The Qualitative Report

Volume 29 | Number 7 Article 12

8-3-2024

A Qualitative Study on Workplace Mental Wellbeing in the Singapore Context

Chad C E Yip
University of Southern Queensland, chadyip7@gmail.com

M. Anthony Machin
University of Southern Queensland

Yong Wah Goh
University of Southern Queensland

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr

Part of the Industrial and Organizational Psychology Commons, and the Multicultural Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation

Yip, C. C. E., Machin, M. A., & Wah Goh, Y. (2024). A qualitative study on workplace mental wellbeing in the Singapore context. The Qualitative Report, 29(7), 1981-2015. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2024.6795

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Qualitative Report at NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Qualitative Report by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.

A Qualitative Study on Workplace Mental Wellbeing in the Singapore Context

Abstract

Workplace wellbeing is essential for the employee as well as the organisation, but it may not adequately capture the way wellbeing is experienced in Singapore due to its diverse multi-ethnic society imbued with Eastern and Western values. The present study explores Singaporean employees' understanding and perspectives in relation to how they experience wellbeing at the Singapore workplace. With a total of 31 participants consisting of full-time Singaporean employees from 17 industries, we used reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) to interpret the data and develop the themes. These 13 themes are: accomplishment, autonomy, co-worker relationship, employee recognition, fairness, learning and professional development, meaningful work, organisational support, person-organisational fit, role clarity, support from boss, transparency, and work-life balance. This study has elucidated our understanding of workplace wellbeing in the Singapore context and set the direction for further research including the development of a new Singapore Workplace Wellbeing Questionnaire. This will in turn assist in future development of workplace interventions aimed at improving employee outcomes, leading to improved health outcomes in the Singapore population and sustained economic growth and success.

Keywords

employee wellbeing, mental health, Singapore, thematic analysis, wellbeing

Creative Commons License

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License.

Acknowledgements

Our profound thanks go to all who participated and shared their experiences in this study.

This article is available in The Qualitative Report: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol29/iss7/12

The Qualitative Report 2024 Volume 29, Number 7, 1981-2015
https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2024.6795

A Qualitative Study on Workplace Mental Wellbeing in the Singapore Context

Chad Chew Eun Yip[1,2], M. Anthony Machin[1], and Yong Wah Goh[1]
[1]School of Psychology and Wellbeing, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, QLD, Australia.
[2]School of Social and Health Sciences, James Cook University, Singapore

Workplace wellbeing is essential for the employee as well as the organisation, but it may not adequately capture the way wellbeing is experienced in Singapore due to its diverse multi-ethnic society imbued with Eastern and Western values. The present study explores Singaporean employees' understanding and perspectives in relation to how they experience wellbeing at the Singapore workplace. With a total of 31 participants consisting of full-time Singaporean employees from 17 industries, we used reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) to interpret the data and develop the themes. These 13 themes are: accomplishment, autonomy, co-worker relationship, employee recognition, fairness, learning and professional development, meaningful work, organisational support, person-organisational fit, role clarity, support from boss, transparency, and work-life balance. This study has elucidated our understanding of workplace wellbeing in the Singapore context and set the direction for further research including the development of a new Singapore Workplace Wellbeing Questionnaire. This will in turn assist in future development of workplace interventions aimed at improving employee outcomes, leading to improved health outcomes in the Singapore population and sustained economic growth and success.

Keywords: employee wellbeing, mental health, Singapore, thematic analysis, wellbeing

Introduction

The world is in the process of rapid modernisation, as evidenced by turbulent and uncertain economic conditions (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2017; Lopolito et al., 2015). The 21st century has brought about drastic changes at the workplace resulting in a significant impact on individual, organisational, and societal health (Cooper, 2009). It is therefore increasingly important for employers to focus on employee wellbeing for ensuring the success of the organisation (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017; Porath et al., 2012).

Defining Wellbeing

Wellbeing is an important concept for thriving and human flourishing, and some terms such as happiness and quality of life have been used synonymously with wellbeing (Selwyn & Wood, 2015). The two main views that have dominated the field are the hedonic approach and the eudaimonic approach. The hedonic approach focuses on maximising happiness and pleasure and avoiding pain (Deci & Ryan, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The eudaimonic approach refers to personal growth and realising one's potential, meaning and purpose in life,

and living a good life (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993). Ryff and Keyes (1995) asserted that subjective wellbeing in terms of pleasure or happiness is not sufficient for overall wellbeing as one could lead a meaningless life but nonetheless be content. Thus, psychological wellbeing consisting of self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth is actually more important (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Further, Ryan et al. (2008) espoused that the basic human psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness derived from the Self-Determination Theory can be fulfilled by living a life in line with the eudaimonic view of pursing intrinsically-valued goals.

Seligman (2011) proposed a wellbeing theory consisting of five measurable dimensions: Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. This theory expands and extends beyond the notion of happiness and life satisfaction and includes hedonic, eudaimonic, and social wellbeing. Seligman argued that these five dimensions enable one to flourish in different areas of life including ones' work life and go well beyond the traditional measurement of success in purely monetary terms. There is overlap between the two frameworks of wellbeing proposed by Seligman and Ryff and Keyes. However, one noticeable difference is the presence of positive emotion in Seligman's framework as an essential aspect of wellbeing, whereas Ryff and Keyes prioritised the importance of living a meaningful life.

To address how wellbeing can be captured more meaningfully across different nations, Huppert and So (2013) provided an analysis of responses from participants in 23 European countries and proposed a conceptual framework of wellbeing delineating 10 dimensions: competence, emotional stability, engagement, meaning, optimism, positive emotion, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality. Their findings suggest viewing wellbeing from a multi-dimensional perspective, including both the hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives. Despite the fact that the research is conducted with participants from only European countries, the authors recognised and emphasized the role that other factors might come into play to influence the conceptualisation of wellbeing such as cultural values, socio-economic conditions and polices; the promotion of wellbeing therefore lies in a deeper understanding of these factors. In line with the recommendation by the authors, the current research aims to elucidate these factors within the Singapore context.

Mental Wellbeing in the Singapore Context

Singapore is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual society in Southeast Asia, and had a total population of around 5.6 million in 2018. Amongst the resident population, the largest ethnic groups are Chinese (74.3%), followed by Malays (13.4%), Indians (9%), and other ethnic groups (3.3%; Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Republic of Singapore, 2019). Singapore was colonized by Britain in 1819 and later gained independence in 1965 from Malaysia. Many of Singapore's laws are still inherited from British and British-Indian laws. There is also considerable freedom and plurality in the practice of numerous religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Taoism (Tambyah, & Tan, 2013). The national language is Malay, but the other official languages of English, Mandarin, and Tamil are widely spoken by the population. English, however, is the medium for education and business, and is the first language taught in schools. As a result of these historical and cultural demographics, Singapore possesses a unique combination of values influenced by both eastern and western cultures (Leong et al., 2014). Thus, the notion of wellbeing in Singapore is likely to differ from those of any other country, and especially from western, educated, industrialised, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) nations (Schulz et al., 2018).

Singapore has achieved substantial economic growth over the last five decades and now has one of the highest GDP per capita in the world (Tambyah & Tan, 2013). Despite the financial success, Singapore scored low in terms of happiness and life satisfaction when compared to other countries (Vaingankar et al., 2011). This is consistent with previous research indicating that economic growth and material success do not necessarily translate into increased wellbeing (Bunge, 2012; Easterlin, 2017; Mikucka & Sarracino, 2014). Despite having one of the most efficient healthcare systems in the world in terms of life expectancy and relative per capita cost of health care (Lim, 2017), mental health in Singapore has been a low priority until recently. This is mainly due to the high level of stigma attached to mental illnesses and the dire shortage of mental health professionals such as clinical psychologists and medical social workers (Chong, 2007).

The significant impact of mental health and the recognition of the importance of mental wellbeing have prompted the Ministry of Health in Singapore back in 2005 to task a Committee of policy makers and mental health professionals to deliver a number of recommendations including building resilience to mental illness, working towards early detection, reducing stigma, engaging the primary care physicians and building up a network of support in the community, rectifying the shortfall in mental health workers, encouraging research, and lastly, developing a monitoring and evaluation system (Chong, 2007). Launched in 2007, the National Mental Health Blueprint further specifically highlighted the importance of promoting mental wellbeing in the Singapore population including at the workplace, to increase the quality of life of its citizens as well as increase productivity for the nation.

Wellbeing at Work in the Singapore Context

Work is an important element in one's life and it is crucial that an employee experiences positive emotions and functions effectively as part of their wellbeing (Keeman et al., 2017). Life is enriched by work in various ways; it fulfils a variety of needs including personal and family needs (Wong & Yuen, 2012). In the economic context, work is a source of income needed to support families. In the social and psychological contexts, work provides group identification and affiliation and a sense of meaning and purpose (Burke et al., 2009), and meaning in life is further enhanced by individuals experiencing meaning at their work (Steger & Dik, 2009). Work can positively enhance a person's mental health in areas such as social interaction and work skills (Rao & Ramesh, 2015), and the workplace can also be an area for targeted interventions for the prevention of mental health problems (Mykletun & Harvey, 2012).

The Singapore workforce is one of the most unique in the world as it is inherently diverse due to its multi-ethnic society. It embodies Western modernity while retaining its Asian values which in turn influences organisational practices (Yeo & Pang, 2017). For example, Yeo and Pang investigated how organisational communication is influenced by cultural values in Singapore and found that only some traits similar to those found in collectivistic cultures were reflected, thus showing the uniqueness and diversity of the Singapore culture. Using the seven dimensions of Gundykunst's (1998) individualistic and collectivistic perspectives on communication, they found that only self-disclosure and persuasive strategies tended towards individualistic scores while reducing uncertainty, abiding by cultural communication rules, maintaining the face of other, observing turn-taking and reducing conflicts tended towards more of the common rules embedded within a specific cultural context. As different factors such as being positive, communication, management of difficulties and conflicts, socio-emotional skills, and values have been shown to influence wellbeing at the workplace (Biggio & Cortese, 2013), the way that workplace wellbeing is experienced may be unique.

A survey conducted by in 2019 has shed light on employee wellbeing in Singapore; it found that Singaporean employees were experiencing increasing stress levels in due to reasons including increased workloads, increased work expectations, the need to meet tighter deadlines and increased competition, all of which would have a negative impact on employee wellbeing as well as the organisation (Cigna, 2019). Moreover, surveys conducted by Singapore's Health Promotion Board (HPB) previously found that the mental wellbeing scores of working Singaporeans were lower than the general population (adults over the age of 18 who are students, not working or have retired) by 13 per cent, yet only 40 per cent of 12000 small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) expressed interest in investing in the mental wellbeing of their employees due to reasons such as lack of knowledge and resources (HPB, 2012). One of the biggest challenges for Singapore companies is that mental health and stress issues are increasingly having a greater impact on employees' productivity. In addition, the Aon's Asia Pacific (APAC) Benefits Strategy study in 2017 found that in Singapore, 72% of employers see mental issues a concern, yet only 51% have emotional and psychological wellness programmes in place. Moreover, only 62% of companies have plans to implement such programs in the future, which is six percentage points lower than the Asia Pacific average. This is a cause for concern given that mental wellbeing directly impacts on productivity.

Grawitch et al. (2014) reported that even though a substantial amount of research has emphasized the importance of promoting employees' wellbeing, little has been done to clarify the process or possible mechanisms. For example, many workplace interventions are simply individually-based and do not consider how they can be integrated into an organisation's unique practices and processes. This brings into question whether the programs currently in place for companies to promote employees' wellbeing are cross-culturally robust. LaMontagne et al. (2014) claimed that there appears to be a lack of effectiveness in workplace mental health interventions as well as lack of focus on employee wellbeing.

