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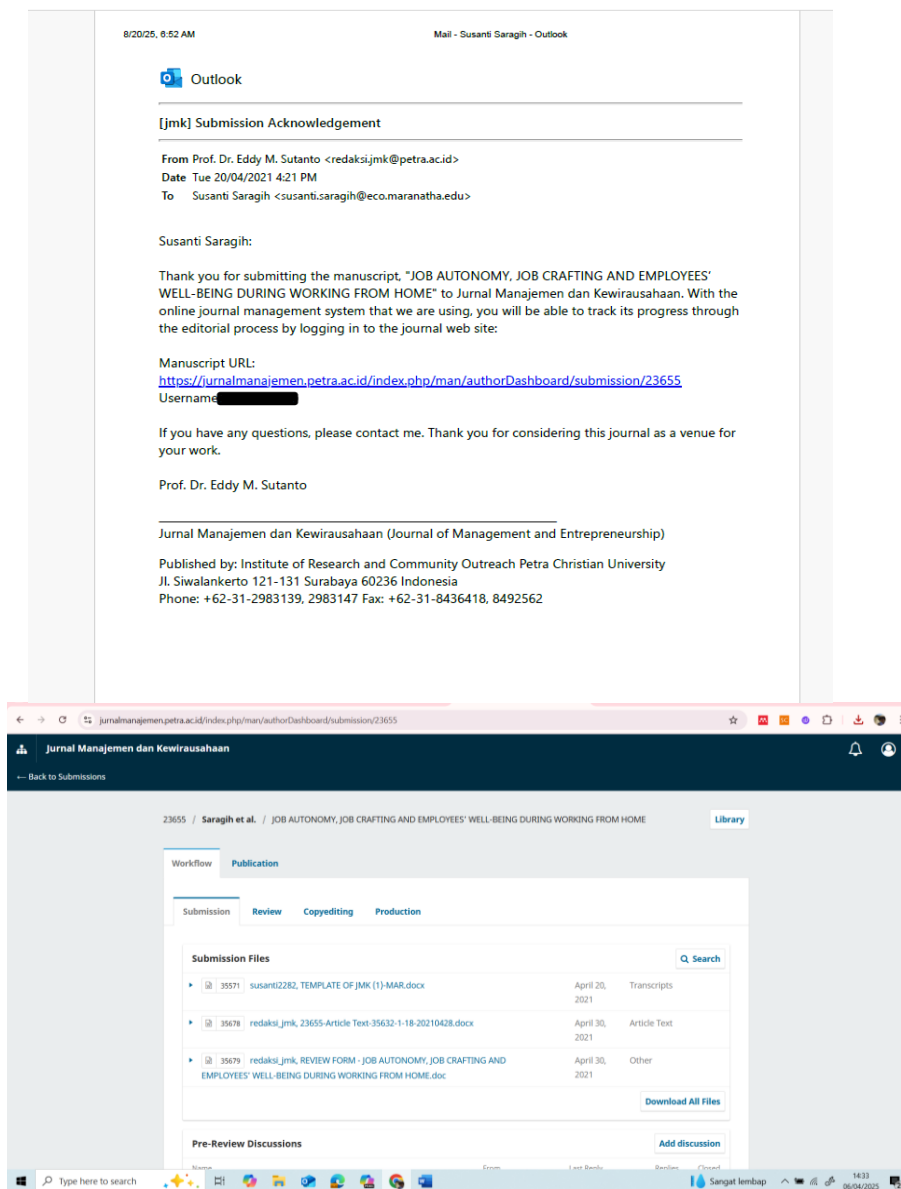
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# 1. Bukti konfirmasi submit artikel dan artikel yang disubmit 20 April 2021



# **JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME**

## **Abstract**

Workplace stressed employees' well-being because people have to work from home (WFH) and adapt to a new routine of work and life since Covid-19 struck the world. Employees who WFH increase their perception of more autonomous on how to handle their tasks, this is known as job autonomy. This study aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and employees' well-being during WFH in Covid-19 Pandemic. An online survey was conducted and there were 427 respondents involved. The model was analyzed using WarpPLS 7.0 and the results showed that no significant relationship was found between job autonomy and well-being. Moreover, job autonomy and job crafting are related as well as job crafting and well-being. Job crafting significantly mediate the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. This study showed that during WFH, employee experience an excessive degree of job freedom and it give them more work pressure and decrease employees' subjective well-being. In a conclusion, this study brings several concerns that organizations should be giving attention to.

**Keywords:** job crafting, job autonomy, well-being, job design, Covid-19 pandemic

## **Introduction**

The nature of work has been changing at a faster pace than ever before. Technological advancements have entirely reshaped organizations and enabled workers to juggle complex tasks, transformed the methods work, and reduce the boundaries between work and personal life (Johnson et al.,2020). This change is significant because employees add value by harnessing technologies to be creative, innovative, and adaptable. Employees need to be in a good state of a physical, mental, and emotional level to be able to accomplish all tasks and adapt with the changes. Moreover, nowadays there are some indications that employees pay more attention to their well-being as it affects their quality of life. This growing attention on well-being has gripped the world of work (Simone, 2014). As a result, many organizations have begun implementing well-being programs within the workplace. These have even become more prioritized since Covid-19 struck the world. Workplace stress reaches a peak, unprecedented level because people have to work from home and adapt to a new routine of work and life. COVID-19 pandemic creating an even more uncertain environment for both employers and employees. Physical activities such as going to the public area, groceries, out to the gym have been disrupted. Employee experiences financial and job insecurity because of layoffs, anger and sadness because of loneliness, and loss of a family member (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021). Employees who need to work from the office are more likely to work in fear and stress of the risk of exposure to the virus, and the increased demand for certain tasks and services.

A recent study found that the more time employees spent working remotely (versus work from the office) the higher their requirement of autonomy (Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2014). Having the flexibility to work remotely may increase employees' expectation and needs of autonomous and self-directed decisions on how to handle their job demand and responsibilities. Quarantine has introduced an alternative work arrangement, namely work from home (WFH). WFH enables employees to take appropriate steps to manage their job situation without direct supervision from the supervisor/manager.

