From a JD-R perspective, the constituents and determinants of organisational leisure support provide a possible extension of well-being-oriented job resources. A critique of the JD-R model is that job resources take a narrow view of managing job demands to ensure the ultimate delivery of organisational performance. This was highlighted by both Long and Cooke (2022) and Saks (2022), who argued that well-being-oriented employee resources are under-represented in the JD-R model. Finally, the specificity in these findings regarding the constituents of organisational leisure support and determinants of its utilisation answers the call for detailed design of leisure support and benefit systems as organisational resources by Akgunduz et al. (2019) and Duerden et al. (2018).

An extension of the critique on the JD-R model is that it also takes a narrow view of demands. Since employees also view leisure as a role that needs to be fulfilled and integrated with their work domain, leisure engagement can be viewed as a demand. Therefore, organisational resources must ensure that employees are supported to integrate both domains. Aligning with the COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), a holistic approach to resource provision for employees confirms the need to consider employees' total resource pool in light of their various demands beyond work. This builds on Bakker and Demerouti's (2017) perspective on resources not only to support work demands but also to fulfil the employees' role in their leisure lifestyle. Taking such a perspective introduces a caring and well-being-oriented approach to resource provision, addressing the concern raised by Saks (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) that HRM literature has overly focused on performance-based support systems.

Outcome: Subjective well-being

From a JD-R perspective, engagement in leisure activities impacts how motivated or engaged employees show up at work, thereby improving organisational outcomes. However, the critique of this model is that it treats organisational performance as the primary outcome. This research suggests that when the right level of support resources is provided, support is perceived as meaningful, caring and well-being-oriented. Furthermore, when these resources are meaningfully utilised, participants have high-quality experiences that translate into improved subjective well-being. As Kuykendall et al. (2017) found, high levels of quality leisure experiences (leisure affect) positively influence subjective well-being. This was validated by Lee et al. (2021) and Wood et al. (2020) in their articulation of experiences that trigger positive affect as a driver of life satisfaction and well-being. However, for organisational support to translate to quality leisure experiences, the support constituents must be suitable, and the determinants of utilisation must be in place.

By treating subjective well-being as a core outcome of organisational leisure support SET suggests that positive outcomes will eventually result for the organisation. This social exchange process is explained through perceived organisational support (Kurtessis et al., 2017) and specifically perceived organisational leisure support (Cheng et al., 2020). When employees perceive that the organisation authentically cares about their well-being and provides meaningful support, they are more likely to reciprocate with favourable organisational behaviours. Therefore, in alignment with Salas-Vallina et al. (2021), the JD-R model should incorporate a SET into the pathway that explains organisational performance, as this will require an authentic interest in driving employee well-being as a core outcome of resource provision.

The following sub-sections will deep dive into the two sub-research questions to discuss the constituents of support and determinants of utilisation that facilitate improved subjective well-being.

6.2.1 Sub-research question 1: What are the constituents of organisational leisure support resources required to facilitate employee subjective well-being?

The five prominent constituents of organisational leisure support found in this study are time-based support, event-based support, interest group support, leisure facilities at work and working from anywhere. While these were broadly aligned to literature, some nuanced contributions not fully conceptualised in leisure literature are noted. This includes calendar management and specialised leave as part of time-based support, communities with a cause as interest groups, facilities supporting engagement with the natural environment and inactive leisure (quiet/silent rooms), and finally, working from other countries as a leisure benefit. Other interesting findings include the need for financial means for leisure and academic learning-based support as a leisure benefit unrelated to work competency development. The following sub-sections unpack these discussion points by drawing on the literature.

Time-based support

Time-based leisure support allows employees to switch between leisure and work activities to allow leisure's stress relieving and recovery role to take effect over short or longer periods. Strassburger et al. (2022) found that time-based support was essential to drive employee perception of work-life balance and signal a more caring approach to support (Saks, 2022). More specifically, Cheng et al. (2020) emphasised the importance of time flexibility for employees to have more control and autonomy over when work gets done to facilitate engagement in leisure. Therefore, findings on the need for more control over work hours, workweek (days), and leave provision were validated. Furthermore, De Bloom et al. (2018) supported the idea of extended periods of time off to facilitate meaningful recovery from the physical and mental impacts of work-related stress and strain.

Nuanced findings absent in existing literature included the need for calendar management support to ensure employees' workdays are not cluttered with meetings, especially if not value-adding. Additionally, nuanced perspectives on leave were shared, emphasising specialised leave that did not consume employees' annual leave days (e.g., special leave for charity work).

Event-based support

Findings show the need for events-related support orchestrated by the organisation. Events include company and team-level social events such as year-end functions, team building and other sponsored events external to the organisation. Events were seen as a means to engage with colleagues in a non-work context that helped create meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging in a fun environment. This aligns with the conceptualisation of community activities by Cheng et al. (2020). While Cheng emphasised social activities with employees and families, findings in this study emphasised work-related relationships and networking. Furthermore, Strassburger et al. (2022) also highlighted the importance of workplace fun from a work-life balance perspective. This included activities at work that facilitated social or leisure engagement.

Interest group support

Extending on the concept of creating communities at work, the need for interest groups at the workplace was prominent. This spanned physical and non-physical activity-based groups and the creation of communities with a cause. Like event-based support, interest groups allowed employees with similar sporting, hobby or cause-based interests to connect. This is supported by De Bloom et al. (2018) and Tessema et al. (2022), who recognised the importance of connecting groups of employees with shared interests in leisure activities.

Furthermore, while Cheng et al. (2020) also found that orchestrating leisure clubs at work could create a sense of identity for employees, the emphasis was sporting or hobby-based interest groups. This research also found that creating communities with a cause was a prominent need, less evident in recent literature. Such communities include LGBTQ groups, disabled persons, and women empowerment. Creating a supportive environment for these groups gives them a sense of purpose, helps build individual identity and enhances employee relationships.