Importance of Workplace Wellbeing

Employee wellbeing has implications for both the employee and the organisation. An employee with low wellbeing is burdened by emotional and psychological difficulties; they are also less productive, makes poorer decisions, and contributes less to the organisation (Danna & Griffin, 1999). The reverse is true: when an employee's wellbeing is at its optimum, they are able to perform optimally at the workplace (Grawitch et al., 2006). When organisations pay attention to the employees by providing the necessary growth factors to promote and support their wellbeing, a reciprocal relationship is created resulting in improved job performance. As mental wellbeing also directly affects how employees think and feel about their job and organisation (Tov & Chan, 2012), it is critical that employers focus on their employees' mental wellbeing as a way for their organisations to grow.

Furthermore, mental and cognitive skills such as creativity, relationship and emotional skills, autonomy and exchange of knowledge, all of which are closely associated with the wellbeing of individuals, have been identified as key factors contributing to individual and collective efficiency within a company (European Network for Workplace Health Promotion, 2010). Thus, these valuable skills can be tapped if the company can create conditions to increase employees' wellbeing.

Marchand et al. (2014) highlighted that very little research has focused on workplace conditions and contexts in capturing employee mental health determinants, which can subsequently impact on workplace interventions as wellbeing needs to be viewed from an individual as well as organisational level. A meta-analysis conducted by Harvey et al. (2017) elucidated the important relationship between workplace characteristics and employee mental health; specifically, the authors identified 12 workplace risk factors that were shown to be

related to common mental health issues: high job demand, low job control, low workplace social support, effort-reward imbalance, low organisational procedural justice, low organisational relational justice, organisational change, job insecurity, temporary employment status, atypical working hours, bullying, and role stress.

Wellbeing Research in Non-Western Context

Hill et al. (2004) reported that the majority of research in work and family has been conducted in developed Western countries which share similar culture valuing individualism; employees are also better supported by government and organisational policies aimed at promoting work and family interface. Given the unique cultural context in Singapore, the workplace and family life environment are therefore likely to present a different set of factors as compared to other countries (Sandberg et al., 2012), such as the presence of Confucian values (Tan, & Tambyah, 2015) and government's push for greater family values (Chan et al., 2000).

Using a structured questionnaire derived and adapted from an earlier QWL study (Miller, 1978), Wyatt and Wah (2001) found that four factors contributed to employees' perceptions of quality of work life and therefore wellbeing in Singapore, including personal growth and autonomy, favourable work environment, nature of the job, stimulating opportunities and co-workers. The study also found that participants showed a preference for autonomy as well as active participation from others at the workplace. The authors concluded that this runs contrary to Hofstede's (1980) research which indicated that cultures that are high on power distance (which includes Singapore), would place less emphasis on participation and democracy. In the unique Singapore context, this might be due to the increasing level of education and living standards changing the perceptions and expectations of workplace (Wyatt, & Wah, 2001).

There is also evidence that some Confucian values continue to remain strong in Singapore. Chan et al. (2000) investigated the sources of work stress using self-administered questionnaires from six professional Singaporean groups and found that employees indicated interpersonal conflicts with superiors as highly stressful due to the Confucian value of placing emphasis on interpersonal harmony, and this effect remained even after their ethnicity was accounted for. Work-family conflict was also cited as one of the major sources of stress due to the strong family values as well as the need to be successful at work inherent in Singapore society; consequently, employees struggled and faced mounting stress when firm commitments to both work and family became irreconcilable (Chan et al., 2000). On the other hand, the study also found that positive personality traits including having a sense of control and a sense of self-esteem helped improve employee mental wellbeing. In fact, as interpersonal harmony is a value strongly emphasised in Singapore, good relationships with colleagues were also found to contribute positively to the work experience and therefore resulted in improved employee wellbeing.

Wong and Yuen (2012) underscored the subtle differences in the meaning of "relationship" as a common concept applicable to both the West and the East; having good interpersonal relationships are important in an individualist Western society because the personal emotional needs of the individuals are met. Having good interpersonal relationships in a collectivist Eastern society means more than satisfying personal emotional needs alone; it is more concerned about preserving interpersonal harmony within the group members so that it puts members in a more advantageous position. In the workplace, having a good relationship with the boss or people of higher status is likely to provide better chances of getting a promotion or more benefits. It is therefore common to find items such as "equitable opportunity" and "fair competition" in self-constructed work values scales in Mainland China (Wong & Yuen, 2012).

This is to highlight how unique relationships at the workplace in Eastern societies can have an impact on employees such as opportunities for promotion.

The Current Study

In recent years, Abdin et al. (2019) indicated that there has been an increasing presence of workplace psychosocial risk factors such as poor organisational climate, introduction of new technologies, leadership and work-family conflict resulting in a decline in employees' wellbeing and negative impact on organisational outcomes such as job dissatisfaction and loss of productivity. As such, research into workplace wellbeing factors in the current climate is needed to combat such workplace risk factors as well as to increase workers' wellbeing. Moreover, it has been highlighted that there is limited research examining non-Western participants perspective of wellbeing from their unique cultural position (Maulana et al., 2018; Schulz et al., 2018).

Moreover, mental wellbeing is significantly associated with many economic development sectors such as employment and education and other Millennium Development Goals as drafted by the United Nations such as improving maternal health and decreasing child mortality (Gureje & Jenkins, 2007). Economic growth is in turn affected by these conditions through their effects on manpower supply, wage growth, and productivity (WHO, 2002). Due to Singapore's extremely small size and limited resources, manpower and productivity are critical to its economic development and growth and success. Employees are therefore the critical drivers of progress in Singapore, and the focus on the wellbeing of Singapore employees is critical to ensure that long term economic growth is sustainable.

In order to understand workplace wellbeing specific to the Singapore context, identifying the organisational factors that contribute to mental wellbeing is therefore needed as well as examining how employee outcomes can be positively enhanced. Thus, the purpose of current study was to elicit the perspectives from Singaporean employees that contribute to mental wellbeing at their workplace. The research question guiding this study included: "What are the important aspects of mental wellbeing in the Singapore workplace and how do organisational factors influence them?"

This qualitative study sought to add on to the pool of evidence-based knowledge and solutions to improve mental wellbeing at the workplace specifically in the Singapore context.

Author's Research Note

The first author is a clinical psychologist who has worked in a variety of settings including the social service and private sectors. He strongly believes that every individual has the potential to live a meaningful and productive life through the appreciation of their unique strengths and actualizing potentials. Being a Singaporean who has studied and lived in abroad (Australia and New Zealand) for 14 years, he has noticed that workplace wellbeing in Singapore is generally low as compared to the Western counterparts and mental wellbeing had not been a priority especially before Covid-19 hit. He was therefore inspired to embark on his Ph.D. study journey in 2017 with the aim of developing a culturally relevant workplace wellbeing instrument in Singapore, as no instrument relevant for use in the local context was available to his knowledge at that time. He believed that such an instrument would bring greater awareness into workplace wellbeing and lead to the development of best practice, standards, guidelines, and interventions. This is to ensure that employee wellbeing remains the focus for the organisation to thrive and remain competitive in today's challenging economy through greater productivity and reduced negative psychological consequences. The second and third authors are the supervisory team from the School of Psychology and Wellbeing at the

University of Southern Queensland, Australia. The second author is an Emeritus Professor and has extensive experience in the area of occupational health psychology. The third author is an organisational psychologist and his areas of expertise include occupational stress and wellbeing across cultures, mindfulness, and sustainability. All three authors were highly invested in increasing the wellbeing of every individual in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study adopted a thematic qualitative approach which aimed to explore participants' experience of workplace wellbeing in the Singapore context. Thematic analysis is one of the most widely used methods and is suitable for use in a diverse range of epistemologies and research questions including realist, phenomenological, or social constructionist questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). It is also well-suited to investigate an area that may be under-researched with the views of participants not normally listened to (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, it has been emphasized that reflexivity is an essential component of good qualitative research as it brings in and acknowledges the researcher's own role in conducting the research thereby enriching the research data and outcomes with meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Willig, 2013). Together with its clear methodological structure and flexible approach in identifying concepts pertaining to the research questions, the use of reflexive thematic analysis was therefore deemed appropriate for the current study.

Willig (2013) highlighted that the use of focus groups leverages on a number of key elements that allow for the generation of rich data. For example, the conversations that occur during the focus groups between participants provide the researcher a significant amount of information including the participants' attitudes, viewpoints, and meanings in relation to the research topic of interest. As such, focus groups as compared to one-on-one interviews, provide a more natural setting where interaction within a social group takes place thereby offering high ecological validity in the data generated (Willig, 2013). Ecological validity, which involves looking at the relationship between the findings of the research and its application to real life settings, is seen to be most relevant to qualitative research. As further pointed out by Lune and Berg (2017), the meanings and responses elicited during the discussions in focus groups are not only socially constructed as compared to individually constructed one-on-on interviews, but also reflect the participants' interests rather than the researcher's interest, all of which help to enhance the validity of the data generated. Moreover, focus group discussions enable an issue or area of interest to be understood in greater depths and details, and they also allow participants to contribute with minimal effort to the discussions, yet at the same, allow them to feel heard and understood (Bader & Rossi, 2002). As conversations in focus groups are innately social in structure where every participant has to conform to the social norms just like in the real world, the use of focus groups in research thus allows knowledge and insights to be obtained on a particular phenomenon in real life (Cyr, 2019).

Participants

A total of 31 employees from different industries participated in six focus groups. The size of the six focus groups conducted ranged from four to seven participants. Willig (2013) suggested that there should not have more than six to eight participants in each focus group so that every participant can fully participate in the discussion. A number totalling 30 or more participants conducted through a series of a few small focus groups is appropriate for a full study as indicated by Lune and Berg (2017). Only Singapore citizens who were working full-

time in Singapore were eligible to participate in the research. In total, 21 females and 10 males with an age range of 29 to 63 took part in the focus group study. The majority were Chinese (28) followed by Indians (2) and Malay (1). Participant numbers, gender, and employee categories in each of the focus groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Table of Focus Group Participants

	Participants (P)		
Focus Group (FG)	n	Gender	Industries
One (FG1)	5	3 females, 2 males	Administrative, Customer Service, Healthcare
Two (FG2)	7	5 females, 2 males	Design, Finance, Manufacturing, Marketing, Music, Travel
Three (FG3)	5	3 females, 2 males	Administrative, Healthcare, Management, Retail
Four (FG4)	4	3 females, 1 male	Construction, Executive (Government), Healthcare (Government), Law,
Five (FG5)	5	3 females, 2 males	Education, Healthcare
Six (FG6)	5	3 females, 1 male	Accounting, Administrative, Healthcare, Logistics

Data Collection

The researcher recruited participants for the focus group directly through personal contacts via email and/or telephone, word-of-mouth, as well as through recommendations and snowballing by the participants such as their colleagues or peers. The researcher contacted all the 31 employees who forwarded an expression of interest either through emails or mobile messages to establish availability and arranged for the focus groups to be conducted on specific dates online via the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) zoom platform. The researcher conducted all six focus groups within a 3-month period in 2019. Each of the six focus groups

lasted between 1 hour to 1.5 hours. The researcher obtained signed informed consent was from the participants prior to the commencement of the discussion in each focus group.

The researcher provided an overview of the study purpose as well as the definition of mental wellbeing in relation to the workplace. The researcher confirmed with the participants that they had read and understood the information sheet provided to them and informed the participants of the confidential nature of the discussion and that the focus group session would be audio-recorded to ensure that all information could be accurately captured and transcribed later. The researcher also reminded the participants that no names would be identified in any way during the transcription process.