They freely make task-related decisions, scheduling work tasks, and select work methods, this known as job autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Job autonomy and flexibility create an environment where self-initiation, proactivity and flexibility are promoted (Slemp, Kern, & Vella-Brodick, 2015). Job autonomy increases individual's sense of responsibility for his/her performance because employee who has enough independence and freedom to make decision on their daily task will apply their knowledge, preference and experience to conduct and perform the job, even to solve problems at works. They will engage in their jobs with a complete sense of willingness, recognize the purpose of their job, and are self-determined to perform a wider variety of tasks in various ways and methods of work (Zhou, 2020).

Several works (Sekiguchi, Li, & Husumi, 2017; Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2019; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020) have shown that employees who perceived enough control over their work are more likely to have higher satisfaction, performance, and well-being. A satisfactory level of autonomy at workplace permits employees to do a more extensive range of tasks, redefine their roles and modify job aspects that will reach an effective method of work, therefore be a precondition for work crafting (Kim et al., 2018). In reality, an employee becomes "crafter" of his/her work when the workplace provides them flexibility and space to make decision redesigning their jobs, balancing work load and job resources align with their abilities and preferences and thus creating a more engaging, meaningful, and enthusiastic working experience (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Slemp et al., 2015; Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017). Therefore, employee who perceived autonomy at work will have a lower stress and a higher psychological availability or resourcefulness of individuals that could in turn enhance employees' well-being (Wingerden et al., 2017).

However, research about autonomy and positive outcomes during this pandemic revealed a different result. Palumbo (2020) found that autonomy offered in home-based telecommuting work negatively affected employees' work-life balance and triggered higher fatigue during the pandemic. This comes from overlapping between private life and work and produces physical and emotional exhaustion. Vyas and Butakhieo (2020) also discovered that work from home during quarantine leads to an unhealthy lifestyle (lying on the sofa all day or sitting on an unsuitable chair), lowers motivation, and enhances cyberslacking.

The key objectives of this study are to explore the association between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediation effect of job crafting on job autonomy and well-being during working from home in Pandemic Covid-19. This study contributes to the job design literature in exploring the mechanism of job autonomy influence job crafting and well-being. While previous studies have been conducted in various industries and countries, this study conduct during the Pandemic Covid-19. The reason for this is employees who work remotely have a higher need for autonomy. Moreover, the findings will help the practitioners in facilitating the factors that promote autonomy and well-being.

### **Analytical Framework**

#### **Job Autonomy and well-being**

A broad theory of Self Determination Theory explains that humans have three intrinsic psychological needs: connectedness, autonomy, and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2008). Autonomy is characterized as the extent to which the job presents valuable freedom, independence, flexibility to make changes, and choice in determining the procedures to execute the work successfully (Ryan & Deci, 2008). Relatedness represents the individuals' need to experience a sense of affinity and connection with other people. The need for relatedness is satisfied when the worker has a supportive relationship and feels cared for by others.

Meanwhile, competence is defined as the human need to feel capable, successful, and able to accomplish their work effectively.

When employees are granted a satisfactory degree of job autonomy, they can execute their tasks (producing and servicing activities) by applying their knowledge, skills, and abilities efficiently. This would lead to a positive effect on employees' well-being (Park & Searcy, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012; Kim, et al., 2018). According to Yang and Zhao (2018) and Petrou et al., (2012), individuals' psychological well-being would increase dramatically when they experience independence and autonomy at the workplace. Employee would use their creativity, authority, and power to handle their work and have more chances to cope with the stressful work situation. This ensures that their satisfaction, work satisfaction, organizational engagement, and mental health will increase, and their stress and burnout will be decreased. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 1: Job autonomy will be positively related to employees' well-being*

*Hypothesis 2: Job autonomy will be positively related to job crafting*

### **Job crafting and well-being**

Job crafting is defined as a mechanism by which employees voluntarily change some aspects of the job (e.g. physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects) to increase performance and fit with their skill, knowledge, and career preference (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims, et al., 2012). The motivation for job crafting roots from employees' basic needs, the need to take control, the need to have a meaningful experience, and the need for connection to others. Employee becomes "crafter" of his/her daily tasks because they want to take control over the method, scope and the result, able to reduce daily stress at workplace, and create work climate in which they can work happier and more motivated.

Tim et al., (2012) grouped job crafting into four aspects: increasing the structural job resources, increasing challenge on the job, decreasing hindering job demands, and increasing social aspects of the job. Increasing structural job resources referred to the assortment of resource and opportunity for growth. This response lowers the adverse effects of high job demand and contribute to higher work dedication and job satisfaction (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010; Tim et al., 2012). Increasing challenging job demands is an opportunity to generate more challenges at work so that employees experience an acceptable degree of challenging job loads and requirements (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Decreasing hindering job demand defines as a self-initiated change that employees make to lower their job requirements when they perceived that their job loads have become devastating. Decreasing the degree of job demands may reduce the adverse health effects such as burnout and boredom (Tim et al., 2012; Wingerden et al., 2017). The fourth dimension is to improve social job resources that reflecting changes on the social aspect of the job (i.e., asking for advice, feedback, and coaching).

Prior research (e.g. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnso, 2005) applied person-job fit theory, come to an agreement that poor employee well-being is a result of an imbalance between the abilities, needs, and values of the worker. Meanwhile, job crafting is proactive behavior, the self-initiated adjustment in their job aspects to align the job with employees' needs and optimize their personal goals. There are three ways to execute job crafting designed in Wrzesniewski and Dutton's research (2001), the number and types of daily tasks, the amount of interaction with others, and how they think about or perceive their jobs.