Leisure facilities at work

This research found the provision of leisure-related facilities at work to be a prominent support constituent. Such facilities include physical activity facilities, social spaces (e.g., canteens, coffee shops, restaurants and bars), natural spaces (landscapes and wildlife), pause areas and quiet spaces. These facilities worked to support leisure activities by individuals or groups. While leisure facilities and equipment such as gyms, sports fields, and event venues were discussed in the literature (Cheng et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022), a broader view of facilities was introduced in this study. In alignment with De Bloom et al. (2018), this research has also found that employees value engagement with the natural environment to facilitate recovery experiences amidst work. Therefore, there was a need for facilities that made natural landscapes and wildlife accessible to employees to integrate leisure at work. Additionally, leisure support literature did not cover the findings on quiet spaces such as silent rooms.

The need for facilities that allow for inactive leisure challenges dominant perspectives that leisure engagement involves individuals actively doing something. Although De Bloom et al. (2018) found that sedentary activity by employees has the least favourable organisational outcomes, there is still some need for inactive leisure engagement support that facilitates rest and recovery at work for the employee's benefit.

Working from anywhere

Flexibility regarding work arrangements extends beyond time flexibility (work schedules). With the introduction of hybrid working environments after the COVID-19 pandemic, employees expect work-from-anywhere support to facilitate their leisure engagement. Employees value working from home as it makes switching between work and leisure activities easier and saves the time it takes to get ready and travel to work, which can be substantial. Tessema et al. (2022) and Guest (2017) cover employees' need for hybrid arrangements to allow for remote working, emphasising working from home.

While the finding on working from home was obvious, a nuanced finding emerged on working from another country. In this case, employees seem interested in working

from other countries to learn about new cultures, people or places and be closer to family. This takes the concept of working remotely further and allows for work in locations distant from work over extended periods. Such support provides employees fulfilment in terms of new experiences, learning, and reconnecting with family.

Other interesting findings on leisure support

Although the literature suggests that the employer-employee relationship is shifting away from economic exchanges to social exchanges (Duerden et al., 2018; Guest, 2017; Kurtessis et al., 2017), this research found that there was still a need for financial support. Such support (e.g., leisure stipends/allowances, funding, and discounts) would allow employees to have more freedom in using it, for example, not being limited by suppliers the organisation uses. This is not new but rather validates the emphasis on financial support covered by both Cheng et al. (2020) and Strassburger et al. (2022) as leisure-related support.

Learning-based support was also highlighted as a need. This learning support related to coursework not linked to employees' jobs but fields in which employees were personally interested in developing. This extends the definition of leisure to include learning/studies not as an obligation but as a leisure activity. Training and development-related support is viewed as a performance or work-related tactic to promote improved job performance or progress in employees' careers (Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021). While De Bloom et al. (2018) discussed courses linked to leisure (e.g., learning to play a musical instrument or a new craft), the perspective on support for leisurely academic studies is a unique contribution to the academic debate.

6.2.2 Sub-research question 2: What are the determinants of utilisation of organisational leisure support by employees?

Findings show that there are four prominent determinants of utilisation that form part of organisational leisure support. These include the nature of support (tailored to needs/interests, conditionality, voluntary nature, timing and similarity to work), supportive stakeholders (leaders and team members), communication and coordination. Furthermore, the role of the individual (behaviours such as switching off from work, time management and upward communication) was also found to be a determinant of support utilisation, although not an organisational element. The

findings are broadly supported by literature with some new and nuanced contributions on timing of support, coordination of support and the role of individual behaviours.

Nature of support

The nature of the leisure support provided was a prominent determinant of utilisation. It includes whether the support is tailored to individual needs/interests, whether it is conditional, whether participation is voluntary, the timing of the support and similarity to work.

Given the diversity of leisure interests discussed as part of the leisure activity profiles, there is an evident need for the support provided to align with individual needs and interests. De Bloom et al. (2018) discussed this need through their findings on diverse leisure activity profiles among their sample of employees. Duerden et al. (2018) and Tessema et al. (2022) also suggested the need for distinctive value propositions that are interesting and show authentic care for employees, while Long and Cooke (2022) indicated the challenge with broad-brushed approaches that result in low-quality support experiences. In support of tailored/bespoke support systems, Kelly et al. (2020) found that employees engaged in multiple forms of leisure experienced diverse recovery experiences from work demands. Therefore, leisure support should also be diverse and tailored to individual preferences.

Conditional leisure support was also found to be a significant determinant of utilisation. This required employees to perform at specific levels to qualify for certain benefits or support. Even when support was not directly linked to performance outcomes, employees felt the need to perform at certain levels to be deserving of the support provided. Conditional leisure support, such as performance-linked incentives (Cheng et al., 2020) and incentive benefit packages (Elbaz et al., 2020), was covered in leisure studies; however, it has failed to recognise that to perform at optimal levels or maintain optimal levels of performance, employees may first need to utilise support as an input. This view is supported by Long and Cooke (2022), who suggested that support programs are viewed as tools to drive performance, neglecting the preventative function that they can play. Therefore, whether the support is perceived to be conditional is a determinant of an employee using it.

The need for support to be voluntary was found to be a concern of employees and impacted whether they meaningfully engaged with the support provided. The need for optionality stemmed from employees wanting to choose whether and when to participate in leisure activities. When forced to utilise support, the utilisation of the support would not be meaningful, and benefits would not materialise. Therefore, although Elbaz et al. (2020) recommended that managers get employees to engage in at least one form of leisure activity, it should not be forced. Moreover, Kuykendall et al. (2017) suggested that even though leisure may not be important to some individuals, participation may still be essential to gain freedom from their work and life demands, suggesting a benefit of mandating engagement in leisure.