A semi-structured interview schedule was deemed to be the most appropriate which allowed for participants to respond using their own words and meanings (Willig, 2013). The researcher provided definitions of mental wellbeing and mental wellbeing at the workplace to the participants. This was to ensure that participants would have the same understanding of these definitions to facilitate the discussions. All authors developed the questions for the focus groups to guide the discussions to identify factors that contributed to mental wellbeing at the workplace. Examples of these questions include: What are the key factors that determine your sense of wellbeing at the workplace," "why do these factors, as you shared earlier, determine your sense of wellbeing at the workplace," "could you give me a few examples of the things or things you are doing that contributes to your sense of wellbeing at work," and "what do you think are some of the outcomes that an employee might identify with or strive for at the workplace?" Ethical approval was given by USQ Human Research Ethics Committee on the 13th of November 2019. The approval number is H19REA253.

Analysis

The analysis of the transcribed data that followed the six phases of thematic analysis delineated by Braun and Clarke (2006) was conducted by the first author. Using a largely inductive process within a critical realist paradigm where knowledge is accessed through a subjective and socially constructed lens such as history and cultural background (Braun & Clarke, 2013), semantic and/or explicit themes within the data were identified. The thematic analysis allowed for the identification of repeated patterns of meaning or themes across the six focus group data sets without adherence to a specific theoretical position. The analysis of the data did not look beyond what the participants in the focus groups had said in order to identify ideas, conceptualization or ideologies that might have altered or informed the semantic content of the data, such as the use of grounded theory with a more constructionist approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The themes identified were clear and explicit with the data extracts containing many of the actual titles of the themes. A review of research literature was conducted to help interpret and refine the data to ensure clarity of the more theoretical extracted themes where the actual title of the theme did not come from the data extracts (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Further, as a theme can be viewed from different perspectives, negative or disconfirming ideas or information from the data extracts that were contrary to the themes were also included in the analysis to increase credibility of the account (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The first phase of analysis consisted of checking the data files and transcripts for any mistakes after having the data transcribed into written form by the professional transcription service. This was followed by repeated readings of each of the focus group dataset to ensure complete familiarization of the data. The second phase consisted of generating and listing initial interesting codes from the transcripts. A worked example of the initial listing of codes in this phase is presented in Table 2. Braun and Clarke's (2013) emphasized that it is important to "produce insights into the meaning of the data that go beyond the obvious or surface-level

content of the data, to notice patterns or meanings that link to broader psychological, social or theoretical concerns" (pp. 201, 204). Thus, as the initial coding process proceeded across the six focus group data sets, key patterns related to factors that contributed to workplace mental wellbeing became more noticeable, and similarities as well as differences across the data sets also became more apparent. The third phase consisted of analyzing, reviewing, and clustering the codes according to their similarity from which themes were eventually created. The themes were named in accordance with the perceived meaning and representation of the codes. As emphasized by Braun and Clark (2006, 2013), the analysis of the data was a recursive process moving back and forth throughout the six-phase process. As the process moved into phase four, three overarching themes and 13 themes were eventually identified. Constant revisiting of the transcripts and codes was done to ensure all meaningful patterns across the data sets were analyzed. Phase five consisted of further reviewing all the themes by a final re-read of all the data items across the entire data sets to ensure that the themes identified captured the meaning of the whole data set in relation to the research question, that is, factors that contributed to mental wellbeing at the Singapore workplace. The second and third authors conducted an iterative process and mutually agreed on the three overarching themes and 13 themes.

Table 2
A Worked Example of the Initial Coding Stage

Data	**Codes**
Moderator: It makes you feel good to come to work because?	
P4: You look forward to, you want to come to work because you're in a good environment. You have people you want to meet. People you want to work with and strive to a common goal.	Supportive environment, non-toxic Meaning of good environment? Supportive boss Supportive colleagues Physically safe environment Psychologically safe environment Good social relationship with colleagues/boss Good working relationship with colleagues/boss Common goal and aspiration, clear roles
P2: Because the work experience is enjoyable and pleasant. P4: Yes. P2: You don't feel like it is a chore.	Being supported at work - from others (colleagues, boss) and organisation Clear expectations and role Work is meaningful Learning opportunities Variety of tasks/less monotonous Able to make decisions Feeling competent, able to accomplish task Good fit with the job/organisation Job satisfaction
P5: Or it's like what P2 say you feel I'm going to get verbal abused today. I don't know what is next. You enjoy coming to work because you will have the same respect from your colleagues. You don't feel threatened. You have a say in the company with your opinions. That makes work enjoyable.	Uncertainty and fear at work (abuse)/toxic environment - negative Feeling emotionally/psychologically/physically safe Feeling respected as a person, same respect for everyone

	Discrimination and abuse free. Who is responsible? Boss? Organisation? Having a voice at work, being listened to Being happy at work is possible
P3: I will also say good interpersonal relationships also mean you have goodwill support from your colleagues. That's very important because teamwork you can do it.	Importance of forming good social relationships with colleagues Importance of good working relationship with colleagues to accomplish tasks No task is difficult with good support Support for one another, trust
P6: Teamwork makes it doable.	Importance of good relationship between colleagues, work becomes easier. Clear goals and vision Productivity

Braun and Clarke (2013) addressed several criteria as well as issues with regards to conducting qualitative research of good quality. Specifically, the authors highlighted that reliability is not a suitable criterion for evaluating qualitative research in the quantitative sense; qualitative methods acknowledge the context-specific nature of reality, with interpretations and meanings generated by the active researcher who inevitably influences the research process which in turn renders coding reliability an unsuitable criterion. Rather, reliability in qualitative research should be conceived as "trustworthiness" by following a set of guidelines, namely, the 15-point criteria check as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013) which the current study adhered to. The researcher took care to acknowledge his own theoretical commitment for the data to be imbued with meanings, and the interpretations of the data were implicitly shaped by theory and past research pertaining to psychological wellbeing, workplace wellbeing factors and the Singapore workplace context. In addition, the current research study also adhered to the general framework consisting of four core principles, "sensitivity to context," "commitment and rigour," "transparency and coherence," and "impact and important" developed by Yardley (2000, 2008) to guide quality qualitative research. As explained by Braun and Clarke (2013), Yardley's principles are open and flexible and are applicable to conducting qualitative research in diverse orientations. These four core principles and their application in the current research study are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 3

The Application of the Four Core Qualitative Research Principles by Yardley (2000, 2008) to the Current Research Study

1. Sensitivity to context

The researcher showed sensitivity to context through several ways. Firstly, the researcher critically reviewed existing literature and investigation methods relating to topic being studied, that is, workplace mental wellbeing. Secondly, the researcher was sensitive to context in which the study was conducted, that is, participants in the Singapore workplace context, as well as participants' perspectives. Thirdly, the researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines including being sensitive to participants' viewpoints as well as to the interpretation of the data ensuring the researcher's own perspectives and position were not imposed. This ensured that all participants were respected especially given that Singapore is a multiracial and multicultural country.

2. Commitment and rigour

The researcher demonstrated commitment and rigour by paying attention to each stage of the analysis process based on well-established guidelines (qualitative research and thematic analysis guidelines)

including literature review, data collection, methodology, analysis and interpretation of data and report writing.

3. Transparency and coherence

The researcher demonstrated transparency and coherence in two ways. Firstly, each stage of the research process was documented and provided in detail, and sound analysis, interpretations and reporting were made ensuring a good fit between the research question and underlying epistemological assumptions. Secondly, the use of reflexivity towards the research process was continuously emphasized. As previously mentioned, the importance of reflexivity was an important aspect of qualitative research as a way of to enrich the research process and outcomes (Willig, 2013).

4. Impact and importance

The researcher demonstrated the impact and importance of the current research study through gaining greater understanding and insights into the research topic of interest, that is, workplace wellbeing in the Singapore context, and how the results of the study could be applied to workplaces and inform interventions for positive change towards greater employee wellbeing and productivity.

Results

The analysis of the data identified 13 sub-themes which have been grouped into three overarching themes, and they in turn help define workplace factors contributing to employee mental wellbeing. The overarching theme of Workplace Experience consists of Autonomy, Accomplishment, Role Clarity, Person-Organisation Fit, Learning and Professional Development, Meaningful Work, and Work-Life Balance. The overarching theme of Workplace Relationships consists of Support from Boss and Co-worker Relationships. The overarching theme of Organisational Culture consists of Fairness, Organisational Support, and Transparency. These three overarching themes and 13 themes are presented in Table 3.

Table 4
Overarching Themes and Themes

Overarching Themes	**Themes**
Workplace Experience	• Autonomy • Role Clarity • Work-Life Balance • Learning and Professional Development • Meaningful Work • Accomplishment • Person-Organisation Fit • Organisational Support
Workplace Relationships	• Co-worker relationships • Support from Boss
Organisational Culture	• Fairness • Transparency • Employee Recognition

Overarching Theme 1: Workplace Experience

Autonomy

The first theme that emerged from our data analysis was the sense of autonomy that the participants highly valued when doing their job. In fact, this was a very strong theme shared by all the participants. As shared by participant 1 from focus group 5:

> Autonomy, like what participant 2 has mentioned is very important to me…to make decisions that are within whatever that I need to do. I'm not being questioned all the time as to why I make certain decisions, but that I'm being trusted by my bosses that I have the organisation or client's interest at heart.

Participant 1 made it very clear that being able to make decisions on his own and being trusted is essential. Indeed, autonomy is concerned with the amount of flexibility, freedom, and independence in deciding how work is done (Avinandan & Neeru, 2006). Self-Determination Theory as proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985), states that the experience of having autonomy, alongside relatedness and feeling competence, are needed to foster intrinsic motivation to enhance growth and wellbeing. At the workplace, these factors can have a significant impact on learning, achievement, employee motivation, wellness, and productivity (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Moreover, the consequences of not having adequate autonomy at work is described by participant 3 in focus group 5: "If the workplace is very rigid and inflexible and the boss is very top-down, I think someone said earlier about finding the rules very micromanaging…then it gets very suffocating and difficult to work."

This extract demonstrates that in addition to the lack of autonomy, the unnecessary scrutiny and micromanagement style implemented by supervisors can result in an undesirable psychological consequence of developing negative emotions such as anxiety and "feeling trapped." This suggests that having autonomy at work not only contributes to mental wellbeing at work, but the lack of it is likely to contribute to negative psychological consequences.

The experience of autonomy was found to be positively associated with numerous wellbeing outcomes such as self-esteem and self-actualization (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The experience of job autonomy as a key ingredient in psychological wellbeing and workplace wellbeing has similarly been well-documented (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Employees are more likely to be satisfied with the jobs and more trusting of their organisations (Deci et al., 1989) and experience greater wellbeing (Baard et al., 2004; Deci et al., 2001; Lynch et al., 2005) when their managers are autonomy supportive. Further, Deci and Ryan (2008) argued that the basic psychological needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy are universal across different cultures with research supporting that the satisfaction of the autonomy need enhances psychological wellbeing in both Western and Eastern cultures. The current study supported the theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (2008) that autonomy is universal across different cultures as well as supported the earlier study by Wyatt and Wah (2001) that Singapore employees value having autonomy at work despite Singapore being a more collectivist country. This is in contrary to the notion that employees in collectivistic societies place less emphasis on job autonomy as compared to employees in individualistic societies (Shi, 2011), which suggests the uniqueness of the workplace in the Singapore context.

Role Clarity

The second theme that emerged, role clarity, refers to the degree to which employees receive sufficient information as well as understanding to complete tasks and perform their role (Nansubuga & Munene, 2013). Participants highlighted the need for clear expectations so that the job can be performed with confidence thereby helping to reduce feelings of uncertainty and confusion. As shared by participant 1 in focus group 3: "…with clearer expectations from the superiors and clearer instructions…you accomplish what is it that you're supposed to do…that gives you the satisfaction at work too, and that defines who you are in the long run too."

On the other hand, the lack of role clarity can have negative consequences. Participant 1 in focus group 4 highlighted that without such clarity, it is inevitable that problems would surface at work: "They expect you know. What's your expectation? What's your expectation or your so-called protocol from your department? You don't explain to people, but you just say it. Of course, issues are bound to happen."