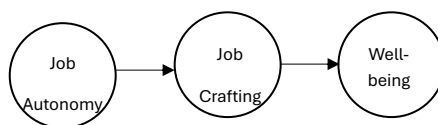
Utilization of these three methods would improve well-being because employees are more engaged at work (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2015; Wingerden et al., 2017); satisfy with their work, perform better (Guan & Frenkel, 2018), and experience lower levels of stress (Singh & Singh, 2018). Similarly, Crawford, Lepine & Rich (2010) found that employees can work according to their abilities, need and value by crafting their daily tasks and achieve a higher degree of well-being, therefore we hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3: Job crafting will be positively related to employees' well-being*

### **Job Autonomy, Job Crafting and Well-being**

It has been stated that job autonomy is an essential factor in the perceived potential for job craft. A high degree of job autonomy will trigger job crafting by signaling employees that they have enough opportunity and independence to take initiative changes (Petrou et al., 2012; Sekiguchi et al, 2017; Debus et al, 2019; Saragih et al, 2020). In addition, research indicates that a higher level of autonomy encourages employees to execute a range of tasks, responsibilities, and will be positively related to a higher level of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Slomp et al., 2015; Saragih et al, 2020). In a related vein, the Job Demand-Resource Model (JD-R model) found that autonomy improves the number of structural resources, social resources, and challenges needed at a job. These could be improving one's capabilities, asking for coaching or advice, proactively participate in new projects, making the job mentally less intense). Therefore, the employee would also have a sense of energy and engagement with their works and experiencing a sense of significance and satisfaction (Wingerden et al., 2017; Singh & Singh, 2018). As a consequence, this could enhance the well-being of the employees. Thus, it is hypothesized that job autonomy would increase well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable (Figure 1).

*H4: Job autonomy is related to well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable*



**Figure 1. The conceptual research framework**

## Research Method

### Sample and Procedure

The sample of this study is employees who have been working for a minimum of 1 year in Bandung and Jakarta. The minimum sample size was calculated based on the number of parameters. An online survey was conducted by targeting employees who have been working for 1 year in Bandung or Jakarta and 427 respondents participated in this research (Table 1). Respondents were categorized in gender, age, educational background, and employment status. The majority of respondents were female (47%) and the prevailing age was in the age range of > 46 years old (19.6%). Nearly one-third of the respondents have a bachelor's degree (31.5%) and works as permanent workers (54.8%).

**Table 1: Respondents Profile (n = 427)**

	# of respondents	percentage
Gender		
Male	139	22.7
Female	288	47.0
Age		
23-28	84	13.7
29-34	88	14.4
35-40	85	13.9
41-46	50	8.2
>46	120	19.6
Education		
High School	7	1.1
Diploma	169	27.6
Bachelor's degree	193	31.5
Master's degree	58	9.5
Employment Status		
Permanent Worker	336	54.8
Temporary Worker	91	14.8

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## Measures

**Job crafting.** This study followed the instrument developed by Tim et al., (2012). It compounds of four dimensions (increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands). A sample of the item is “I make sure that my work is mentally less intense”. There are 21 items on a five-point Likert scale measuring each of four dimensions. **Job autonomy.** The scale adopted the instrument developed by James Breauagh (1999) that consists of 9 items. A sample item is “I am free to choose the methods the methods to use in carrying out my work”.

**Workplace well-being (WWB).** The survey adopted the instrument developed by Warr (1990). It consists of 12 descriptor words (both positive affect and negative affect). Respondents indicate the frequency of each emotions they experience at work for the last 2 months.

To examine whether the three constructs assessed were distinct from one another, we conducted reliability using WarpPLS 7.0. Table 2 described the loading factors results. Indicators' loading factor should be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). All indicators in Job Autonomy (JA) had a satisfactory structure loading (greater than 0.5). Meanwhile, some items in job crafting (JC) and Well-being (WWB) must be deleted because showed unsatisfactory validity score (loading factors were under 0.5). There are 7 indicators deleted in JC and 6 indicators in well-being.

**Table 2: Loading Factors**

	Job Autonomy	Job Crafting	Wellbeing
ja1	(0.777)		
	(0.816)		
ja2	(0.793)		
	(0.704)		
ja3	(0.694)		
	(0.757)		
ja4	(0.675)		
	(0.642)		
ja5	(0.650)		
ja6		(0.687)	
		(0.658)	
ja7		(0.602)	
		(0.756)	
ja8		(0.687)	
		(0.629)	
ja9		(0.562)	
		(0.619)	
		(0.608)	
		(0.549)	
jc1		(0.526)	
		(0.647)	
jc2		(0.756)	
jc3			(0.822)
			(0.861)
			(0.814)
			(0.783)



jc5	(0.790)
jc8	(0.836)
jc11	
jc13	
jc14	
jc15	
jc16	
jc18	
jc19	
jc20	
wwb1	
wwb2	
wwb3	
wwb7	
wwb8	
wwb9	

To ensure that all items in the questionnaire are meet the requirement of internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha was tested. Compositive reliability and the alpha coefficients of the Cronbach should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). The result of the reliability check is shown in Table 3 and all variables assessed in this study had a satisfactory score of composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha (range from 0.886-0.924).

Table 3: Reliability Check		
Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Job Autonomy	0.909	0.886
	0.900	0.879
Job Crafting	0.924	0.901
Wellbeing		

### Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables are presented in Table 4. The result shows that job autonomy is correlated positively with job crafting ( $r = 0.735^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but correlated negatively with well-being ( $r = -0.218^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, job crafting is negatively linked to the

well-being of the employees ( $r = -0.277^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The result also showed the highest mean score for job autonomy (mean = 4.49) and the lowest mean score for well-being (mean = 2.31).

**Table 4: Means, standard deviation and correlations for all variables (n = 427)**

	Mean	JA	JC	WB
JobAutonomy	4,49	1	.735**	-.218**
JobCrafting	4,41		1	-.277**
Well-being	2,31			1

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## Hypothesis Testing

We estimated the research model by conducting a path analysis through WarpPLS 7.0. The model is considered to be fit if it meets 3 (three) fit model size criteria, such as Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Block Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF). The result showed that the research model after data analysis using the WarpPLS program was fit indicated by general information. Based on the result, the model proposed is accepted (Table 5) because APC is 0.533 ( $p < 0.001$ ); ARS is 0.332 ( $p < 0.001$ ), AFVIF 1.900, GoF value 0.422 (larger than 0.36).

