

Calendar Mindset: Scheduling Takes the Fun Out and Puts the Work In

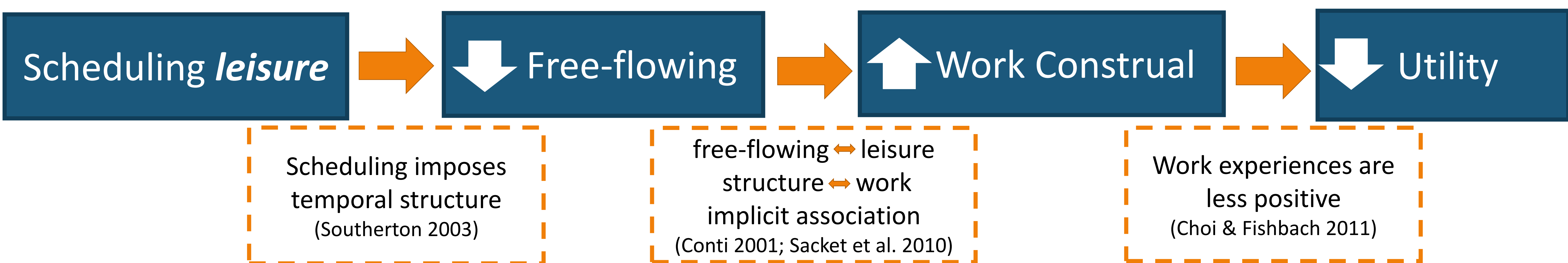
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ABSTRACT

People live increasingly scheduled lives. While scheduling is beneficial for work and chores (Macan 1994; Milkman et. al 2012), we find a detriment of scheduling *leisure*. We show that scheduling leads leisure to feel more like *work*, reducing both *excitement* and *enjoyment*.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



STUDIES 1-7

Scheduled (vs. Impromptu) Leisure Feels like Work

	Wed
8:00am	
8:30am	
9:00am	
9:30am	
10:00am	
10:30am	
11:00am	Class
11:30am	
12:00pm	Lunch
12:30pm	Break
1:00pm	
1:30pm	Class
2:00pm	
2:30pm	
3:00pm	
3:30pm	
4:00pm	Gym
4:30pm	
5:00pm	
5:30pm	
6:00pm	Dinner
6:30pm	
7:00pm	Meeting
7:30pm	
8:00pm	
8:30pm	
9:00pm	
9:30pm	Homework
10:00pm	
10:30pm	
11:00pm	

Impromptu: Imagine that it is Wednesday evening and you are ending your meeting on campus. You run into a friend you would like to catch up with. You discuss grabbing froyo on campus and *start heading there*.

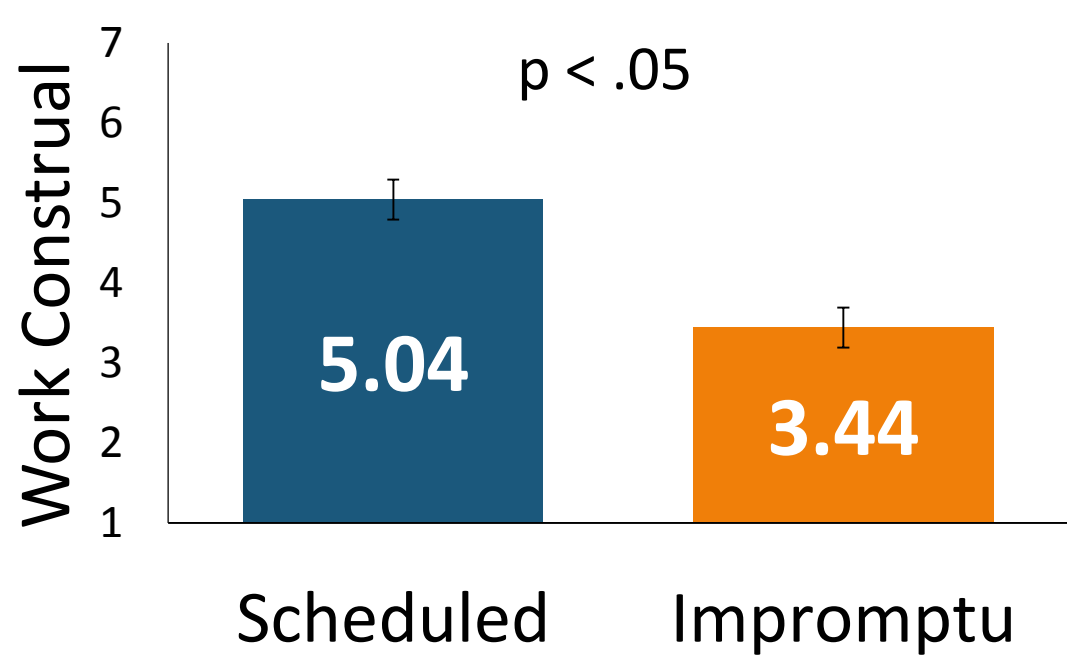
Scheduled: Imagine that it is Monday morning. While on your way to your first class you run into a friend you'd like to catch up with. You discuss grabbing froyo Wednesday and *agree to meet up at 8:00pm*.