Indeed, role clarity has been widely acknowledged as an important factor in reducing work stress thereby enhancing employee mental wellbeing (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991). It helps employees understand their role thereby increasing the perceptions of competence (Wynne & Stringer, 1997) and avoiding unnecessary workload (Choo, 2017). Although a lack of role clarity exists in every job and role to some degree which can indirectly encourage an employee's learning and problem-solving skills (Savelsbergh et al., 2012), a high degree of a lack of role clarity can generate an unhealthy level of stress and frustration at the job (Schaubroeck et al., 2006) thereby decreasing job performance (Gilboa et al., 2008).

Work-Life Balance

The third theme was the participants' expression of the need for work-life balance to achieve better wellbeing at work. Work-life balance can be defined as how employees fulfil their multiple roles effectively in both the work and non-work domains alongside their immediate priorities in life (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). As illustrated by participant 1 from focus group 2: "There are more and more people who actually choose to be single and not have families or have animals or have partners of the same gender. They are different. Families come in all shapes and sizes."

This excerpt suggests that life outside work can include people who have traditional family duties such as being a parent, but also include people who choose to pursue other personal interests such as having partners of the same gender and caring for pets. This points to a shift in attitude and behaviour toward engaging in non-traditional choices or leisure activities in Singapore, and having a work-life balance is essential for employees regardless of the choices they make in their personal lives.

Having a balanced work-life is also concordant with one's life (Chandra, 2012) and having the opportunity to do what matters apart from work (Kossek et al., 2014) was recognized by participant 5 in focus group 6:

> For me, mental wellbeing at work means able to have a good work-life balance in terms of able to go home on time and the work that I'm given…flexibility work time should be something that should be done to encourage the work-life balance…I value other things more than work, much more than work…

Participant 5 in this quote pointed out that having a work-balance is a personal responsibility as well as an organisational responsibility, suggesting that workplace support for work-life balance is essential or it would be difficult for the employee to execute it. As

highlighted by Wyatt and Wah (2001) who found that Singaporean employees placed a significant emphasis on family and social life and therefore tended to avoid shift work, employees in collectivistic country such as Singapore are also more likely to comply with bosses' instructions (Le et al., 2020). It is vital to proactively emphasize the need for work-life balance at the personal as well as organisational level.

Learning and Professional Development

The fourth theme that emerged was the participants' need for learning experiences that are related to their job or role. This can be termed as professional development (Hayes, 2010). Specifically, participation in professional development enables an employee to learn and apply new knowledge and skills leading to improved job performance. Workplace learning can consist of both formal and informal learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990), has been found to be associated with several positive employee outcomes such as self-confidence, job satisfaction (Huo & Boxall, 2020) and wellbeing (Michalos, 2008). Participant 3 in focus group 5 explained the need for such learning so that professional growth is not stagnant: "…being able to attend workshops…professional development type seminars to improve on my skills…I think that's very important for me to constantly be improving my skill set…so that you're constantly evolving and you're not staying stagnant…"

Participant 5 emphasized the need for continuous learning to stay relevant at work. Indeed, the experience of learning generates numerous positive changes for the employees such as enhancing their skills and competence helping them to manage their work demands more effectively (Holman & Wall, 2002). This in turn generates higher levels of work engagement, since work engagement contributes positively to employee health and wellbeing and organisational outcomes (Halbesleben, 2010; Salanova et al., 2010).

The experience of learning can also come from colleagues who are more senior at work when participants shared what made them "feel good" at work. As explained by participant 5 in focus group: "I am still learning at work… I'm always learning from the seniors."

This excerpt suggests that the experience of learning from colleagues who are more senior at work can have a significant impact on wellbeing; it may be that the relationship between the employee and the senior is more heavily emphasized in an employee-supervisor relationship owing to the higher degree of power distance found in collectivistic cultures (Huo & Boxall, 2020) such as Singapore. This appears to support the collectivist and Confucian view whereby the mentorship provided by the seniors signifies two unique aspects in the Singapore context; first, employees prefer learning from their seniors due to the authority they command. Second, the support provided by the seniors becomes more family-like and can extend beyond the professional work context into the personal life context (Zhou et al., 2019) thereby increasing the "feel good" positive affect.

Thus, as employees actively and voluntarily seek learning and professional development, it is also vital that organisations provide such opportunities. Consistent with the findings by Wyatt and Wah (2001) which found that Singaporean employees highly valued stimulating opportunities, it was important for them to receive ongoing learning as well as opportunity to fully utilise their abilities and apply what was learned.

Meaningful Work

The fifth theme relates to the participants' view of living a good life which involves experiencing meaningfulness at work. The ability to acquire meaning from one's experiences in life plays a critical role in one's psychological wellbeing (King et al., 2006; Ryff & Singer, 1998). Although individuals can experience wellbeing at the global (life) and domain (work)

levels (Steger & Dik, 2009), meaningful work refers to the extent employees derive meaning from work (domain level) thereby increasing their level of wellbeing. This importance of meaningful work was emphasized by participant 2 in focus group 4:

> …one other element which is meaningful work…key factor for wellbeing so I can have a good cause. I have good colleagues, we all have coffee, but then there's nothing very meaningful to do. Meaning for what is translated into fulfilment, satisfaction, work satisfaction, stuff like that.

Participant 2 defined meaning at work as a form of personal fulfillment and satisfaction which underpins her wellbeing. Offering another view, participant 5 in focus group 5 highlighted that she was motivated to find meaning at work rather than just earning a salary; in fact, she wanted to have a positive impact on people and the society:

> ...another thing that will contribute to my wellbeing at work will be the sense that I'm actually contributing, the sense that I am actually making an impact… if I'm paid a lot but I don't feel as if I'm making a contribution or a change or a difference in somebody's life, then I think I'll feel very bothered by it…

Steger et al. (2012) defined meaningful work as comprising three components from the eudaimonic viewpoint - positive meaning in work, work to create meaning, and the belief that work contributes to the greater good. Arnold et al. (2007) found that people who experience meaningful work also experience greater wellbeing including psychological wellbeing and mental health. Greater job satisfaction has also been found when employees report their work as meaningful (Kamdron, 2005) and when they perceive their work contributes to a greater cause (Sparks & Schenk, 2001). Although Singapore places high emphasis on personal income as measures of success (Fen et al., 2013), the current study has revealed that employees also place great emphasis on the importance and value of having meaningful work.

Accomplishment

The sixth theme that emerged relates to accomplishment, which can be objectively quantified and sought after even if it does not bring about a sense of meaning for the individual (Lovett & Lovett, 2016). This can include extrinsic rewards and successes where strong performance is often the focus in Western societies (Butler & Kern, 2016). Moreover, accomplishment can involve having self-efficacy and utilizing different skillsets necessary in the completion of tasks and achieving goals, thereby resulting in increased wellbeing (Butler & Kern, 2016). The current study found that subjective feelings of accomplishment to be an important factor contributing to workplace wellbeing.

Participant 5 from focus group 6 described her sense of accomplishment and "feel good" feeling as a journey of having mastery and working towards achieving a goal, which in turn gave her a sense of meaning:

> …everyone finds meaning in a different way. If I feel like I am helping the company, then I feel good about it…we have a new acquisition and we're just trying to integrate a new entity and seeing that's slowly coming together, I enjoyed that part of it. (F6P5)

Sharing a slightly different view, Participant 1 from focus group 3 commented:

> I think work, to a certain extent, defines our identity…if it is meaningful and you know you're contributing, you have accomplished something…more than just feeling good, but I'm not sure whether you equate feeling accomplished being able to contribute as just a good feeling or there's more to…

Her view suggests that work gave her a sense of identity as well as a sense of accomplishment that goes beyond the hedonic viewpoint of "feeling good," which suggests positive psychological functioning including meaning and realising one's potential in life.

Indeed, competence forms one of the three tenets in underpinning human thriving through the satisfaction of the core human psychological needs in the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Having a sense of accomplishment which involves working toward and achieving goals, master and efficacy, is important at work (Butler & Kern, 2016). Beyond material success, Singaporean employees are likely to value a subjective sense of accomplishment. This may stem from their changing needs and expectations as a high level of education and standards of living are already achieved through an objective sense of accomplishment. Moreover, there is positive correlation between having a subjective sense of achievement and positive affect (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000) which in turn is one of the important factors in building good relationships with other people (Moore et al., 2018).

Person-Organisation Fit

The seventh theme relates to the participants' view on person-organisation fit. Several definitions of fit exist between an employee and their work environment (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). Of relevance to the current study, person-organisation fit refers to the extent that an employee's characteristics such as personality, philosophy, values, skills, abilities, attitudes, and needs concur with those of the organisation (Aamodt, 2016). Knowledge and skillsets for the job are no longer sufficient employees to be satisfied and productive, as differences in personal values and organisational values can result in increased stress level, reduced job satisfaction and higher employee turnover (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Srivastava, 2011). It is also important for individuals to fulfil their higher order needs such as internal prosocial values (Hu et al., 2016) which then leads to increased psychological wellbeing (Chung et al., 2019). For example, participant 4 from focus group 5 shared:

> ..it's important that whichever company you work in, the direction align with your internal needs…not just grow, it has to be a good fit as well…take for example, if you a person who's an introvert, and your current job require you to be an extrovert to meet with your client, you'll feel very uncomfortable…say if you're looking at an individual personal point of view, then the company has to be a fit for the person instead of the other way round.

He spoke of the need to shift of responsibility toward the organisation in eliciting the needs of employees and creating opportunities and roles most suited for them thereby ensuring a good person-organisation fit. As pointed out by Aamodt (2016), employees are likely to experience a heightened level of stress when there is a lack of good fit, and employees whose needs are not met are also likely to be dissatisfied.

A good person-organisational fit occurs when the employee's characteristics match those of the organisation, and this in turn helps to enhance employee's intrinsic motivations, and job involvement (Leung & Chaturvedi, 2011). From the Self-Determination Theory perspective (Deci & Ryan, 2000), a good fit between the employees and their organisation in terms of similar values and a match of skills and abilities to the demands of the job satisfies

their psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, leading to greater commitment to the organisation and work performance (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). In turn, the satisfaction of these three psychological needs improves wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Further, research has suggested that generalization of an employee's fit with the organisation is an important area of investigation cross-culturally (Gelfand et al., 2007). In the study conducted by Greguras and Diefendorff (2009) with Singaporean employees in the non-Western Asian context, the findings showed the relevance of person-organisation fit in predicting employees' attitudes and behaviours from the self-determination theory perspective. The current study expands on the study by Greguras and Diefendorff to investigate the extent identified factors contributing to workplace mental wellbeing predicts employee outcomes within the Singaporean context.

Organisational Support

The eighth theme that emerged was the participants' view on the importance of organisational support. Organisational support refers to the extent the employees view their organisation as taking an interest in their wellbeing and valuing their contributions (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It can come in various ways such as appreciating the efforts put in by the employees, assisting them in times of need such as sickness, providing them with stimulating work and ensuring a good working environment for them (Aubé et al., 2007). The support provided can also be socioemotional in nature such as showing concern and respect for the employees (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). As expressed by participant 1 from focus group 2:

> They actually get speakers to come into the office to talk about various types of mental health issues that they can experience at work. I think it's interesting that companies are starting to do that, but they are more supportive companies.

This quote illustrates the importance for organisations to genuinely care for their employees' wellbeing and to provide the necessary means to support them such as promoting mental wellbeing initiatives. However, she also noted that such support is uncommon in Singapore. It is important for the organisation to have the appropriate means to provide help in a timely manner when employees encounter difficulties at work. A strong organisational support system is necessary to reduce a sense of helplessness which would have a negative impact on mental wellbeing. Perceived organisational support is an important factor in enhancing employee psychological wellbeing (Kurtessis et al., 2017); employees are more likely to identify with and commit to the organisation when they perceive adequate organisational support as meeting their socioemotional needs including approval, increased self-esteem and emotional support thereby leading to better wellbeing. Employees who are treated well are also more likely to have a greater emotional affinity with their organisations leading to improved work performance (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). Consistent with the findings by Wyatt and Wah (2001), Singaporean employees emphasized the importance of management support and understanding.