In contrast to the perspective on mandating leisure participation, De Vos et al. (2020) and Kelly et al. (2020) recommended an autonomy-based support environment where employees can opt in or out. Furthermore, Long and Cooke (2022) echoed that mandating the use of support may, in any case, result in low-quality experiences. Thus, regardless of the benefits of leisure engagement, employees should be able to choose whether to engage with leisure support resources.

Timing of support (when and how often it was made available) also determined whether employees could adequately utilise resources provided due to a conflict with work priorities. While this was not explicitly covered in literature, it speaks to the need for autonomy and control (or freedom) in utilising support at the employees' time of need rather than at the organisation's convenience of providing it.

Finally, the similarity to work emerged as a factor determining whether individuals utilise support. In instances where leisure activities were similar to work, employees found that it did not facilitate effective recovery experiences. Kelly et al. (2020) validated this by finding that leisure activities dissimilar to work translated to higher levels of self-efficacy. This aligns with COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), whereby leisure activity and work utilising similar personal resources (e.g., computer skills or knowledge) deplete personal resources and adversely impact subjective well-being.

Supportive stakeholders

This study found the presence of supportive stakeholders to be a determinant of the extent to which employees utilise leisure support. The presence of supportive leaders and team members helps create a climate in which employees feel encouraged and free to utilise support and engage in leisure. This is well supported in HRM literature. From a JD-R perspective, Bakker and Demerouti (2017) recognised leaders' influence in creating a favourable working environment through job characteristics. Kurtessis et al. (2017) further highlighted that supervisors are vital in creating a supportive and caring environment for subordinates by making support accessible, highlighting the negative impact of abusive supervisory behaviours. Similarly, Long and Cooke (2022) emphasised how the relationship between leaders and employees impacted the propensity of employees to utilise support. Furthermore, Saks (2022) and Salas Vallina et al. (2021) indicated the moderating role of caring leadership in translating caring HRM practices into a well-being-oriented organisational climate for employees.

Organisational support literature did not, however, strongly emphasise the role of team members in creating an environment in which employees are encouraged to utilise support. Therefore, team member support as a determinant of leisure support utilisation is a new finding.

Communication

The awareness of support available to employees was found to be essential to its utilisation. The communication of leisure support includes creating awareness of what exists and encouraging its utilisation. Lack of communication and information sharing was cited as a barrier to using support programmes (Long & Cooke, 2022) and, more specifically, leisure support systems (Strassburger et al., 2022). Furthermore, job resources were mentioned to include education (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), communication and information sharing (Cooper et al., 2019; Saks, 2022; Sala-Vallina et al., 2021) in HRM literature. It, therefore, makes sense that from a leisure support perspective, communication and information sharing remain an essential resource, specifically as a determinant of support utilisation.

Coordination

While initial awareness of support was required, further coordination was expressed to be a meaningful usage driver. This includes active coordination by department personal assistants at a team level and social committees or HR departments at an organisational level. These support facilitators play a crucial role in coordinating activities linked to the constituents of support (e.g., team-building events and interest group events). This has only sparsely been covered in literature, with Cheng et al. (2020) lightly touching on leisure benefits and resource planning committees. Given the variety of formal and informal support constituents and determinants, it is evident that effective coordination and planning around support resources is required.

Role of self

Finally, although not an organisational support resource, the role of the individual was found to be a determinant of utilisation. It is important to note that while not an organisational resource, the behaviour of individuals in terms of their ability to switch off from work, manage their time and communicate upwards is influenced by the support climate and culture created by the organisation's leaders and team members. For example, individuals with abusive managers or leaders who do not encourage leisure may choose to deprioritise engagement in leisure to focus on work and may not effectively communicate their leisure needs for fear of rejection.

The literature does not directly cover the role of individuals in leisure support utilisation. However, Bakker and Demerouti (2017) discussed the role of employee behaviours in shaping how resources are used. There is specific mention of strategies to alter their use of job resources (and manage job demands) by planning to achieve particular goals. For example, when employees detect diminishing personal resources, they may employ coping strategies involving leisure support. Furthermore, the role of personality traits such as extroversion (De Bloom et al., 2018) and proactive personalities (Abdel-Hadi et al., 2021) covered in leisure studies suggest the existence of employee behaviours that could influence the usage of leisure support. This also indicates that both the organisation and individual are responsible for ensuring that leisure support is utilised, given the potential for mutual benefits.

6.3   Conclusion

The discussion of findings shows that the phenomenon of organisational leisure support, as it relates to subjective well-being, arises from employee leisure and work contexts. The context arises from unique leisure preferences (activity profiles) and work demands. Therefore, the need to integrate work and leisure lifestyles calls for relevant organisational leisure support.

Organisational leisure support covers both its constituents and determinants of utilisation, which are both viewed as resources. This perspective, therefore, advances the academic debate on the JD-R model, which is critiqued to take a narrow view of job resources and job demands with a primary focus on organisational outcomes. Organisational leisure support comprising constituents and determinants creates support that employees can use meaningfully. These high-quality and varied leisure experiences then translate into improved subjective well-being. More specifically, it is posed that the determinants of utilisation may function as a moderator in the relationship between support constituents and subjective well-being. Thus, an overall structure of the phenomenon is uncovered involving a context that requires leisure-work integration and organisational leisure support resources to facilitate this integration and translate it into improved subjective well-being.

Finally, by answering the two sub-research questions, five prominent leisure support constituents and four key determinants of utilisation were found to form the core of the structure of the phenomenon. Leisure support constituents include time-based support, event-based support, interest group support, leisure facilities at work and working from anywhere. While mostly aligning to perspectives in literature, nuanced findings sparsely covered or missing in the literature included the need for calendar management and specialised leave (e.g., leave for social impact activities), interest groups for cause-based communities, facilities to support quiet time and engagement with the natural environment, and working from other countries.