**Table 5: Measurement Model**

Fit Indicators	Recommendation Value	Value
APC		0.533 ( $P < 0.001$ )
ARS		0.332 ( $P < 0.001$ )
AFVIF	$\leq 3.3$	1.900
GoF	$\geq 0.36$ (large)	0.422
RSCR	$\geq 0.9$	1.00
SSR	$\geq 0.7$	1.00

Furthermore, the R-Square for job crafting is 0.564 and well-being is 0.100 (Table 6). Also, we assessed the predictive validity associated with each latent variable in the model by evaluating the Q-squared coefficient (Table 6). If the Q-Square value showed  $> 0$ , we can conclude that the model has predicate

relevance (vice versa). The Q-squared coefficient in this study is 0.6076, therefore 60,76% of employees' well-being explained by job crafting and job autonomy.

Q-Square value estimation (predicate relevance/Q2):

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) (1 - R22)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0,564) (1 - 0,100)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (0,436) (0,90)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - 0,3924$$

$$Q2 = 0.6076$$

**Table 6: R Square**

Dependent Variable	R Square
Job Crafting	0.564
Wellbeing	0.100

**Table 7: Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Coef.	Prob.	Conclusion
Job Autonomy → Well being	-0.05	p < 0.164	Hyp. rejected
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting	0.75	p < 0.001	Hyp. accepted
Job Crafting → Well being			Hyp. accepted
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting → Well being	0.28	p < 0.001	Hyp. accepted
	-0.209	p < 0.001	

Based on the result shown in Table 7, it revealed an interesting point. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being ( $\beta = -0.05$ ;  $p < 0.164$ ) is not significant; hence this result doesn't support the hypothesis. We also found a significant association between job autonomy and job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Table 7 showed that job crafting positively and significantly associate with well-being ( $\beta = 0.28$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). In the association of work autonomy and well-being, the mediating role of job creation is supported in this study ( $\beta = -0.200$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Remarkably, the result revealed a negative direction in the

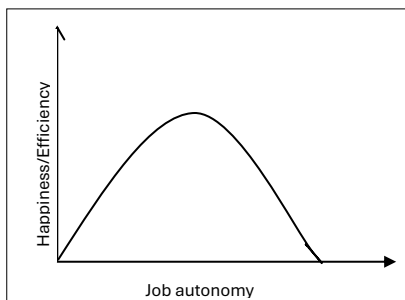
association of job autonomy and well-being ( $\beta = -0.209$ ). Unlike prior research that has largely emphasize the positive direction, this result gave a different view of these variables association.

### **Discussion**

The high attention to employees' well-being becomes prominent since Covid-19 hit the world. Workplace stress reaches a peak level because people have to adapt to a new routine and ways of work and life. Covid-19 pandemic has changed employees' expectancy of a workplace. Employees are looking for higher flexibility to experience better well-being. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. More specifically, the purpose was to address the mediating effects of job crafting on the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. As a result, this study shines a light on current insight into job design and factors that promoted well-being.

Hypothesis 1 stated that a curvilinear relationship would exist between job autonomy and well-being. This means that when employee experience a high job autonomy, their well-being would increase (Yang & Zhao, 2018). The result of the analysis didn't support for a positive relationship. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being is not significant. This result challenge the previous finding that have found a positive effect of job autonomy on well-being. This study conducted during the pandemic when employees have to work from home without proper monitoring policy. Accordingly, employees experience an excessive degree of job flexibility and it give them more work pressure, aggravate job burnout, create an opportunity for deceitful behavior, and reduce their subjective happiness (Zhou, 2020; Kubicek, Paskvan, and Bunner, 2017). Crawford and Lepine (2013) stated that "too-much-of-a-good-thing" might make the loss larger compared to the benefit expected (inverted U shape figure 2).

**Figure 2: inverted U shape curve**



Source: Zhou (2020)

Job autonomy is hypothesized related to job crafting in hypothesis 2. Theoretically, job autonomy provides the precondition that enables more self-determined, discretionary behaviors in an organization, such as job crafting. Job crafting is a voluntary behavior aimed at finding significance and personal development by asking colleagues for advice, asking for more assignments and challenges, reducing

emotional and mental requirements, change physical workspace. The result revealed that job autonomy significantly effects job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This support previous findings (e.g. Debus et al., 2019; Vanbelle et al., 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2018) that explained that when employee have a satisfactory degree of freedom and the job demands are high, employee will tend to modify aspects of the task according to their skills, and preference. They even able to increase challenge when the job is under stimulating. Flexibility allows them to reduce job demands that delivered pressure emotionally and physically.

The direct effect of job crafting, and well-being also supported in this study (hypothesis 3). By engaging in job crafting, employees will basically reshape their job to become more closely aligned with their skills, preferences and motivation for work. This process affects the nature of the job itself, including the demands experienced, resources and meaning of the work. This result parallel with previous researches. Tims et al. (2012, 2013) have found that job crafting enables individuals to strike an equilibrium between the demands and also the personal resources they need to perform that helps against burnout, exhaustion and increases engagement.

Hypothesis 4 stated that job crafting would mediate the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. Perceived autonomy at the workplace would lead to job crafting behavior, which in turn would be associated with higher subjective well-being. The results of this study supported hypothesis 4, which is consistent with what was found by Slemp et al. (2015), and Saragih et al. (2020). These results indicate that during the pandemic, employees who enjoy flexibility (in choosing time, methods, and place) to accomplish his/her works are prone to redefine their job to fit their needs and make their job more satisfying, meaningful and lead to better well-being (Demerouti, 2014).

### **Conclusion and Implication**

Based on the above discussion, this study concludes that job autonomy also harms employees' well-being. In other words, the high levels of flexibility at the workplace contribute to detrimental effects on employees' well-being. Job autonomy creates a curvilinear function, well-being increases from low to medium levels, but it decreases when they experience an excessive level of freedom. Employees feel more insecure and not sure what to do. While job autonomy leads to a voluntary behavior, called job crafting. Job autonomy allows employees to take control over how they execute their tasks. Therefore, employees tend to alter the nature of their job to align the demand and resources with their personal preferences. This finding gives practical contribution for organizations and supervisors to provide an optimal level of independence and flexibility at the workplace. As an addition, an evaluation standard should explain beforehand so, the employee knows how they will evaluate and finish their work.