Overarching Theme 2: Workplace Relationships

Co-worker Relationships

The ninth theme captured the importance and the need for employees to have good relationship with one another. This is important from a basic human need perspective that

humans are social beings with a fundamental need to interact, connect and belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). From a social wellbeing perspective, having positive relationships with others enhances positive mental health, and increasing educational level is also likely to contribute to increased social wellbeing (Keyes, 1998). In the Singapore context where there is a generally a high level of educational level amongst employees, social wellbeing remains the focus at the workplace where employees can tap into the usefulness of having positive co-worker relationships. As described by participant 2 from focus group 3:

> … even though we had a bad superior or management, I think the colleagues is more important because I think it's like a safety net for your opinions and decisions in work…for us to feel safe at work…it creates that bond. I'm not in this alone…my feelings are valid…

This excerpt illustrates how having a close relationship with colleagues can provide significant support especially in times of stress. This relationship creates emotional safety net in which they find comfort in sharing their emotions and feeling supported. The theme of co-worker relationship epitomizes the fundamental human need to form social bonds. People form interpersonal bonds and friendships from a range of experiences and from having the opportunity to interact frequently (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Relatedness, described as being socially connected, is a basic psychological need through which colleagues feel cared for one another as members of the same group (Ryan & Deci, 2017), thereby contributing to employee wellbeing. This also highlighted the need for interpersonal harmony within amongst co-workers in a collectivistic culture in Singapore as indicated by the earlier study by Wyatt and Wah (2001).

Support from Boss

The tenth theme involved participants' significant emphasis on the relationship with the boss. Together with having positive relationships with colleagues, this completes the overarching need for humans to connect with one another as social beings. However, there are key differences - having a good relationship with the boss entails receiving various forms of support from them in a way that would help them perform to the best of their abilities thereby enhancing their wellbeing. These forms of support can include both professional support and emotional support. As participant 1 from focus group 6 explained:

> Having a boss that is approachable is also good for the mental wellbeing… relations between the colleagues, between the bosses are the most important because we don't just work alone, we work with people…like right now, the company I'm working in, there is completely no politics at all. Everyone is very upfront with each other…

This excerpt illustrates the importance for the boss to be approachable so that difficulties at work can be shared and communicated honestly and openly without any repercussion. As she stated, the absence of office politics at her workplace lies in the way that every person including the boss at the workplace was able to express honest opinions. In fact, the smaller organisation she was working at is suggestive of the "family culture" in Singapore in which every employee is valued like a family member and shows concern and care openly thereby creating a sense of belonging and togetherness (Low, 2011).

A leader, such as the boss, can be described as any person who can exert an influence over another person or a team toward achieving a goal (Bryman, 1996). Although it is often

challenging to ascertain what makes a good leader (Pastorino, & Doyle-Portillo, 2019), Sivanathan et al. (2004) highlighted the importance of enhancing employee wellbeing through having a positive leader. In the Singapore context, participants also expected greater emotional support from their boss in in the form of a "family culture," which is in line with the Confucian view that people preserve relationships in a family-like manner (Li, 2007).

Overarching Theme 3: Organisational Culture

Fairness

The eleventh theme relates to fairness, which is one of the most basic concerns in society. Perceptions of fairness refer to how employees perceive fairness in terms of how equal they are being treated in two main areas, namely, distributive and procedural fairness (Brotheridge, 2003). Distributive fairness refers to the equal distribution of outcome related resources such as work, privileges and responsibilities, whereas procedural fairness refers to the extent to which the decision-making process is fair, open, informative, and respectful (Prilleltensky, 2011).

Particularly, unfairness in the form of favouritism has been highlighted by participant 1 from focus group 2:

> …in companies that are very old-school thinking…not keeping on times with their business methods and the way they conduct businesses, but also in other issues, being fair to males and females and not playing favouritism. There are still companies that do not reward on merit but reward on PR skills…US companies getting more aware of such issues, but I don't think in Asia, this has been raised yet and I don't think we're close in Singapore.

In this excerpt, several important issues were raised by participant 1. First, as a female, she experienced favouritism being exhibited in the form of gender bias where one gender was given access to unfair privileges. Second, rewards for employee were based on their relationship with the management team. Third, a comparison was made between Asia and the US indicating different organisational processes. In Singapore, organisations appear to be lagging Western countries in terms of providing fair and equal treatment to employees. Although Singapore has been heavily influenced by Western business cultures, "*guanxi*," a personal relationship that brings two people closer together (Chen & Tjosvold, 2007) is still prevalent. A person with a better "*guanxi*" could be better taken care of as compared to others (Yang, 2013), and it determines whether an employee is rewarded fairly or not.

Employees view fairness seriously because perceptions of fairness allow one to feel more control over what they do, to feel belonged, to feel worthy and to experience meaningfulness at work (Cropanzano et al., 2001). On the contrary, low levels of perceived fairness also double as a work stressor thereby decreasing employee health, wellbeing, and performance (Fujishiro, 2005). Moreover, the perceptions of fairness can in turn influence employees' attitudes toward the organisation and their subsequent behaviours (Blader, & Tyler, 2005) such as lack of commitment and high turnover rate, however, employees who are treated fairly are more likely to stay on with the organisation (Ruiz-Quintanilla & Blancero, 1996).

Transparency

The twelfth theme that emerged relates to transparency, which is concerned with information and the sharing of information, pleasant or unpleasant (Farrell, 2016); employees

would generally expect transparency in the decision-making process at work. Further, transparency can involve having three characteristics, namely, disclosure, clarity, and accuracy (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016); disclosure refers to the extent that relevant information is received in a timely manner; clarity refers to how well the information received is understood; accuracy refers to the correctness of the information received. Importantly, each of these characteristics helps mediate the positive relationship between transparency and trust, both of which promote a greater sense of employee affective commitment thereby also indirectly improve the psychological wellbeing of employees (Klimchak et al., 2020). As shared by participant 6 from focus group 1: "…is important to have a company which fosters transparency…if you're working with somebody who is toxic, people are unreliable you can't trust them then you are less likely to also want to share your problem…"

This quote underscored the association between trust and transparency in a positive relationship, and transparency is also dependent on trust (Rawlins, 2008). Trust is important because an employee may not know if a colleague would divulge and use the information maliciously. Transparency thus helps to mitigate such negative experiences which in turn reduces the level of anxiety and uncertainty at the workplace (Rawlins, 2008). Transparency in this context also ensures that the employees are made aware of how rewards are distributed according to merits thereby reducing speculation, mistrust and rumours.

Moreover, fostering transparency in terms of having clear communication within the organisation helps to reduce stress and uncertainty; it also helps to build trust which further motivates employees to work together toward achieving organisational goals (Farrell, 2016). Transparency is also important in terms of respect for one another and relationship building because people who communicate transparently are often held in higher regard than those who did not (Auger, 2014). Thus, transparency helps to lubricate good relationships within the organisation. This is critical in the Singapore workplace where relationships with one another are highly valued.

Employee Recognition

The final thirteenth theme involves the participants' need to be recognised and appreciated for their effort they put in for their organisation which in turn, helps to enhance their level of wellbeing. As expressed by participant 2 from focus group 1:

> …they don't need to get me gifts…all they need to say is thank you, and if they appreciate for all my training. You feel good enough. I think, appreciation, it means a lot...thank you from a big, big boss and all, oh no, thank you, it's very hard for them to say thank you sometimes…

Participant 2 brought awareness to the fact that recognition can be shown in ways such as being acknowledged, being appreciated, or being endorsed that one has done something positive or accomplished something (Caligiuri et al., 2010). Saying thank you, giving praises, acknowledging and appreciating ideas being provided and being respected are forms of non-monetary recognition (Nolan, 2012). This suggests that both monetary rewards and non-monetary rewards such as employee recognition can positively impact on job satisfaction and employee motivation (Tessema et al., 2013).

The need for recognition amongst employees is ubiquitous regardless of the type or status of the job (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Brun and Dugas identified four employee recognition approaches, namely, personal recognition, recognition of work practices, recognition of job dedication and recognition of results. In turn, these approaches are vital in fulfilling employees' needs in two ways - being recognised as a unique and whole person from the humanistic

perspective and being appreciated from the contribution they make from the work psychodynamics perspective.

Recognition is an important factor because it helps increase employee motivation (Grawitch et al., 2006; Saunderson, 2004) and makes work more meaningful (Pavlish & Hunt, 2012). Employee recognition is also crucial for mental health at the workplace (Brun & Dugas, 2008), and a low level of employee recognition is associated with lower a level of employee mental health (Dextras-Gauthier & Marchand, 2016). Thus, employee recognition helps employees increase their mental wellbeing through several pathways including recognising them as dignified persons, enhancing their growth at work, and helping them attribute greater meaning to their work (Grawitch et al., 2006). Consistent with the previous study by Wyatt and Wah (2001), Singaporean employees wanted to be treated with respect as a person and expected that their good performance be recognized.

Discussion

Employee mental wellbeing is attracting increasingly significant interest where more awareness has been created especially from the government in Singapore. Consequently, Singapore is still lagging its Western counterparts in several areas such as promoting mental health and wellbeing initiatives within the organisation. For example, when compared to other countries, Singapore scored low in terms of happiness and life satisfaction despite achieving a high level of material standard (Vaingankar et al., 2011). In Singapore, there is also a general lack of awareness and high level of stigma regarding mental health issues amongst the general population (Chong, 2007) and even amongst the general health professionals and spiritual leaders (Tonsing, 2017).

The current study aimed to elicit the perspectives from Singaporean employees in relation to mental wellbeing at the workplace. Thirteen organisational factors were delineated: accomplishment, autonomy, co-worker relationship, employee recognition, fairness, learning and professional development, meaningful work, organisational support, person-organisational fit, role clarity, support from boss, transparency, and work-life balance. These identified factors are consistent with previous literature and research in that improving each of these factors is likely to bring about improved mental wellbeing for the employees. Individual-based interventions are inadequate in addressing employee mental wellbeing; rather, a more comprehensive approach in the form of support involving active contributions and interventions from the organisation is needed (Noblet & LaMontagne, 2006). Improving employee wellbeing is important because employees with better mental wellbeing in turn helps to improve several important outcomes such as interpersonal relationships, physical health, and productivity (Dickson-Swift et al., 2014).

Although these 13 factors are also commonly found in workplace wellbeing research, the expression of these factors was unique to the Singapore context. Indeed, Sandberg et al. (2012) presented factors specific to the Singapore workplace and family contexts. For example, the working environment is still uncompromising in terms of having flexible work options compared to the United States and other developed countries. Only 13% of employees in Singapore indicated having flexible work options in 2007, and even if such flexible working conditions are available, employees are not utilising them fully (Hill, 2007). Some of the reasons could be attributed to the employees' fear of being perceived negatively and discouraging organisational culture (Jones et al., 2008).

The current study indicated that having a work-balance was important and it is a responsibility borne by both the employee and the organisation. However, it is likely that employees may find it challenging to assert their work-life balance needs owing to the collectivistic culture in Singapore where they tend to comply with their bosses' instructions

instead (Le et al., 2020). Moreover, Lim (2010) argued that in Singapore, work-life balance is promoted for reasons not for employee wellbeing but for productivity and profits, and employees are made to bear more responsibility for their own wellbeing rather than a genuine collective effort borne together with the organisation.