The four key determinants include the nature of support (tailored to needs/interests, conditionality, voluntary nature, timing of support, and similarity to work), supportive stakeholders (leaders and team members), communication and coordination. While HRM literature broadly supports findings, the study has validated the need for these determinants in the context of leisure-specific support. Additionally, new findings

include the timing of support, coordination of support (i.e., facilitators to drive support engagement) and, although not an organisational resource, the role of the individual in the utilisation of support. Finally, a unique contribution has been made to the JD-R theory regarding leisure-related organisational resources and specifically separating the resources into constituents of support and determinants of utilisation.

Therefore, the articulation of organisational leisure support centred on subjective well-being has helped progress the debate on the construct in HRM and leisure literature, validating findings from other contexts and contributing new, nuanced findings. Furthermore, considering the proliferation of support and benefit systems in practice, the articulation of the well-being-oriented approach ensures that employee outcomes (improved subjective well-being) are regarded as a core outcome.

7 CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This research sought to explore employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to facilitate improved subjective well-being with two objectives. The objectives set out to (1) understand the key constituents of organisational leisure support and (2) explore the determinants of its utilisation by employees. The topic and objectives were well placed to address existing challenges in practice and advance literary debate in the fields of HRM and leisure.

The evolving work context characterised by rising work demands and overlapping work and leisure life domains has resulted in deteriorating employee well-being outcomes. This warranted revisiting how employees are resourced to improve their subjective well-being. Furthermore, young employees have shown a greater need for well-being-oriented resources and consequently have a greater expectation to be resourced to facilitate the improvement of their subjective well-being. Given the proven positive impact of high-quality leisure experiences on well-being (De Bloom et al., 2018; Elbaz et al., 2020; Kuykendall et al., 2017; Tsaur & Yen, 2018), well-being-oriented organisational leisure support is highly relevant in addressing the problem. Moreover, despite the need for well-being-oriented support, the proliferation of support and benefit systems in literature and practice places a skewed emphasis on performance-oriented organisational support (Akgunduz, 2019; Guest, 2017; Long & Cooke, 2022; Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021) that has, in some instances, negatively impacted employee well-being (Richmond et al., 2017; Caillier, 2017; Han et al., 2020).

The JD-R theory, conceptualised by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), has emphasised resources that drive organisational performance, with organisational leisure support being scantly covered. Therefore, articulating well-being-oriented organisational leisure support has helped advance perspectives on job resources.

A qualitative approach was taken due to the nascency of the topic in literature. Specifically, a descriptive phenomenology strategy was employed to emphasise the perspectives of employees' lived experiences regarding organisational leisure support and their subjective well-being. Unpacking the experiences of 12 employees

working in the South African financial services sector has resulted in conceptualising organisational leisure support as a resource to facilitate improved subjective well-being. The objectives were achieved by articulating five prominent constituents of organisational leisure support and four key determinants of its utilisation by employees. The articulation of constituents and utilisation determinants takes a more nuanced perspective on leisure support resources, highlighting the need for utilisation determinants to drive high-quality engagement with support constituents. It was further proposed that determinants could moderate the relationship between constituents of support and improved subjective wellbeing in alignment with how Saks (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) discussed the role of leadership.

7.2 Constituents of Organisational Leisure Support

The five prominent constituents found include time-based support, event-based support, interest group support, leisure facilities at work and working from anywhere. Perspectives in the literature support the need for time flexibility (Cheng et al., 2020) and work-life balance (Saks, 2022). De Bloom et al. (2018) also highlighted the need for short and long periods of time off to allow for the recovery effects of leisure engagement. Nuanced findings regarding time-based support included calendar management support to avoid days filled with meetings and allowances for specialised leave (e.g., leave for charity work).

The literature on organisational leisure support also validated event-based support, which involves events coordinated by the organisation to create a sense of community (Cheng et al., 2020) and facilitate work-life balance (Strassburger et al., 2022). Building on the concept of creating communities, interest group support was found to be critical. The orchestration of interest groups allows employees with similar interests or hobbies to connect (De Bloom et al., 2018; Tessema et al., 2022). However, interest groups covered in the literature are skewed towards specific sports or hobbies. The need for cause-based interest groups (e.g., LGBTQ, disabled persons, and women empowerment groups) was not well covered and represents a new finding from a leisure perspective. Such activities create a sense of belonging and identity for individuals and work to create a space in which they can enjoy their leisure activities.

Leisure facilities covered in the literature included the provision of space and

equipment (e.g., venues and sports fields) to engage in activity-based leisure directly (Cheng et al., 2020; Strassburger et al., 2022). However, findings on inactive leisure facilities, such as those allowing for engagement with the natural environment and quiet rooms, were uncovered in the literature. Finally, working from anywhere was identified as a leisure support constituent. It facilitates flexibility and supports more effective time management without the need to waste productive time on getting ready and travelling to work. The need for hybrid and remote working aligns with the perspectives Guest (2017) and Tessema et al. (2022) shared. A new finding was the need to work from other countries. This enables employees to experience new people, cultures and places and, in some instances, allows them to be closer to family.

7.3   Determinants of Organisational Leisure Support Utilisation

The four determinants of oranisational leisure support were the nature of support (tailored to needs/interests, conditionality, voluntary nature, timing and similarity to work), supportive stakeholders (leaders and team members), communication and coordination.

Literature supports the existence of the determinants with some nuanced findings. Duerden et al. (2018) and Tessema et al. (2022) emphasised the need for diverse and tailored support to align with employee needs. Furthermore, Long and Cooke (2022) criticised the inability of generic support and benefits systems to drive high-quality support experiences. Next, conditional support, such as incentive-based leisure benefits linked to performance outcomes, was found to be a determinant of employees meaningfully engaging with support. Although leisure support incentives were covered in the literature (Cheng et al., 2020; Elbaz et al., 2020), the perception of support not being conditional can be a key driver in employees effectively utilising support and having quality leisure experiences.