Please add this plan to your calendar now.

Work Measure: subset of effortful, chore, obligation, commitment, constraining, and like work

Effect holds when...

- Study 2:** Calendar shown is free (vs. busy)
- Study 3:** Activity is recurring (vs. one-time)
- Study 4:** Activity is special (vs. mundane)
- Study 5:** Activity is self (vs. friend) initiated
- Study 6:** Activity is solitary (vs. social)
- Study 7:** Activity is leisure, but not work



STUDIES 9-10

Specific (vs. Rough) Scheduling Reduces *Retrospective* Utility

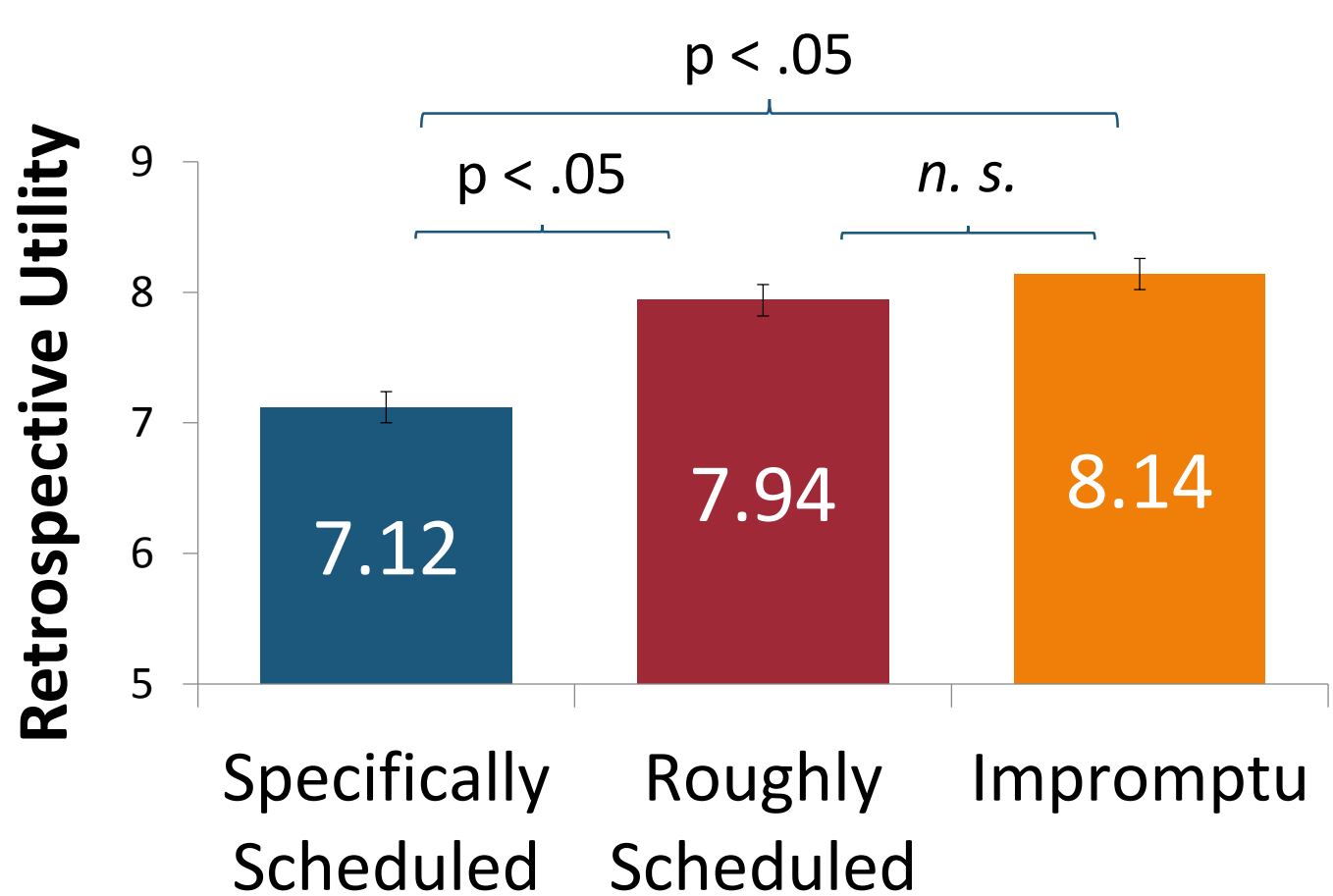
Participants recalled the last movie they saw in theaters and were then classified into three groups:

Specifically Scheduled: Those who had scheduled the specific time for the movie on their calendar in advance.

Roughly Scheduled: Those who had planned ahead without setting specific times for the movie on their calendar.

Impromptu: Those who had not set the date and time for the movie more than a couple hours in advance.

All participants then rated how enjoyable the movie was.



Those who specifically, but not roughly, scheduled recalled lower enjoyment.

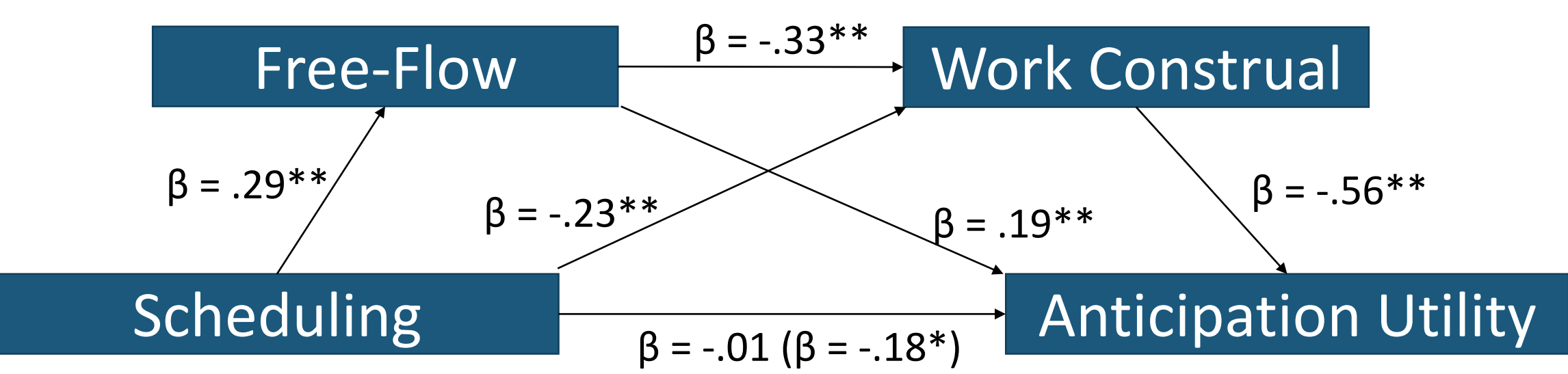
Study 10: Effect replicates with felt excitement for an imagined activity with *randomly assigned* scheduling.