In terms of learning at work, participants turned to their seniors and enjoyed the learning process from them. This is in line with research by Huo and Boxall (2020) who found that learning is more effective when it is conducted through one of a higher seniority as compared to a co-worker due to the power distance culture inherent in Eastern societies. In fact, learning from a co-worker can be viewed unfavourably as one perceives oneself as being incompetent compared to the co-worker (Huo & Boxall, 2020). Moreover, the support provided by the seniors appears to support the collectivist and Confucian view whereby the mentorship provided by the seniors goes beyond workplace learning and extends into the personal life context (Zhou et al., 2019). This was evident when participants expected their bosses to provide emotional support in addition to professional support in the form of a "family culture."

Singapore retains some of the traditional attitudes involving rigid regulations and values. Although there is a strong focus on preserving interpersonal harmony within group members including colleagues and bosses as found in collectivistic cultures, the notion of "*quanxi'* through which an employee with a better relationship with the boss or people of higher status to as secure better opportunities at work, is still prevalent. Quanxi appears to be a common phenomenon in Singapore whereby informal social exchanges such as having lunch and dinner are used to facilitate favourable outcomes for the parties involved such as getting a better work role or move up the ranks in the organisation (Bian & Ang, 1997). This phenomenon continues to persist as evidenced in the current study, 23 years after the study conducted by Bian and Ang. As such, the themes of fairness and employee recognition are important factors in ensuring fair opportunities and recognition are provided for every employee in the Singapore context.

The current study also revealed the importance of having autonomy at work despite Singapore being more likely to be subjected to power distance. Power distance refers to the extent employees accept the unequal share of power in an organisation (Hofstede, 1980). As explained by Wyatt and Wah (2001), the need to have more autonomy at work can be attributed to the higher educational level and living standards of Singaporean employees who now value greater control over their work. In a study conducted by Tan and Chong (2003) in Singapore, the authors similarly highlighted the importance of providing autonomy to employees allowing them to participate in the decision-making process through a conducive organisation culture that actively encourages it. This in turn would help change perceptions of power distance and make employees feel more valued within the organisation.

There is a greater focus on meaningful work with a view of having a greater positive impact on the society beyond monetary rewards or material success. In fact, none of the participants mentioned the need for extrinsic aspirations such as better pay or more power. This suggests that a further accumulation of wealth in a developed country does not necessarily result in increased wellbeing (Bunge, 2012; Easterlin, 2017; Mikucka & Sarracino, 2014), and flourishing in different areas of life including work life goes beyond the traditional measurement of success in monetary terms (Seligman, 2011). Moreover, the notion of "family" appears to have shifted from the traditional family ties to one that involves other personal pursuits such as social and health-related activities and having pets. Thus, it is important employees have a work-life balance so they can spend their time off pursuing personal interests. Indeed, a general household survey report provided by the Singapore government in 2015 indicated a significant increase in households with a single person and married couple who have no children (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2015), leaving people with more time and energy to pursue personal interests.

Lastly, consistent with the eudaimonic view from the Self-Determination Theory perspective (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan et al., 2008), the current study suggests that the pursuit of intrinsic goals and values such as personal growth, learning, meaning, interpersonal relationships and contribution to the society through the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, helps contribute to greater wellbeing. Although 13 organisational factors tied to mental wellbeing unique to the Singapore context were found with some manifested differently as compared to Western cultures, Ryan and Deci (2017) argued that basic psychological needs are universal and apply to all humans across cultures.

The concept of wellbeing is complex and encompasses many elements of human experiences. Moreover, the conceptualisation and manifestation of mental wellbeing is similarly subject to cultural differences and influences (Fen et al., 2013; Vaingankar et al., 2011). Regarding workplace wellbeing, Chari et al. (2018) argued for a new framework of worker wellbeing as a conceptualisation to include multiple domains, subdomains, and subdomain constructs. Through a review and synthesis of existing literature with the findings of the current study, this research has highlighted the importance of acknowledging a socio-cultural perspective in the Singapore context in establishing the structure of workplace wellbeing dimensions. While these workplace wellbeing dimensions found in the current study are largely consistent with existing literature, the nuances of the expression of these factors are unique only in the Singapore context which is made up of a multi-ethnic society embodying both Western and Eastern values. The use of a qualitative approach in the current study has allowed for the exploration of Singapore workplace wellbeing in greater details and depth. Thus, this research has not only established the concept of workplace wellbeing in the unique Singapore context, but also helped reinforced the notion that the local and cultural context plays a crucial role in influencing how people experience wellbeing from their unique socio-cultural positions.

Study Strengths and Limitation

The use of qualitative methods in research study is important (Barker et al., 2016). Firstly, it allows for a more complex phenomenon, that is, workplace mental wellbeing in Singapore, to be examined in greater details and depth; secondly, it provides participants the opportunity to respond in their own ways as well as their own words; thirdly, participants were given “a voice” and their views were heard, which otherwise would be under-represented in other research studies. As far as the researcher is aware of, the current study is the first exploratory study to obtain in-depth perspectives from Singaporean employees in relation to workplace mental wellbeing with 13 wellbeing dimensions identified.

Notwithstanding, two limitations were noted. Firstly, the researchers acknowledged that a variety of industries exists in Singapore with different working situations that were not captured in this sample. However, this study was not designed to be representative of all workplaces across all industries. Secondly, the researchers acknowledged their own theoretical commitment for the data to be imbued with meanings, and the interpretations of the data were implicitly shaped by theory and past research pertaining to psychological wellbeing and workplace wellbeing.

Conclusions

A high level of mental wellbeing among the populace benefits employers, employees, and the whole society. The current study is the first in Singapore to examine and reveal important mental wellbeing dimensions which are culturally relevant and meaningful at the

workplace in the Singapore context. Moving forward, the current findings, that is, the 13 identified themes, will be taken to develop and validate a new Singapore Workplace Wellbeing Questionnaire through subsequent quantitative studies. It is expected that the new scale can be used as a valid and reliable tool for the screening of workplace mental wellbeing in Singapore. This will in turn assist in future development of appropriate workplace interventions aimed at improving employee outcomes. The implications of culturally appropriate interventions for mental wellbeing are widespread and are essential as this will ultimately contribute to improved health outcomes in the population in Singapore which in turn will sustain long term economic growth and success.

References

Aamodt, M. G. (2016). *Industrial/organizational psychology: An applied approach* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Arnold, K. A., Turner, N., Barling, J., Kelloway, E. K., & McKee, M. C. (2007). Transformational leadership and psychological well-being: The mediating role of meaningful work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12*, 193–203. https://doi:10.1037/1076-8998.12.3.193

Aselage, J., & Eisenberger, R. (2003). Perceived organizational support and psychological contracts: A theoretical integration. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 24*(5), 491–509. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.211

Aubé, C., Rousseau, V., & Morin, E. M. (2007). Perceived organizational support and organizational commitment: The moderating effect of locus of control and work autonomy. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22*(5), 479-495. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710757209

Auger, G. A. (2014). Trust me, trust me not: An experimental analysis of the effect of transparency on organizations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 26*(4), 325–343. https://doi:10.1080/1062726x.2014.908722

Avinandan, M., & Neeru, M. (2006). Does role clarity explain employee-perceived service quality? A study of antecedents and consequences in call centres. *International Journal of Service Industry Management, 17*(5), 444–473. https://doi:10.1108/09564230610689777

Baard, P. P., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Intrinsic need satisfaction: A motivational basis of performance and well-being in two work settings. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 34*(10), 2045–2068. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2004.tb02690.x

Bader, G. E., & Rossi, C. A. (2002). *Focus Groups: A Step-By-Step Guide* (3rd ed.). USA: The Bader Group.

Barker, C., Pistrang, N., & Elliott, R. (2016). *Research methods in clinical psychology: An introduction for students and practitioners* (3rd ed.). John Wiley.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*(3), 497–529. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497

Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo* (2nd ed). SAGE Publications.

Bian, Y., & Ang, S. (1997). Guanxi networks and job mobility in China and Singapore. *Social Forces, 75*(3), 981. https://doi:10.2307/2580527

Biggio, G., & Cortese, C. (2013). Well-being in the workplace through interaction between individual characteristics and organizational context. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being, 8*(1), 19823. https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v8i0.19823

Blader, S. L., & Tyler, T. R. (2005). How can theories of organizational justice explain the effects of fairness? In J. Greenberg & J. A. Colquitt (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational justice*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Bolisani, E., & Bratianu, C. (2017). Knowledge strategy planning: An integrated approach to manage uncertainty, turbulence, and dynamics. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 21*(2), 233–253. https://doi:10.1108/jkm-02-2016-0071

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners.* Sage.

Brotheridge, C. M. (2003). The role of fairness in mediating the effects of voice and justification on stress and other outcomes in a climate of organizational change. *International Journal of Stress Management, 10*(3), 253–268. https://doi.org/10.1037/1072-5245.10.3.253

Bryman, A. (1996). Leadership in organizations. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organization studies* (pp. 276-292). Sage.

Brun, J.-P., & Dugas, N. (2008). An analysis of employee recognition: Perspectives on human resources practices. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 19*(4), 716–730. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190801953723

Bunge, M. (2012). Wealth and well-being, economic growth, and integral development. *International Journal of Health Services, 42*(1), 65–76. https://doi.org/10.2190/hs.42.1.g

Burke, R. J., Koyuncu, M., Fiksenbaum, L., & Acar, F. T. (2009). Work hours, work intensity, satisfactions and psychological well-being among Turkish manufacturing managers. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 5*(2), 12–30. https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v5i2.264

Butler, J., & Kern, M. L. (2016). The PERMA-profiler: A brief multidimensional measure of flourishing. *International Journal of Wellbeing, 6*(3), 1-48. https://doi:10.5502/ijw.v6i3.52

Caligiuri, P., Lepak, D., & Bonache, J. (2010). *Global dimensions of human resources management: Managing the global workforce*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Chan, K. B., Lai, G., Ko, Y. C., & Boey, K. W. (2000). Work stress among six professional groups: The Singapore experience. *Social Science & Medicine, 50*(10), 1415–1432. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536(99)00397-4

Chandra, V. (2012). Work–life balance: Eastern and Western perspectives. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23*(5), 1040-1056. https://doi:10.1080/09585192.2012.651339

Chari, R., Chang, C. C., Sauter, S. L., Petrun Sayers, E. L., Cerully, J. L., Schulte, P., Schill, A. L., & Uscher-Pines, L. (2018). Expanding the paradigm of occupational safety and health: A new framework for worker well-being. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 60*(7), 589–593. https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000001330

Chen, N., & Tjosvold, D. (2007). Guanxi and leader member relationships between American managers and Chinese employees: Open-minded dialogue as mediator. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 24*(2), 171–189. https://doi:10.1007/s10490-006-9029-9

Chong, S. A. (2007). Mental health in Singapore: A quiet revolution? *Annals: Official Journal of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, 36*(10), 795-796. https://annals.edu.sg/pdf/36VolNo10Oct2007/V36N10p795.pdf

Choo, L. S. (2017). Colleague support and role clarity in promoting the work engagement of frontliners in Malaysian hotels. *Performance Improvement Quarterly, 29*(4), 389–405.

https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21234

Chung, Y. W., Im, S., & Kim, J. E. (2019). The role of volunteer participation and person-organization fit in the relationship between motives and psychological well-being. *Sustainability, 12*(1), 330. https://doi:10.3390/su12010330

Cigna. (2019). *Cigna 360 Well-Being Survey: Well & Beyond.* https://munideporte.com/imagenes/documentacion/ficheros/0122EEB5.pdf

Cooper, C. L. (2009). The changing nature of work: Enhancing the mental capital and well-being of the workplace. *Twenty-First Century Society, 4*(3), 269–275. https://doi.org/10.1080/17450140903197393

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Cropanzano, R., Byrne, Z. S., Bobocel, D. R., & Rupp, D. E. (2001). Moral virtues, fairness heuristics, social entities, and other denizens of organizational justice. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 58*(2), 164–209. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1791.

Cyr, J. (2019). *Focus groups for the social science researcher*. Cambridge University Press.