This study agrees that job crafting mediates job autonomy and well-being. Having the flexibility to work remotely during pandemic increase employees' perception of making more independent and self-directed decisions to accomplish tasks (Gajendran et al. 2014). This relates to higher engagement and subjective well-being. This result also indicates that managers should focus on results because it goes hand-in-hand with job autonomy. When managers give an employee flexibility during remote work, it is important to assess whether they are delivering outstanding results.

Evident from the survey conducted during the pandemic by the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021) found that during WFH employees experience more stress, fear regarding job security, felt anxious, lonely, bored, and exhausted. Therefore, organizational need to provides support

(e.g., trust, clear direction, communication, proper monitoring, and flexibility about specific work arrangements).

Our present study has its limitations whose acknowledge points to future studies. First, this study only focuses on job autonomy as an independent variable. Future research might help to establish the complex path involving more independent variables (e.g., social support, workload). Second, in this study analysis, job crafting is treated as uni-dimension. Based on the initial study by Tims, Bakker, and Derks (2012), job crafting consists of 4 dimensions. Future research should treat each job crafting's dimension as an individual dimension in the data analysis.

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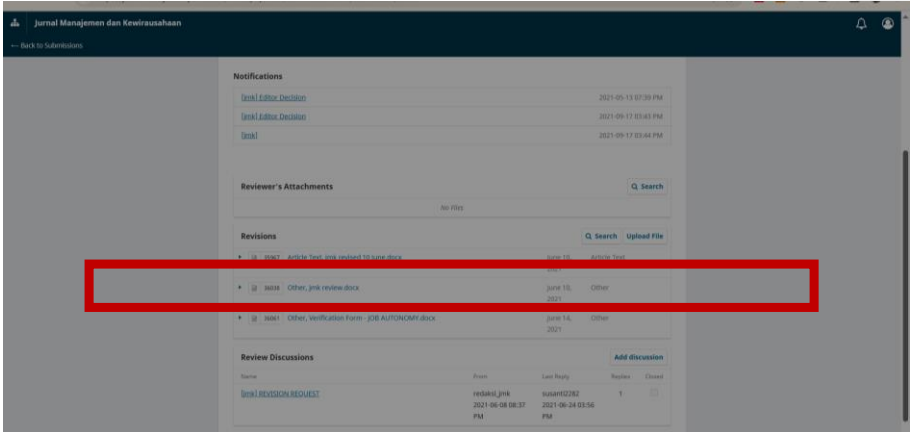
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## 2. Bukti permintaan revisi tahap 1 (13 Mei 2021)





3. Bukti respon terhadap revisi (10 Juni 2021) dan manuskrip yang di revisi



### Authors' comments

No.		
	Need to support the statement with the latest evidence under introduction, the statement stated A recent study....which refers to citation in 2014. Recent should be supporting with the latest evidence.	<p>We have updated the latest evidence. For examples: Gajendran, Harrison, &amp; Delaney-Klinger, 2014 → International Labour Organization, 2020; Palumbo, 2020; Gajendran, Harrison, &amp; Delaney-Klinger, 2014.</p> <p>Previous researches proposed that job autonomy has become a precondition of proactive workplace behavior, namely job crafting (Chang, Rui and Wu, 2021; Kim, et al., 2018; Li et al., 2020).</p>
2	The subsection title Analytical Framework is a more appropriate change to the conceptual framework.	We have changed the title
3	Be consistent on the writing of Covid-19 or COVID-19.	We have replaced Covid-19 to COVID-19
4	Revise the references along with the guidelines. Make sure all the citation sources in the text must be listed in the references. Vice versa.	References revised.
5	Revise the writing of tables and Figure numbers and names along with the guidelines.	We revised the table and figures titles
6	All statistical symbols must be in italic.	<i>B, r, and p</i> are all in italic
7	Abstract must be past tense	<p>Abstract has revised into past tense.</p> <p>For example: An online survey was conducted ... there was a relationship .... Job crafting significantly mediated</p>

## **JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME**

### **Abstract**

Nowadays, organizations have focused more on employees' well-being because people have to work from home (WFH) or practice hybrid work and adapt to a new routine of work and life since COVID-19 struck the world. During working from home, employees expect more flexibility on how to handle their tasks—this is known as job autonomy. This study aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and employees' well-being during WFH in COVID-19 Pandemic. An online survey was conducted and there were 427 respondents involved. The model was analyzed using WarpPLS 7.0 and the results showed that no significant relationship was found between job autonomy and well-being. However, there was a relationship between job autonomy and job crafting, as well as between job crafting and well-being. Job crafting significantly mediated the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. This study showed that during WFH, employees have experienced an excessive degree of freedom in doing their tasks, and it had given them more pressure and decreased employees' subjective well-being. The findings may be valuable in all kinds of organizational settings when reviewing and proposing job design and well-being policies.

**Keywords:** job crafting, job autonomy, well-being, job design, COVID-19 pandemic

## Introduction

The nature of work has been changing at a faster pace than ever before. Technological advancements have entirely reshaped organizations, implemented various flexible work arrangement (FWA), modified the methods work, and reduced the boundaries between work and personal life (Johnson et al., 2020). These changes are significant because employees can add value by harnessing technologies to be creative, innovative, and adaptable. Nevertheless, employees need to be at a good level of physical, mental, and emotional conditions to accomplish all tasks and adapt to these vast changes. As a result, there are some indications that nowadays employees pay more attention to their well-being as it affects their quality of life.

This growing attention on well-being has gripped the world of work (Simone, 2014). Many organizations have begun implementing well-being programs within the workplace. These have even become more prioritized since COVID-19 struck the world. This pandemic has created an even more uncertain environment for both employers and employees. Workplace stress reaches an unprecedented level because people have to work from home and adapt to a new routine of work and life. Physical activities such as going to the public area, groceries, out to the gym have been disrupted. Employees experience financial and job insecurity because of layoffs, anger and sadness because of loneliness, and loss of a family member (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021). Employees who need to work from the office are more likely to work in fear and stress of the risk of exposure to the virus, and the increased demand for certain tasks and services.