STUDY 12

Full Conceptual Model of Scheduling

Participants imagined playing Frisbee on campus either impromptu or scheduled.

They rated free-flow (free-flowing, flexible $\alpha = .90$), work construal and anticipation utility (excited, thrilled, looking forward, , resentful^R, reluctant^R, unenthusiastic^R $\alpha = .90$) for the activity.



Hayes Model 6 for Serial Mediation [95% CI] = (.022, .107)

Study 12 demonstrates our full conceptual model, whereby: Scheduling → Free-flow → Work → Utility

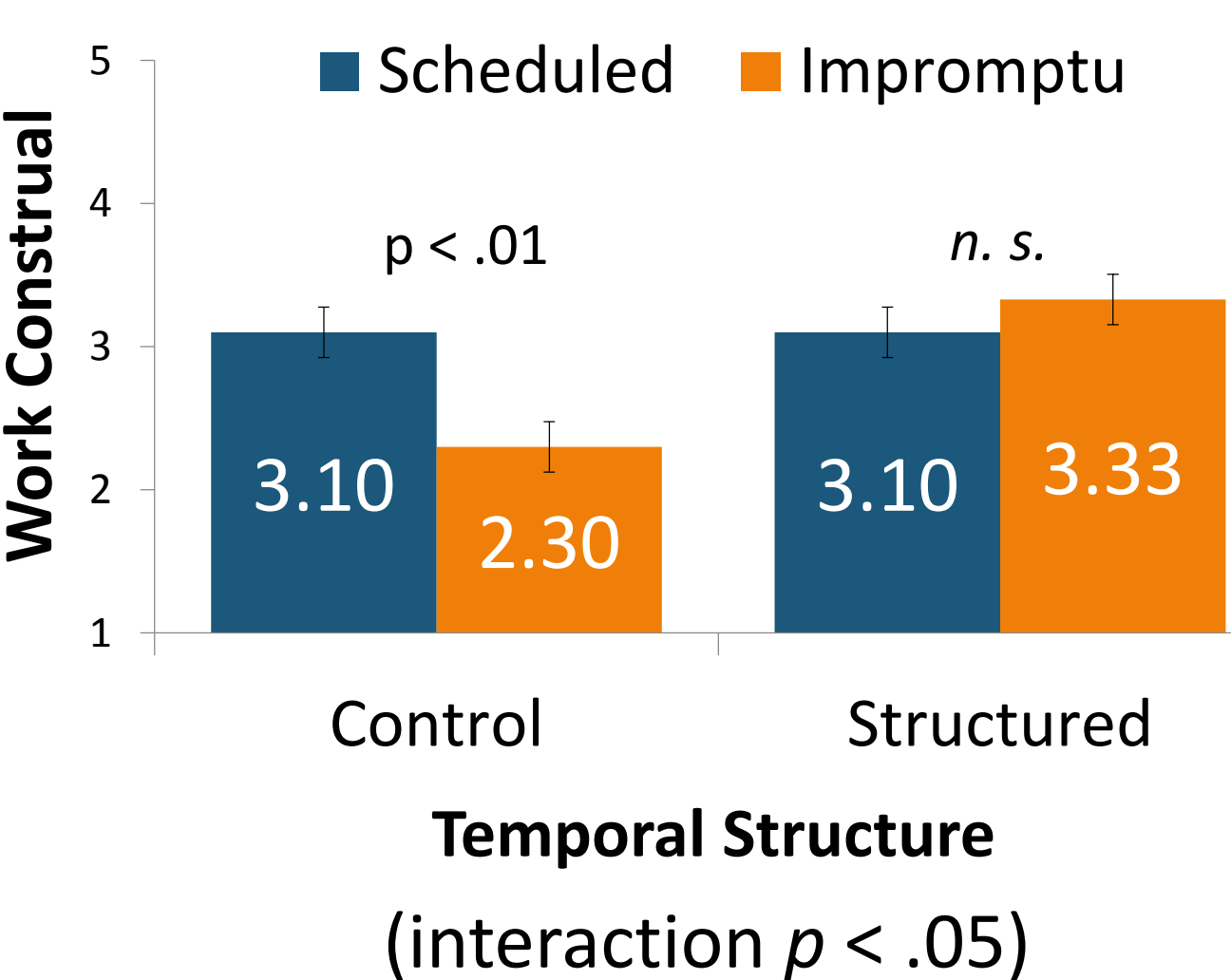
STUDY 8

Structured Impromptu Leisure Feels like Work

Participants imagined going to the forest preserve—where there are many activities offered—either impromptu or scheduled

Control: You will try to sign up for two activities and have a picnic in between.