Danna, K., & Griffin, R. W. (1999). Health and well-being in the workplace: A review and synthesis of the literature. *Journal of Management, 25*(3), 357–384. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639902500305

Deci, E. L., Connell, J. P., & Ryan, R. M. (1989). Self-determination in a work organization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*(4), 580–590. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.74.4.580

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry, 11*(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2006). Hedonia, eudaimonia, and well-being: An introduction. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 9*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9018-1

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's domains. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne, 49*(1), 14–23. https://doi.org/10.1037/0708-5591.49.1.14

Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., Gagné, M., Leone, D. R., Usunov, J., & Kornazheva, B. P. (2001). Need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being in the work organizations of a former Eastern bloc country: A cross-cultural study of self-determination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*(8), *930–942*. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167201278002

Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Republic of Singapore. (2019). *Yearbook of statistics Singapore*. https://www.singstat.gov.sg/-/media/files/publications/reference/yearbook_2019/yos2019.pdf

Dextras-Gauthier, J., & Marchand, A. (2016). Does organizational culture play a role in the development of psychological distress? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 30*(2), 337-359. https://doi:10.1080/09585192.2016.1216874

Dickson-Swift, V., Fox, C., Marshall, K., Welch, N., & Willis, J. (2014). What really improves employee health and wellbeing. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management, 7*(3), 138–155. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijwhm-10-2012-0026

Easterlin, R. A. (2017). Economic growth increases people's well-being. In B. S. Frey & D. Iselin (Eds.), *Economic ideas you should forget* (pp. 37-38). Springer.

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*(3), 500–507. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500

Farrell, M. (2016). Transparency. *Journal of Library Administration*, *56*(4), 444-452. https://doi:10.1080/01930826.2016.1157426

Fen, C. M., Isa, I., Chu, C. W., Ling, C., & Ling, S. Y. (2013). Development and validation of a mental wellbeing scale in Singapore. *Psychology*, *4*(7), 592-606. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2013.47085

Fujishiro, K. (2005). *Fairness at work: Its impacts on employee well-being* [Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University]. https://etd.ohiolink.edu/acprod/odb_etd/ws/send_file/send?accession=osu1117142039&dispositio

Ganster, D. C., & Schaubroeck, J. (1991). Work stress and employee health. *Journal of Management*, *17*(2), 235–271. https://doi:10.1177/014920639101700202

Gelfand, M. J., Erez, M., & Aycan, Z. (2007). Cross-cultural organizational behavior. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *58*(1), 479–514. https://doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085559

Gilboa, S., Shirom, A., Fried, Y., & Cooper, C. (2008). A meta-analysis of work demand stressors and job performance: Examining main and moderating effects. *Personnel Psychology*, *61*, 227–71. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.00113.x

Grawitch, M. J., Gottschalk, M., & Munz, D. C. (2006). The path to a healthy workplace: A critical review linking healthy workplace practices, employee well-being, and organizational improvements. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *58*(3), 129–147. https://doi.org/10.1037/1065-9293.58.3.129

Greguras, G. J., & Diefendorff, J. M. (2009). Different fits satisfy different needs: Linking person-environment fit to employee commitment and performance using self-determination theory. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*(2), 465–477. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014068

Gudykunst, W. B. (1998). *Bridging differences: Effective intergroup communication* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Gureje, O., & Jenkins, R. (2007). Mental health in development: Re-emphasising the link. *Lancet*, *369*(9560), 447–449. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60211-6

Halbesleben, J. (2010). A meta-analysis of work engagement: Relationships with burnout, demands, resources and consequences. In A. B. Bakker & M. P. Leiter (Eds.), *Work engagement: A handbook of essential theory and research* (pp. 102-117). Psychology Press.

Harvey, S. B., Modini, M., Joyce, S., Milligan-Saville, J. S., Tan, L., Mykletun, A., Bryant, R. A., Christensen, H., & Mitchell, P. B. (2017). Can work make you mentally ill? A systematic meta-review of work-related risk factors for common mental health problems. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *74*(4), 301–310. https://doi.org/10.1136/oemed-2016-104015

Hayes, M. (2010). *Why professional development matters*. Learning Forward. https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/professional-development-matters.pdf

Health Promotion Board (HPB). (2012). *Mental wellbeing of working Singaporeans*. https://www.hpb.gov.sg/article/health-promotion-board-launches-integrated-workplace-mental-health-solution-and-centre-of-excellence-for-healthy-mind-to-improve-mental-well-being-of-working-singaporeans

Hill, E. J. (2007). *Singapore national study of work-life harmony: Final report*. Brigham Young University.

Hill, E. J., Yang, C., Hawkins, A. J., & Ferris, M. (2004). A cross-cultural test of the work-family interface in 48 countries. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*(5), 1300–1316. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-2445.2004.00094.x

Hoffman, B. J., & Woehr, D. J. (2006). A quantitative review of the relationship between person–organization fit and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 68*(3), 389–399. https://doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2005.08.003

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Sage.

Holman, D., & Wall, T. (2002). Work characteristics, learning-related outcomes, and strain: A test of competing direct effects, mediated, and moderated models. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 7*(4), 283–301. https://doi:10.1037/1076-8998.7.4.283

Hu, J., Jiang, K., Mo, S., Chen, H., & Shi, J. (2016). The motivational antecedents and performance consequences of corporate volunteering: When do employees volunteer and when does volunteering help versus harm work performance? *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 137*, 99–111. https://doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.08.005

Huppert, F. A., & So, T. T. C. (2013). Flourishing across Europe: Application of a new conceptual framework for defining well-being. *Social Indicators Research, 110*(3), 837–861. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9966-7

Huo, M., & Boxall, P. (2020). Do workers respond differently to learning from supervisors and colleagues? A study of job resources, learning sources and employee wellbeing in China. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 33*(4), 742-762. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2020.1744029

Jones, B. L., Scoville, D. P., Hill, E. J., Childs, G., Leishman, J. M., & Nally, K. S. (2008). Perceived versus used workplace flexibility in Singapore: Predicting work-family fit. *Journal of Family Psychology, 22*(5), 774–783. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013181

Kalliath, T., & Brough, P. (2008). Work-life balance: A review of the meaning of the balance construct. *Journal of Management & Organization, 14*(3), 323–327. https://doi.org/10.5172/jmo.837.14.3.323

Kamdron, T. (2005). Work motivation and job satisfaction of Estonian higher officials. *International Journal of Public Administration, 28*(13-14), 1211–1240. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900690500241085

Keeman, A., Näswall, K., Malinen, S., & Kuntz, J. (2017). Employee wellbeing: Evaluating a wellbeing intervention in two settings. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00505

Keyes, C. L. M. (1998). Social well-being. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 61*(2), 121–140. https://doi.org/10.2307/2787065

Klimchak, M., Ward Bartlett, A. K., & MacKenzie, W. (2020). Building trust and commitment through transparency and HR competence: A signaling perspective. *Personnel Review, 49*(9), 1897-1917. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-03-2019-0096

King, L. A., Hicks, J. A., Krull, J. L., & Del Gaiso, A. K. (2006). Positive affect and the experience of meaning in life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*(1), 179–196. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.1.179

Kossek, E. E., Valcour, M., & Lirio, P. (2014). *The sustainable workforce: Organizational strategies for promoting work-life balance and wellbeing*. In P. Y. Chen & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Wellbeing: A complete reference guide. Work and wellbeing* (pp. 139-156). Wiley Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118539415.wbwell030

Kowalski, T. H. P., & Loretto, W. (2017). Well-being and HRM in the changing workplace. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(16), 2229–2255. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1345205

Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individual's fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-

group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology, 58(2),* 281–342. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2005.00672.x

Kurtessis, J. N., Eisenberger, R., Ford, M. T., Buffardi, L. C., Stewart, K. A., & Adis, C. S. (2017). Perceived organizational support: A meta-analytic evaluation of organizational support theory. *Journal of Management, 43*(6), 1854–1884. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315575554

LaMontagne, A. D., Martin, A., Page, K. M., Reavley, N. J., Noblet, A. J., Milner, A. J., Keegel, T., & Smith, P. M. (2014). Workplace mental health: Developing an integrated intervention approach. *BMC Psychiatry, 14,* 131. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-14-13

Lara, E., Martín-María, N., Forsman, A., Cresswell-Smith, J., Donisi, V., Ådnanes, M., Kaasbøll, J., Melby, L., Nordmyr, J., Nyholm, L., Rabbi, L., Amaddeo, F., & Miret, M. (2020). Understanding the multi-dimensional mental well-being in late life: Evidence from the perspective of the oldest old population. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 21*, 465-484. https://doi:10.1007/s10902-019-00090-1

Le, H., Newman, A., Menzies, J., Zheng, C., & Fermelis, J. (2020). Work–life balance in Asia: A systematic review. *Human Resource Management Review, 30*(4), 100766. https://doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2020.100766

Leong, F. T. L., Huang, J. L., & Mak, S. (2014). Protestant work ethic, Confucian values, and work-related attitudes in Singapore. *Journal of Career Assessment, 22*(2), 304–316. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072713493985

Leung, A., & Chaturvedi, S. (2011). Linking the fits, fitting the links: Connecting different types of PO fit to attitudinal outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 79*(2), 391-402. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.02.007

Li, P. P. (2007). Social tie, social capital, and social behavior: Toward an integrative model of informal exchange. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management, 24*(2), 227–246. https://doi:10.1007/s10490-006-9031-2

Lim, J. (2017). Sustainable health care financing: The Singapore experience. *Global Policy, 8*(52), 103–109. https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12247

Lim, W. (2010). A culture of work-life 'imbalance' in Singapore. *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies, 12*(2), 22-37. jas_dec2010_weida.pdf (nzasia.org.nz)

Lopolito, A., Prosperi, M., Sisto, R., & De Meo, E. (2015). Translating local stakeholders' perception in rural development strategies under uncertainty conditions: An application to the case of the bio-based economy in the area of Foggia (South Italy). *Journal of Rural Studies, 37*, 61–74. https://doi:10.1016/j.jrurstud.2014.12.005

Lovett, N., & Lovett, T. (2016). Wellbeing in education: Staff matter. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, 6*(2), 107-112. https://doi:10.7763/IJSSH.2016.V6.628

Low, K.C.P. (2011). Types of Singapore Corporate Culture. *Business Journal for Entrepreneurs, 2011*(2), 11- 49. https://ssrn.com/abstract=1883436

Lune, H., & Berg, B. L. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (9th ed.). Pearson.

Lynch, M. F., Jr., Plant, R. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2005). Psychological needs and threat to safety: Implications for staff and patients in a psychiatric hospital for youth. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 36*(4), 415–425. https://doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.36.4.415

Marchand, A., Durand, P., Haines, V., & Harvey, S. (2014). The multilevel determinants of workers' mental health: Results from the SALVEO study. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 50*(3), 445–459. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-014-0932-y

Marsick, V., & Watkins, K. (1990). *Informal and incidental learning in the workplace*.

Routledge.

Maulana, H., Obst, T., & Khawaja, N. (2018). Indonesian perspective of wellbeing: A qualitative study. *The Qualitative Report, 23*(12), 3136-3152. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3508

Michalos, A. C. (2008). Education, happiness and wellbeing. *Social Indicators Research, 87*(3), 347–366. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-007-9144-0

Mikucka, M., & Sarracino, F. (2014). Making economic growth and well-being compatible: The role of trust and income inequality. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive,* (59695). https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/id/eprint/59695

Miller, E. (1978). Measuring the quality of work life in General Motors. Interview with Howard C. Carlson. *Personnel, 55*, 21–26.