A recent study found that the more time employees spent working remotely (versus working from the office) the higher their expectation of flexibility (International Labour Organization, 2020; Palumbo, 2020; Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2014). For instance, employees may be able to change the measurement of productivity by focusing on outcomes rather than working hours, and on unspecific work hours, but total weekly hours remain unchanged, or by utilizing different methods to handle their job demand and responsibilities (International Labour Organization, 2020). Working from home (WFH) should enable employees to take appropriate steps to manage their job situation without direct supervision from their supervisor/manager. This temporary alternative work arrangement requires mutual trust between employees and managers (International Labour Organization, 2020), so employees freely make task-related decisions, scheduling work tasks, and select work methods, this known as job autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Job autonomy and flexibility create an environment where self-initiation, proactivity, and flexibility are promoted (Slomp, Kern, & Vella-Brodick, 2015). Job autonomy increases individual's sense of responsibility for their performance because an employee who has enough independence and freedom to make decision on their daily task will apply their knowledge, preference, and experiences to conduct and perform the job, and even to solve difficult problems at works. Flexibility at work promotes positive results by enhancing employee's engagement, ownership, including recognize the purpose of their job, and willingness to modify the methods of work (Zhou, 2020).

Several studies (Sekiguchi, Li, & Husumi, 2017; Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2019; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020) have shown that employees who perceived enough control over their work are more likely to have higher satisfaction, performance, and well-being. A satisfactory

level of autonomy at workplace permits employees to do a more extensive range of tasks, redefine their roles, and modify job aspects that will reach an effective method of work, and will then become a precondition for work crafting (Kim et al., 2018). In reality, an employee becomes “crafter” of their work when the workplace provides flexibility and space for employee to make decision on redesigning their jobs, and balancing workload and resources. Subsequently, this decision-making creates a more engaging, meaningful, and enthusiastic working experience (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Slemp, Kern, & Vella-Brodick, 2015; Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017) because employee will have a lower stress and a higher psychological availability that could in turn enhance employees’ well-being (Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017).

However, studies on autonomy and positive outcomes during this pandemic revealed a different result. Palumbo (2020) found that autonomy offered in home-based telecommuting work negatively affected employees’ work-life balance and triggered higher fatigue during the pandemic. Often, WFH interferes with personal life, blurs the boundaries of work and personal life because of an increase in work hours and an intensification of work. It is speculated that workers’ well-being and performance will be affected. In Japan, a research showed that working hours and time off ambiguity were the highest-ranked disadvantage of remote working (Sato, 2019). Vyas and Butakhieo (2020) also discovered that work from home during quarantine leads to an unhealthy lifestyle (lying on the sofa all day or sitting on an unsuitable chair), lowers motivation, and enhances cyberslacking.

The key objectives of this study are to explore the association between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediation effect of job crafting on job autonomy and well-being during working from home in COVID-19 Pandemic. This study contributes to the job design literature in exploring the mechanism of job autonomy and its influence on job crafting and well-being. While previous studies have been conducted in various industries and countries on normal situation, this study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reason for doing the study is employees who work remotely have a higher need for autonomy. Moreover, the findings will help the practitioners in facilitating the factors that promote autonomy and well-being during the period of remote working.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Job Autonomy and well-being**

A broad theory of human motivation, the Self Determination Theory, explains that humans have three intrinsic psychological needs: connectedness, autonomy, and competence (Ryan and Deci, 2008). Autonomy is characterized as the extent to which the job presents valuable freedom, independence, flexibility to make changes, and choice in determining the procedures to execute the work successfully (Ryan and Deci, 2008). Relatedness represents the individuals’ need to experience a sense of affinity and connection with other people. The need for relatedness is satisfied when the worker has a supportive relationship and feels cared for by others. Meanwhile, competence is defined as the human need to feel capable, successful, and able to accomplish their work effectively.

When employees are granted a satisfactory degree of job autonomy, they can execute their tasks by applying their knowledge, skills, and abilities efficiently. This would lead to a positive effect on employees’ well-being (Park & Searcy, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012; Park and Jang, 2015; Kim et al., 2018). According to

Yang and Zhao (2018) and Petrou et al., (2012), individuals' psychological well-being would increase dramatically when they experience independence and autonomy at the workplace because they would use their creativity, authority, and power to handle their work and have more chances to cope with the stressful work situation. It also promotes job satisfaction, organizational engagement, worker's mental health, and decreases stress level.

Previous studies proposed that job autonomy has become a precondition of proactive workplace behavior, i.e. job crafting (Chang, Rui & Wu, 2021; Kim et al., 2018; Li et al., 2020). Job crafting is defined as employee's self-initiative actions in changing the physical and cognitive aspect in the task or relational boundaries of their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton; Tims & Bakker, 2010). Employees may modify their jobs based on their needs and preferences by changing tasks' scope, number of tasks, skills used at work, or relationships with customers or colleagues (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

This implied that some degree of flexibility during work from home enables the employee to modify aspects of their works to align them with their personal needs and preferences (Tims et al., 2012; Wingerden et al., 2017; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**can control and determine their work environment**

*Hypothesis 1: Job autonomy will be positively related to employees' well-being*

*Hypothesis 2: Job autonomy will be positively related to job crafting*

### **Job crafting and well-being**

Job crafting is defined as a mechanism by which employees voluntarily change some aspects of the job (i.e. physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects) to increase performance and fit with their skill, knowledge, and career preference (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims et al., 2012). The motivation for job crafting roots from employees' basic needs, the need to take control, the need to have a meaningful experience, and the need of connection with others. Employee becomes "crafter" of their daily tasks because they want to take control over the method, scope and the result, able to reduce daily stress at workplace, and create work climate in which they can work happier and more motivated (Chang, Rui, & Wu, 2021).