Furthermore, there was also a need for support utilisation to be voluntary. When employees feel forced to engage in leisure, utilisation of support was found to be superficial and less meaningful. Therefore, although Elbaz et al. (2020) and Kuykendall et al. (2017) recommend mandating or strongly encouraging engagement in leisure, De Vos et al. (2020) and Kelly et al. (2020) highlighted the need for a more autonomous environment for employees. Timing of support was also key in allowing

for greater autonomy by allowing for more freedom to use benefits in the employees' time of need than when convenient for the organisation. Finally, the similarity of leisure activity to work, in alignment with Kelly et al. (2020), determined whether the employee would meaningfully utilise support.

Supportive stakeholders include leaders, managers and team members. The need for leaders that create a supportive environment that encourages support utilisation was covered by Bakker and Demerouti (2017) and echoed by Kurtessis et al. (2017), Long and Cooke (20220, Saks (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021). However, the role of team members and peers in creating a pro-support environment was muted in leisure support literature. It can be argued that leaders are most critical as they create the culture that drives support utilisation.

Finally, communication and coordination were key in driving engagement with support provided. Bakker and Demerouti highlighted the need for education to drive the usage of job resources, with Long and Cooke (2022) and Strassburger et al. (2022) noting a lack of communication and information as a support usage barrier. Therefore, the need for communication and information sharing, as covered by Cooper et al. (2019), Saks (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021), was validated. Communication needed to be complemented with coordination support through organisation-wide social and leisure committees and personal assistants that orchestrate engagement in leisure support. Despite being a key enabler of utilisation, coordination support was not well covered in leisure support literature.

Finally, although not an organisational support element, the role of self was determined to be a utilisation driver. This regarded the extent to which an individual can switch off from work to engage in leisure meaningfully, manage their own time and ability to communicate their leisure needs and interests. Literature on employee behaviours and personality traits linked to leisure engagement briefly covers individual characteristics. For example, the role of extroversion (De Bloom et al., 2018) and proactive personalities (Abdel-Hadi et al., 2021) in leisure engagement and organisational outcomes is briefly discussed.

7.4 Academic Contribution of the Study

This study has made a significant contribution to advancing literature in HRM and leisure, specifically focusing on addressing the narrow view of resources taken by the JD-R model.

Specifying leisure support constituents has answered the call for specificity regarding leisure support systems by Akgunduz et al. (2019) and Duerden et al. (2018). Furthermore, a well-being-oriented approach to organisational resources that emphasises employee outcomes was lacking in HRM (Long & Cooke, 2022; Saks, 2022) and leisure support (Cheng et al., 2020; Duerden et al., 2018; Strassburger et al., 2022) literature. Therefore, this study's approach emphasised employees' perspectives on leisure support that drive improved subjective well-being.

The definition of utilisation determinants addressed the gap in understanding support utilisation barriers, as raised by Long and Cooke (2022) and Wood et al. (2020). Utilisation determinants were scattered across HRM literature, buried in high-level recommendations regarding mandatory nature of support (De Bloom et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020), fit to individual needs (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Strassburger et al., 2022; Tessema et al., 2020), leadership support (Saks, 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021) and the role of communication (Long and Cooke, 2022). However, studies dedicated to the utilisation drivers of leisure support, particularly, were not found.

Finally, combining the constituents of organisational leisure support and determinants of its utilisation offers a broader view of resources as covered in the JD-R theory (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Additionally, the splitting of constituents and determinants of utilisation indicates that sub-categories of resources exist and play different roles in making the right support available and ensuring a pro-utilisation environment. Taking a well-being-oriented approach to these resources, the goal of improved subject wellbeing also offers a pathway to mutual benefits for the employee and the organisation. Social Exchange Theory supports this, wherein employees feel a greater need to reciprocate when they feel the organisation values them and provides caring and meaningful support (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Guest, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2021).

7.5 Recommendations for Organisations

Various recommendations arise from this study that will help organisations create a healthy blend of support resources for employees. The following paragraphs outline practical recommendations relating to understanding leisure support needs, revising leisure support constituents, manager and leader training, communication and coordination.

Organisations are encouraged to learn more about their employee's leisure interests. Simple tactics such as conducting surveys to learn about employee leisure activity profiles can help identify the mix of leisure preferences at the organisation. For example, this may help connect individuals and departments with common leisure interests. Furthermore, surveys can be used to understand the leisure-work integration challenges and leisure support preferences to understand the challenges and desired leisure support from employee perspectives. This will ensure effective two-way communication.

Insights from surveys should be used to review support constituents in place. Particular attention should be placed on ensuring that the nature of support is suitable to individual needs and preferences as far as possible. To practically achieve this, organisations (HR departments of leisure/social committees) can involve employees in the design of leisure support systems. This will amplify employee voice and create a more caring approach to resource provision.

Organisations should also consider leader and manager training regarding the importance of well-being-oriented leisure support. Training should encourage leaders and managers to learn more about their subordinate's leisure interests to create a supportive environment for leisure engagement. Furthermore, leaders and managers can actively coordinate support, for example, by creating time and space for two-way communication between themselves and subordinates and among team members regarding leisure interests and support required. This will drive a meaningful and consistent utilisation of leisure support across all areas of the organisation.

Organisations should ensure ample communication is put in place to drive awareness of leisure support systems and encourage utilisation. Organisations

should make use of a variety of communication channels, such as organisation-wide emails, WhatsApp groups, and department and team meetings to drive awareness and utilisation.

Finally, organisations should consider how to coordinate support across the organisation best. While HR departments can be viewed as functions responsible for the employee value proposition, dedicated social and leisure committees may help design and plan for the appropriate leisure support across the organisation. At a department and team level, personal assistants can coordinate team socials and team-building events.

7.6   Research Limitations

This study was subject to limitations regarding generalisability, researcher bias, multi-stakeholder triangulation and the study's cross-sectional nature.