Moore, S., Diener, E., & Tan, K. (2018). Using multiple methods to more fully understand causal relations: Positive affect enhances social relationships. In E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (Eds.), *Handbook of well-being* (pp. 1-17). DEF Publishers

Mykletun, A., & Harvey, S. B. (2012). Prevention of mental disorders: A new era for workplace mental health. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 69*(12), 868–869. https://doi.org/10.1136/oemed-2012-100846

Nansubuga, F., & Munene, J. C. (2013). Reflecting on competences to increase role clarity during service delivery in a third world setting. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 25*(4), 231–246. https://doi:10.1108/13665621311316429

Noblet, A., & LaMontagne, A. D. (2006). The role of workplace health promotion in addressing job stress. *Health Promotion International, 21*(4), 346–353. https://doi:10.1093/heapro/dal029

Nolan, S. (2012). A look at current trends and data. *Strategic HR Review, 11*(3), 32-54. https://doi.org/10.1108/shr.2012.37211caa.012

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*, 1–13. https://doi:10.1177/1609406917733847

Pastorino. E. E., & Doyle-Portillo, S. M. (2019). *What is psychology? Foundations, applications, and integration* (4th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Pavlish, C., & Hunt, R. (2012). An exploratory study about meaningful work in acute care nursing. *Nursing Forum, 47*(2), *113–122*. https://doi:10.1111/j.1744-6198.2012.00261.x

Porath, C., Spreitzer, G., Gibson, C., & Garnett, F. G. (2012). Thriving at work: Toward its measurement, construct validation, and theoretical refinement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*(2), 250–275. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.756

Prilleltensky, I. (2011). Wellness as fairness. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 49*(1-2), 1–21. https://doi:10.1007/s10464-011-9448-8

Rao, S., & Ramesh, N. (2015). Depression, anxiety and stress levels in industrial workers: A pilot study in Bangalore, India. *Industrial Psychiatry Journal, 24*(1), 23–28. https://doi.org/10.4103/0972-6748.160927

Rawlins, B. (2008). Measuring the relationship between organizational transparency and trust. *Public Relations Journal, 2*(2), 425–439. https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/885

Ruiz-Quintanilla, S., & Blancero, D. (1996). Open door policies: Measuring impact using attitude surveys. *Human Resource Management, 35*, 269-291. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-050X(199623)35:3<269::AID-HRM1>3.0.CO;2-V

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*(1), 141–166. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.141

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development and wellness*. The Guilford Press.

Ryan, R. M., Huta, V., & Deci, E. L. (2008). Living well: A self-determination theory perspective on eudaimonia. *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being, 9*(1), 139–170. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9023-4

Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 69*(4), 719–727. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (1998). The contours of positive human health. *Psychological Inquiry, 9*(1), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327965pli0901_1

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being, 9*(1), 13–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9019-0

Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (2000). Value priorities and subjective well-being: Direct relations and congruity effects. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30*(2), 177–198. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(200003/04)30:2<177::AID-EJSP982>3.0.CO;2-Z

Salanova, M., Schaufeli, W. B., Xanthopoulou, D., & Bakker, A. B. (2010). The gain spiral of resources and work engagement: Sustaining a positive worklife. In A. B. Bakker & M. P. Leiter (Eds.), *Work engagement: A handbook of essential theory and research* (pp. 118-131). Psychology Press.

Sandberg, J. G., Yorgason, J. B., Miller, R. B., & Hill, E. J. (2012). Family-to-work spillover in Singapore: Marital distress, physical and mental health, and work satisfaction. *Family Relations, 61*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2011.00682.x

Saunderson, R. (2004). Survey findings of the effectiveness of employee recognition in the public sector. *Public Personnel Management, 33*(3), 255–275. https://doi.org/10.1177/009102600403300302

Savelsbergh, C., Gevers, J. M. P., van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., & Poell, R. F. (2012). Team role stress. *Group & Organization Management, 37*(1), 67–100. https://doi:10.1177/1059601111431977

Schaubroeck, J., Ganster, D. C., Sime, W. E., & Ditman, D. (2006). A field experiment testing supervisory role clarification. *Personnel Psychology, 46*(1), 1–25. https://doi:10.1111/j.1744-570.1993.tb00865.xg

Schnackenberg, A. K., & Tomlinson, E. C. (2016). Organizational transparency: A new perspective on managing trust in organization-stakeholder relationships. *Journal of Management, 42*(7), 1784-1810. https://doi:10.1177/0149206314525202

Schulz, J. F., Barahmi-Rad, D., Beauchamp, J. P., & Henrich, J. (2018). The origins of WEIRD psychology. *Cross-Cultural Studies eJournal*. https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3201031

Seligman, M. (2011). *Flourishing*. Free Press

Selwyn, J., & Wood, M. (2015). *Measuring well-being: A literature review*. University of Bristol. http://www.coramvoice.org.uk/professional-zone/news/launch-literature-reviews-support-bright-spots-project

Shi, L. (2011). The interaction of job autonomy and conflict with supervisor in China and the United States: A qualitative and quantitative comparison. *International Journal of Stress Management, 18*(3), 222–245. http://doi.org/10.1037/a0024752

Singapore Department of Statistics (2015). *General Household Survey*. https://www.singstat.gov.sg/-/media/files/publications/ghs/ghs2015/findings.pdf

Sivanathan, N., Arnold, K. A., Turner, N., & Barling, J. (2004). Leading well: Transformational leadership and well-being. In P. A. Linley & S. Joseph

(Eds.), *Positive psychology in practice* (pp. 241–255). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470939338.ch15

Sparks, J. R., & Schenk, J. A. (2001). Explaining the effects of transformational leadership: An investigation of the effects of higher-order motives in multilevel marketing organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 22*(8), 849–869. https://doi:10.1002/job.116

Srivastava, M. (2011). Anxiety, stress and satisfaction among professionals in manufacturing and service organizations. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective, 15*(3), 219–229. https://doi:10.1177/097226291101500302

Steger, M. F., & Dik, B. J. (2009). If one is looking for meaning in life, does it help to find meaning in work? *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being, 1*(3), 303–320. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-0854.2009.01018.x

Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work: The work and meaning inventory (WAMI). *Journal of Career Assessment, 20*(3), 322–337. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072711436160

Tambyah, S. K., & Tan, S. J. (2013). *Happiness and wellbeing: The Singapore experience*. Routledge.

Tan, W., & Chong, E. (2003). Power distance in Singapore construction organizations: implications for project managers. *International Journal of Project Management, 21*(7), 529–536. https://doi:10.1016/s0263-7863(02)00062-5

Tan, S. J., & Tambyah, S. K. (2015). Shifting values and life satisfaction: A sequential cross-sectional study of the influence of values on subjective wellbeing in Singapore. *Social Indicators Research, 127*(3), 1391–1416. https://doi:10.1007/s11205-015-1015-5

Tessema, M., Ready, K., & Embaye, A. (2013). The effects of employee recognition, pay and benefits on job satisfaction: Cross country evidence. *Journal of Business and Economics, 4*(1), 1-13. http://www.academicstar.us/issueshow.asp?daid=765

Tonsing, K. N. (2017). A review of mental health literacy in Singapore. *Social Work in Health Care, 57*(1), 27–47. https://doi:10.1080/00981389.2017.1383335

Tov, W., & Chan, D. (2012, September 25). The importance of employee well-being. *Business Times*. https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2549&context=soss_research

Vaingankar, J. A., Subramaniam, M., Chong, S. A., Abdin, E., Orlando Edelen, M., Picco, L., Lim, Y. W., Phua, M. Y., Chua, B. Y., Tee, J. Y., & Sherbourne, C. (2011). The positive mental health instrument: Development and validation of a culturally relevant scale in a multi-ethnic Asian population. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes, 9*(92). https://doi.org/10.1186/1477-7525-9-92

Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 64*(4), 678–691. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.64.4.678

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). Open University Press.

Wong, S. W., & Yuen, M. (2012). Work values of university students in Chinese mainland, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 34*(4), 269–285. https://doi:10.1007/s10447-012-9155-7

World Health Organization (WHO). (2002). *Health, economic growth, and poverty reduction: The report of working group 1 of the commission on macroeconomics and health*. World Health Organization, Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/42492

Wyatt, T. A., & Wah, C. Y. (2001). Perceptions of QWL: A study of Singaporean employees

development. *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, *9*(2), 59–76.
Wynne, B., & Stringer, D. (1997). *A competency based approach to training and development.* Pitman Publishing.
Yang, C. (2013). Does ethical leadership lead to happy workers? A study on the impact of ethical leadership, subjective well-being, and life happiness in the Chinese culture. *Journal of Business Ethics, 123(3)*, 513–525. https://doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1852-6
Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology & Health, 15*, 215-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870440008400302
Yardley, L. (2008). Demonstrating validity in qualitative psychology. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (2nd ed., pp. 235–251). Sage.
Yeo, S. L., & Pang, A. (2017). Asian multiculturalism in communication: Impact of culture in the practice of public relations in Singapore. *Public Relations Review. 43*(1), 112-122. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.10.014
Zhou, A. J., Lapointe, É., & Zhou, S. S. (2019). Understanding mentoring relationships in China: Towards a Confucian model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *36*(2), 415–444. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-018-9589-5

Author Note

Chad Chew Eun Yip (ORCiD: 0000-0001-6702-6756) holds a Ph.D. from the School of Psychology and Counselling, University of Southern Queensland, Australia. He also holds a Master of Psychology (Clinical) from James Cook University, Australia and is a clinical psychologist. He is a full member of the Australian Psychological Society and Singapore Psychological Society. He is registered with the Singapore Register of Psychologists and is an approved supervisor. Chad is the Head of Psychology at Neurowyzr Pte Ltd, a neuroscience company specialising in brain health. He is also the clinical director of Asia Mind and Brain Center (AMBC), a subsidiary of Neurowyzr. Chad is involved in clinical work, product development and research. He is an adjunct lecturer and clinical supervisor with James Cook University, Australia (Singapore campus) clinical psychology team. Chad is committed to serve the ever-changing needs of the individual and society. Please direct correspondence to chadcheweun.yip@jcu.edu.au

Professor Emeritus Tony Machin (ORCiD: 0000-0002-0967-6934) joined the Department of Psychology at the University of Southern Queensland in 1992. He was the Head of the USQ School of Psychology and Counselling (2008-2018), a member of the Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association (HODSPA) and the Treasurer from 2008-2018, a member of the APS Division of Psychological Research, Education and Training Forum (2014-2019), and an assessor for the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (2019-2023). Professor Machin consulted with a wide range of clients including Queensland Health, the Department of Public Works, Main Roads, Queensland Transport, the Department of Industrial Relations, Queensland Treasury, and the Department of Emergency Services. He completed needs analyses, organisational climate surveys, programme evaluation, and organisational improvement initiatives which involved the analysis of data from between several hundred to over 15,000 respondents. Professor Machin has over 50 refereed publications including publications in the area of occupational health psychology with a focus on the impact of work-related and other factors on individuals' subjective well-being, health, and safety. He is also CI on an ARC Discovery grant (2018-2023) focusing on "Juggling priorities: How do tertiary students balance work and study?".

Yong Wah Goh's (ORCiD: 0000-0001-8621-0866) areas of expertise include occupational stress and wellbeing across cultures, mindfulness, and sustainability. He leads

several international research projects and publishes extensively. He has developed a wide range of training workshops and assessment tools on work stress, mental wellbeing, and mindfulness. Yong Wah is also a Zen meditation teacher and an accredited traditional martial art instructor.

Acknowledgement: Our profound thanks go to all who participated and shared their experiences in this study.

Disclosure Statement: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Funding: The authors have not received any funding or benefits from industry or elsewhere to conduct this study.

Copyright 2024: Chad Chew Eun Yip, M. Anthony Machin, Yong Wah Goh, and Nova Southeastern University.

Article Citation

Yip, C. C. E., Machin, M. A., & Wah Goh, Y. (2024). A qualitative study on workplace mental wellbeing in the Singapore context. *The Qualitative Report, 29*(7), 1981-2015. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2024.6795