Tim et al. (2012) stated that job crafting consists of four dimensions: increasing the structural job resources, increasing challenge on the job, decreasing hindering job demands, and increasing social aspects of the job. Increasing structural job resources refers to the assortment of resource and opportunity for personal growth. This response lowers the adverse effects of high job demand and contributes to higher work dedication and job satisfaction (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010; Tim et al., 2012). Increasing challenging job demands is an opportunity to generate more challenges at work so that employees experience an acceptable degree of challenging job loads and requirements (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Meanwhile, decreasing hindering job demand is defined as a self-initiated change that employees make to lower their job requirements when they perceived that their job loads have become devastating. Decreasing the degree of job demands may reduce the adverse health effects such as burnout and boredom (Tim et al., 2012; Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks, 2017). Finally, employee crafts their work by changing social aspect of the job (i.e. asking for advice, feedback, and coaching).

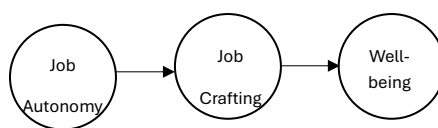
Prior research that has applied person-job fit theory (e.g. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnso, 2005) enlightens that poor employee well-being is a result of misfit between the abilities, needs, and values of the worker. During work from home, employees' daily living routines have been disrupted, which may cause added stress, tension, and physical . Therefore, if an employee has the flexibility to modify their work (i.e. the ability to arrange the number and types of daily tasks, the amount of interaction with others, and how they think about or perceive their jobs), it will lead to a fitness between person and job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Crawford, Lepine & Rich, 2010). Crafting work with these three methods would enable an employee to work according to their values and preferences, more engaged at work (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2015; Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017), be satisfied with their work, perform better (Guan & Frenkel, 2018), and experience lower levels of stress (Singh and Singh, 2018). Therefore, we hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 3: Job crafting will be positively related to employees' well-being*

#### **Job Autonomy, Job Crafting and Well-being**

It has been stated that job autonomy is a requirement for employees to craft their daily tasks. A high degree of job autonomy will trigger job crafting by signaling employees that they have enough opportunity and independence to take initiative changes (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Sekiguchi, Li, & Husumi, 2017; Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2019; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020). In addition, studies indicate that a higher level of autonomy encourages employees to execute a range of tasks, responsibilities, and will be positively related to a higher level of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Slemp, Kern, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020). Not only increase motivation, the Job Demand-Resource Model (JD-R model) also improves the number of structural resources, social resources, and challenges at a job. These could be improving one's capabilities, asking for coaching or advice, proactively participate in new projects, making the job mentally less intense). Therefore, the employee would also have a sense of energy and engagement with their works and experiencing a sense of significance and satisfaction (Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017; Singh and Singh, 2018). As a consequence, this could enhance the well-being of the employees. Thus, it is hypothesized that job autonomy would increase well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable (Figure 1).

*H4: Job autonomy is related to well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable*



**Figure 1. The conceptual research framework**

#### **Research Method**

##### **Sample and Procedure**

The sample of this study is employees who have been working for a minimum of 1 year in Bandung and Jakarta. The minimum sample size was calculated based on the number of parameters. An online survey was conducted by targeting employees who have been working for 1 year in Bandung or Jakarta and 427 respondents participated in this research (Table 1). Respondents were categorized in gender, age, educational background, and employment status. The majority of respondents were female (47%) and the prevailing age was in the age range of > 46 years old (19.6%). Nearly one-third of the respondents have a bachelor's degree (31.5%) and works as permanent workers (54.8%).

**Table 1: Respondents Profile (n = 427)**

	# of respondents	percentage
Gender		
Male	139	22.7
Female	288	47.0
Age		
23-28	84	13.7
29-34	88	14.4
35-40	85	13.9
41-46	50	8.2
>46	120	19.6
Education		
High School	7	1.1
Diploma	169	27.6
Bachelor's degree	193	31.5
Master's degree	58	9.5
Employment Status		
Permanent Worker	336	54.8
Temporary Worker	91	14.8

### Measures

**Job crafting.** This study followed the instrument developed by Tim et al., (2012). It consists of four dimensions (increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands). A sample of the item is "I make sure that my work is mentally less intense". There are 21 items on a five-point Likert scale measuring each of the four dimensions. **Job autonomy.** The scale adopted the instrument developed by James Breugh (1999) that consists of 9 items. A sample item is "I am free to choose the methods to use in carrying out my work".

**Workplace well-being (WWB).** The survey adopted the instrument developed by Warr (1990). It consists of 12 descriptor words (both positive affect and negative affect). Respondents indicate the frequency of each emotions they experience at work for the last 2 months.

To examine whether the variables (job autonomy, well-being, and job crafting) assessed were distinct from one another, we conducted reliability test using WarpPLS 7.0. Table 2 described the loading factors' results. Indicators' loading factor should be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). All indicators in Job Autonomy (JA) had a satisfactory structure loading (greater than 0.5). Meanwhile, some items in job crafting (JC) and Well-being (WWB) must be deleted because showed unsatisfactory validity score (loading factors were under 0.5). There are 7 indicators deleted in JC and 6 indicators in well-being.



Table 2: Loading Factors

	Job Autonomy	Job Crafting	Wellbeing
ja1	(0.777)		
ja2	(0.816)		
ja3	(0.793)		
ja4	(0.704)		
ja5	(0.694)		
ja6	(0.757)		
ja7	(0.675)		
ja8	(0.642)		
ja9	(0.650)		
jc1		(0.687)	
jc2		(0.658)	
jc3		(0.602)	
jc5		(0.756)	
jc8		(0.687)	
jc11		(0.629)	
jc13		(0.562)	
jc14		(0.619)	
jc15		(0.608)	
jc16		(0.549)	
jc18		(0.526)	
jc19		(0.647)	
jc20		(0.756)	
wwb1			(0.822)
wwb2			(0.861)
wwb3			(0.814)
wwb7			(0.783)
wwb8			(0.790)
wwb9			(0.836)

To ensure that all items in the questionnaire met the requirement of internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha was tested. Compositive reliability and the Cronbach alpha coefficients should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). The result of the reliability check is shown in Table 3 and all variables assessed in this study had a satisfactory score of composite reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha ranging from 0.886-0.924.