Creswell and Poth (2018) indicated that qualitative studies are not generalisable. More specifically, this study was limited to a sample size of 12 participants in the South African financial services industry. Therefore, findings are not generalisable across the board and represent the experiences of the selected young, skilled employees recruited for this study. For example, the lived experiences of individuals with disabilities (not covered in this study) may result in different conceptualisations of support. Additionally, participants in this study all originated from large financial services companies and had exposure to leisure support from their organisations. This may have resulted in individuals sharing imposed structures and frameworks of what leisure support means for their organisation rather than their own untainted views. Therefore, findings from this study must be read with an understanding of participant context to avoid making broad-brushed statements about organisational leisure support for all employees.

Across the study, researcher bias was a limitation. This is characteristic of qualitative studies, particularly descriptive phenomenology (Leigh-Osroosh, 2021; Sundler et al., 2019). This is due to the high reliance on the researcher's approach during the interview process and interpretation of findings. To address this limitation, interview questions and protocol were reviewed with peers and the research supervisor. Furthermore, as recommended by Leigh-Osroosh and Sundler, the researcher

employed bracketing techniques to avoid his perceptions of the phenomenon influencing the findings. This was done by reflecting and writing down his own understanding of the phenomenon before conducting interviews and using the in vivo coding tehnique to stay true to the participant's account of the phenomenon.

This study focuses solely on employees' lived experiences in alignment with the phenomenological approach. Consequently, it lacks triangulation using multi-stakeholder perspectives (e.g., line managers, HR managers, leaders). This was intentionally done to ensure that employee perspectives are amplified due to literature on organisational support skewing toward organisational benefit. Despite this limitation, theoretical triangulation was employed using multiple theories to discuss and interpret findings beyond the core JD-R model (e.g., Conservation of Resources, Super's theory, and Social Exchange Theory).

A cross-sectional approach was used to conduct this study. A limitation of this approach in descriptive phenomenology is that it requires participants to recall their experiences. Furthermore, Pratik and Senik (2022) indicated that recollection bias could affect participants' account of their experiences. For example, happy individuals may reflect on past experiences as worse than they were. However, in descriptive phenomenology, interview tactics ensure that participants reconstruct their experience rather than assigning their own meanings and frameworks to the experience (Broomé, 2022; Leigh-Osroosh, 2021).

7.7 Recommendations for Future Research

Reflecting on the findings and limitations of this study, some recommendations can be made to advance research relating to organisational leisure support and subjective well-being.

Since this study selected individuals from large financial services companies, it is possible that those individuals' conceptualisations of leisure support were influenced by their companies' existing leisure support structures and frameworks. To get more novel insights, future research should target employees of smaller organisations or individuals not exposed to organisational leisure support from organisations. This may introduce a fresh perspective on leisure support.

Furthermore, research focused on distinct groups or types of employees based on specific characteristics may complement and deepen understanding of organisational leisure support. For example, employees who are caregivers, disabled persons or professional athletes may have unique leisure support requirements.

Future research may also focus on gaining perspectives from HR managers and line managers on the structure of organisational leisure support. Gaining different perspectives from other stakeholders may help root findings from this research in the reality resource constraints that organisations face. Such research can be executed using findings from this study as stating point and validating it with HR managers and line managers.

Finally, this research has paved the way for testing propositions in quantitative studies. Specifically, the relationship between constituents of organisational leisure support and subjective well-being with determinants of utilisation as a moderator may be empirically tested. For example, Saks (2022) and Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) have already proposed the moderating role of supportive leadership and management (defined as a determinant of utilisation in this study) in the relationship between well-being-oriented HRM and well-being outcomes. Furthermore, the relative importance of constituents and determinants can be ranked in empirical studies to determine the most impactful blend of resources to drive well-being outcomes.

7.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has helped advance academic debate and practice at the intersection of HRM and leisure. Two key contributions are noted in alignment with the objectives: (1) outlining the prominent constituents of organisational leisure support and (2) understanding the key determinants of leisure support utilisation. Therefore, although the specific design of organisational leisure support and its determinants have been underexplored in literature (Akgunduz et al., 2019; Duerden et al., 2018; Long and Cooke, 2022; Wood et al., 2020), this research paves the way to understand better how organisations can provide well-being-oriented support that demonstrates care and value for employees. This research has highlighted that the provision of organisational support as a resource needs to be approached through a two-way process to ensure the appropriate constituents are in place and that the support is meaningfully utilised to translate to high-quality leisure experiences and

improved subjective well-being.

The findings of this study are, therefore, highly relevant in addressing the challenge of rising work demands and deteriorating wellbeing, especially among younger employees who are under-resourced to cope with life demands (Schroth, 2019; Wood et al., 2020; Zacher & Froidevaux, 2021). This is especially relevant among the South African workforce that is experiencing an exodus of skills (Ferreira & Carbonatto, 2020; Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020).

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9   APPENDICES

9.1   Appendix 1: Interview guide

Introduction

Thank participant for attending and explain the purpose of the research and interview, explaining the importance of the participants experiences and opinions/perspectives. Explain key terms/words to be used.

- The research focuses on employees' experience of leisure support from their organisations.
- This can be in the form of formal HR policies and practices or more informal support to enable employees to fully engage in their leisure lifestyles.
- This is based on the proven relationship between leisure and employee wellbeing.
- While the benefit of leisure is evident (e.g., reduced burnout, improved recovery, relaxation (disconnecting from work), enhanced sense of purpose/meaning), the type and structure of support provided by organisations remains underexplored from employees' perspectives, which is what the research is about.

Interview

Part 1: **Socio-demographic** context
  a) How old are you?
  b) How would you describe the work you do?
  c) Type of company employed at and duration of employment.

Part 2: Do you find your **job challenging in any way**?
  a) Probe: What makes it challenging (good or bad)?

Part 3: Do you make use of **leisure time?**
  a) Probe: What type of leisure activities do you enjoy? Why?
  b) Probe: Do you feel that you can fully engage in your leisure activities (to reap the benefits)?