Structured: You will try to sign up for an activity from 12:30-2:00pm, another from 3:00-4:30pm, and have a picnic in between.

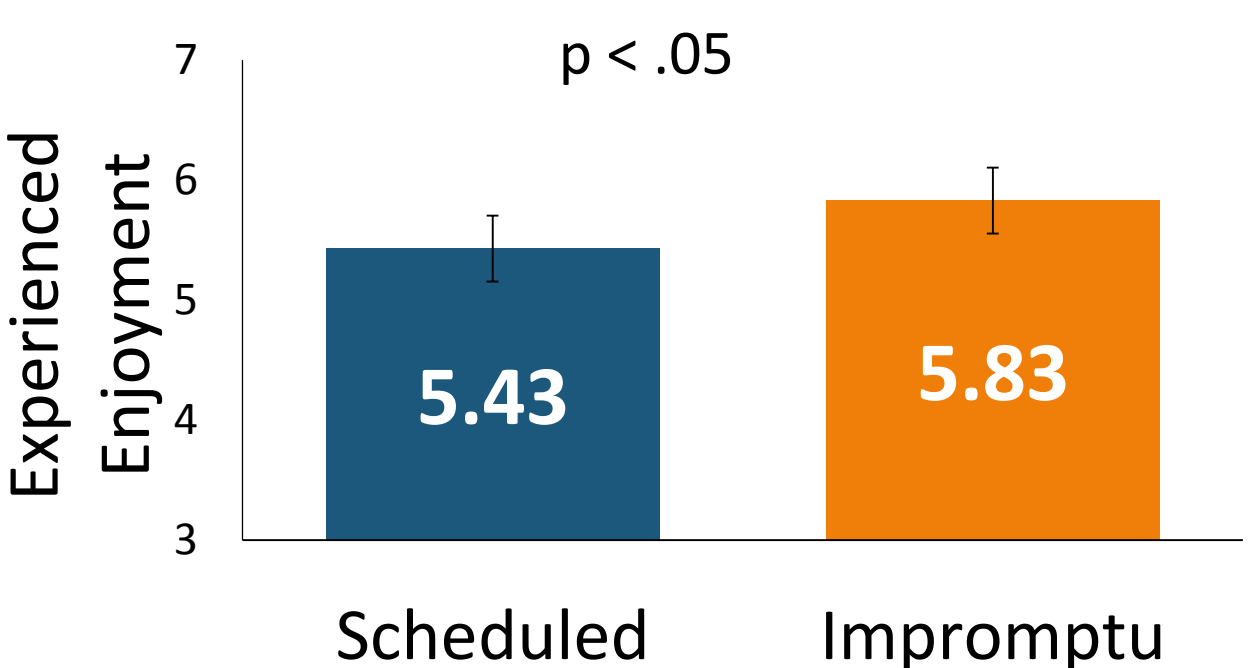


When an impromptu task is structured, it feels more like a scheduled task.

STUDY 11

Scheduling Reduces *Experienced* Utility through Work

Participants chose an entertaining video to watch. Half watched their video impromptu and half scheduled their video for the next few days. Everyone rated their enjoyment and work construal for their experience.



Participants who scheduled the video enjoyed it less.

This was mediated through greater work construal.

DISCUSSION

- Scheduling** imposes temporal structure, which makes leisure activities feel *less free-flowing*, leading to *increased work* construal and *lower utility* for leisure
- This effect holds for diverse leisure activities, both *experienced* and imagined
- We contribute to the literature on planning and intertemporal outcomes while also providing implications for well-being and happiness from leisure

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