Part 4: Does your employer provide **leisure related support/benefits**?
  a) Probe: Please describe the type of support/benefits do they provide?
  b) Probe: Do you make use of it? How? What might be the barriers to you making

better use of leisure support/benefits?

c) Probe: Do you experience the benefits of it (wellbeing)?

d) Probe: Have you experienced challenges with the leisure support provided?

e) Probe: How does the support provided make you feel about your relationship with your organisation (positive and negative)?

Part 5: Do you desire **leisure support/benefits** not provided by your employer?

a) Probe: What type of support/benefits do you desire?

b) Probe: Are you aware of support/benefits provided by other organisations in your past employment or to friends/family that you wish you had?

c) Probe: How would this benefit you?

d) Probe: How do you think having these support/benefits this would affect your relationship with your employer?

Closing

Do you have any final thoughts or feedback?

Thank participant and check if they are comfortable being contacted for any follow-up.

9.2 Appendix 2: Informed consent letter

Dear [name of participant]

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA. I am conducting research on employees' experience of leisure support provided by employers in the South African financial services sector. Leisure includes activities that individuals voluntarily partake in as a break from their typical routines and may be physical, non-physical, individual, and group activities based on individual preferences. These activities are seen as a means for recovery, relaxation, or fulfilment and contributes to overall well-being and life satisfaction. It is thus valuable to understand current and desired leisure support from the perspective of employees and how that impacts their relationship with the employer.

The interview is expected to last about an hour. The interview will be conducted online and recorded for analysis purposes. Should you not have enough time in one sitting, the interview may be conducted in parts. The researcher may also reach out to you to gather further insight if needed but only if you are comfortable doing so. All data used will be anonymised, published without identifiers, and stored in a secure cloud storage facility. **Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the process at any point in time, in which case, all collected data will be deleted.**

If you have any concerns, please contact the researcher or supervisor. Our contact details are provided below.

Researcher: xxx   *Supervisor: xxx*
Email: xxx   *Email: xxx*
Cell: xxx xxx xxxx   *Cell: xxx xxx xxxx*

Signature of participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Signature of supervisor: _____ Date: _____

9.3   Appendix 3: Participant communication over email

The following is an example of the communication with participant included in the invite for the interview.

Dear [Participant],

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research on employee experience of organisational leisure support.

About the research: The research focuses on employees' experience of leisure support from their organisations. This can be in the form of formal HR policies and practices or more informal support to enable employees to fully engage in their leisure lifestyles. This is based on the proven relationship between leisure and employee well-being. While the benefit of leisure is evident (e.g., reduced burnout, improved recovery, relaxation (disconnecting from work), enhanced sense of purpose/meaning), the type and structure of support provided by organisations remains underexplored from employees' perspectives, which is what the research is about.

Defining leisure: The definition of leisure in this context is broad and can include ways in which you derive satisfaction, enjoyment, purpose or meaning through activities. Such activities may be sedentary or active in nature and take place either in the work environment or outside the work environment. It provides you with a mechanism to rest, recover, mitigate the impacts of work demands and replenish your personal resources.

Process: The interview will last about an hour and be recorded over MS Teams (link below). Please sign and return the informed consent form which indicates the details I have just shared.

Please treat the interview as a conversation. Let me know if this time works for you.

Regards,

9.4   Appendix 4: Example of transcription services NDA

CONFIDENTIALLY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

It is a condition of engagement that students will assist in preserving all confidential information, ideas and plans; any confidential information or any information in respect of any data gathered, captured or analysed in respect of the research work they undertake in fulfilment of GIBS masters or doctoral degree programmes, in this case the research project titled "employee experience of organisational leisure support" conducted by [Researcher]. The parties under this   agreement agree to the following:

1.   To apply their best efforts to keep any information confidential which has been acquired or may acquire pursuant to the research work. For the purposes of this clause, confidential information excludes information which:

1.1   is publicly available or becomes publicly available through no act or default of any Party;

1.2   was in the possession of a Party prior to its disclosure otherwise than as a result of a breach by any party of any obligation of confidentiality to which it is subject;

1.3   is disclosed to the student by a person which did not acquire the information under an obligation of confidentiality; and

1.4   is independently acquired by a student and as a result of work carried out by a person to whom no disclosure of such information has been made;

2.   No party shall use or disclose confidential information except with the prior written consent of GIBS or in accordance with an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or in order to comply with any law or governmental regulations by which any Party concerned is bound or as may be lawfully requested in writing by any governmental authority.

3.   The party undertakes to permanently delete any electronic copies of confidential information received, and destroy any confidential printed documentation or similar material in their possession promptly once they are no longer required, usually on completion of the service contracted by the student.

4.　　　On completion of the contracted service on behalf of the student, the party is to confirm to the student that they are not in possession of any confidential information.

Signed at_____ on this_____day of_____2023. On behalf of:

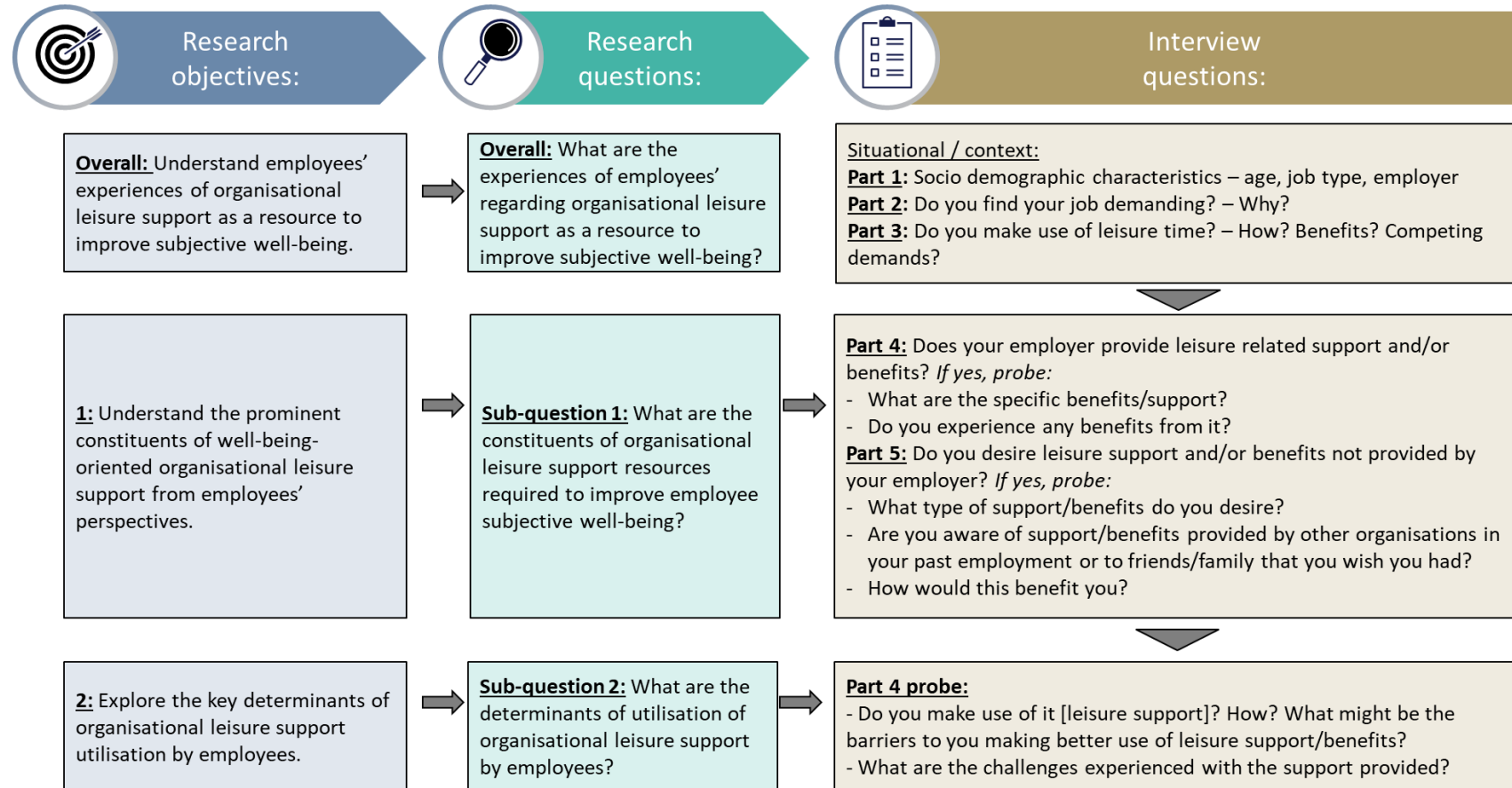_____

Name:_____　　　Signature:_____

duly authorised and warranting such authority

Witness:　_____

9.5 Appendix 5: Demonstrating coherence between research objectives, research questions and interview questions

Figure 4

The link between objectives, research questions and interview questions

Research objectives:	Research questions:	Interview questions:
Overall: Understand employees' experiences of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being.	**Overall:** What are the experiences of employees' regarding organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being?	Situational / context: **Part 1:** Socio demographic characteristics – age, job type, employer **Part 2:** Do you find your job demanding? – Why? **Part 3:** Do you make use of leisure time? – How? Benefits? Competing demands?
1: Understand the prominent constituents of well-being-oriented organisational leisure support from employees' perspectives.	**Sub-question 1:** What are the constituents of organisational leisure support resources required to improve employee subjective well-being?	**Part 4:** Does your employer provide leisure related support and/or benefits? *If yes, probe:* - What are the specific benefits/support? - Do you experience any benefits from it? **Part 5:** Do you desire leisure support and/or benefits not provided by your employer? *If yes, probe:* - What type of support/benefits do you desire? - Are you aware of support/benefits provided by other organisations in your past employment or to friends/family that you wish you had? - How would this benefit you?
2: Explore the key determinants of organisational leisure support utilisation by employees.	**Sub-question 2:** What are the determinants of utilisation of organisational leisure support by employees?	**Part 4 probe:** - Do you make use of it [leisure support]? How? What might be the barriers to you making better use of leisure support/benefits? - What are the challenges experienced with the support provided?

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9.6   Appendix 6: Consistency matrix

Table 5

Consistency matrix to demonstrate coherence

Title: Employee experience of organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being

Research Questions	Literature Review	Data collection tool	Analysis
Overall research question: What are the experiences of employees' regarding organisational leisure support as a resource to improve subjective well-being?	Duerden et al. (2018) Kuykendall et al. (2017) Schroth (2019) Wood et al. (2020) Zacher and Froidevaux (2021)	Semi-structured interview	Descriptive phenomenology – thematic analysis on open ended questions. **Executed through the two sub-research questions below**.
Sub-question 1: What are the constituents of organisational leisure support resources required to improve employee subjective well-being?	Akgunduz et al. (2019) Cheng et al. (2020) Duerden et al. (2018) Guest (2017) Long and Cooke (2022) Saks (2022) Salas-Vallina et al. (2017) Strassburger et al. (2018) Tessema et al. (2020)	Semi-structured interviews – part 4 and part 5.	Descriptive phenomenology – thematic analysis on open ended questions.
Sub-question 2: What are the determinants of utilisation of organisational leisure support by employees?	De Bloom et al. (2018) Kelly et al. (2020) Kurtessis et al. (2017) Long and Cooke (2022) Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) Strassburger et al. (2022) Tessema et al. (2020) Wood et al. (2020)	Semi-structured interviews – Part 4 probes.	Descriptive phenomenology – thematic analysis on open ended questions.