Table 3: Reliability Check

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach’s Alpha
Job Autonomy	0.909	0.886
	0.900	0.879
Job Crafting	0.924	0.901
Wellbeing		

Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables are presented in Table 4. The result shows that job autonomy is correlated positively with job crafting ( $r=0.735^{**}, p<0.01$ ), but correlated

negatively with well-being ( $r = -0.218^{**}, p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, job crafting is negatively linked to the well-being of the employees ( $r = -0.277^{**}, p < 0.01$ ). The results also showed the highest mean score for job autonomy (mean = 4.49) and the lowest mean score for well-being (mean = 2.31).

**Table 4: Means, standard deviation and correlations for all variables (n = 427)**

	Mean	SD	Age	Gender	Education	Employment Status	JA	JC	Well being
Age	-	-	1	.101 <sup>*</sup>	-.077	-.020	.048	.065	.076
Gender	-	-		1	-.235 <sup>**</sup>	.069	-.085	-.038	.114 <sup>*</sup>
Education	-	-			1	-.179 <sup>**</sup>	-.135 <sup>**</sup>	-.064	.087
Emp. Status	-	-				1	-.007	-.031	-.029
JA	4.49	0.640					1	.735 <sup>**</sup>	-.218 <sup>**</sup>
JC	4.41	0.479						1	-.277 <sup>**</sup>
Wellbeing	2.31	0.764							1

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Hypothesis Testing

We estimated the research model by conducting a path analysis through WarpPLS 7.0. The model is considered to be fit if it meets 3 (three) fit model size criteria, such as Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Block Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF). The results showed that the research model after data analysis using the WarpPLS program was fit indicated by general information. Based on the results, the proposed model is accepted (Table 5) because APC is 0.533 ( $p < 0.001$ ); ARS is 0.332 ( $p < 0.001$ ), AFVIF 1.900, GoF value 0.422 (larger than 0.36).

**Table 5: Measurement Model**

Fit Indicators	Recommendation Value	Value
APC		0.533 ( $P < 0.001$ )
ARS		0.332 ( $P < 0.001$ )
AFVIF	$\leq 3.3$	1.900
GoF	$\geq 0.36$ (large)	0.422
RSCR	$\geq 0.9$	1.00
SSR	$\geq 0.7$	1.00

Furthermore, the R-Square for job crafting is 0.564 and well-being is 0.100 (Table 6). Also, we assessed the predictive validity associated with each latent variable in the model by evaluating the Q-squared coefficient (Table 6). If the Q-Square value showed  $> 0$ , we can conclude that the model has predicate

relevance (vice versa). The Q-squared coefficient in this study is 0.6076. Therefore, 60.76% of employees' well-being were explained by job crafting and job autonomy.

Q-Square value estimation (predicate relevance/Q2):

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) (1 - R22)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0,564) (1 - 0,100)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (0,436) (0,90)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - 0,3924$$

$$Q2 = 0.6076$$

**Table 6: R Square**

Dependent Variable	R Square
Job Crafting	0.564
Wellbeing	0.100

**Table 7: Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Coef.	Prob.	Conclusion
Job Autonomy → Well being	-0.05	$p < 0.164$	Hyp. rejected
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting	0.75	$p < 0.001$	Hyp. accepted
Job Crafting → Well being			Hyp. accepted
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting → Well being	0.28	$p < 0.001$	Hyp. accepted
	-0.209	$p < 0.001$	

Based on the results shown in Table 7, it revealed an interesting point. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being ( $\beta = -0.05$ ;  $p < 0.164$ ) was not significant; hence this result did not support the hypothesis. We also found a significant association between job autonomy and job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Table 7 showed that job crafting is positively and significantly associated with well-being ( $\beta = 0.28$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). In the association of work autonomy and well-being, the mediating role of job creation is supported in this study ( $\beta = -0.200$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Remarkably, the result revealed a negative direction in the association of job autonomy and well-being ( $\beta = -0.209$ ). Unlike prior research that has largely emphasized the positive direction, this result gave a different view of these variables association.

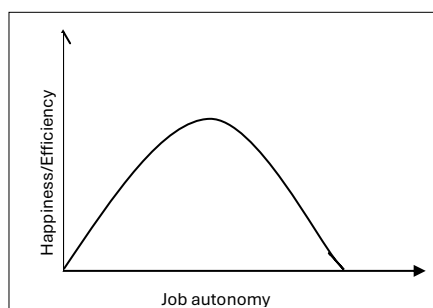
### Discussion

The high attention to employees' well-being has become prominent since COVID-19 hit the world. Workplace stress reaches a peak level because people have to adapt to a new routine and ways of work and life. COVID-19 pandemic has changed employees' expectancy of a workplace. Employees are looking for higher flexibility to experience better well-being. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to examine

the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. More specifically, the purpose was to address the mediating effects of job crafting on the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. As a result, this study shines a light on current insight into job design and factors that promote well-being.

Hypothesis 1 stated that a curvilinear relationship would exist between job autonomy and well-being. This means that when employees experienced a high job autonomy, their well-being would increase (Yang and Zhao, 2018). The result of the analysis did not support a positive relationship. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being is not significant. This result challenged the previous finding that have a positive effect of job autonomy on well-being. This study was conducted during the pandemic when employees have to work from home without proper monitoring policy. Accordingly, employees experience an excessive degree of job flexibility and it gave them more work pressure, aggravated job burnout, created an opportunity for deceitful behavior, and reduced their subjective happiness (Zhou, 2020; Kubicek, Paskvan, & Bunner, 2017). Crawford and Lepine (2013) stated that "too-much-of-a-good-thing" might make the loss larger compared to the benefit expected (inverted U shape figure 2).

**Figure 2: inverted U shape curve**



Source: Zhou (2020)

Job autonomy is hypothesized to be related to job crafting in hypothesis 2. Theoretically, job autonomy provides the precondition that enables more self-determined and discretionary behaviors in an organization, such as job crafting. Job crafting is a voluntary behavior aimed at finding significance and personal development by asking colleagues for advice, asking for more assignments and challenges, reducing emotional and mental requirements, changing physical workspace. The result revealed that job autonomy significantly affects job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75; p < 0.001$ ). This supports previous findings (e.g. Debus et al., 2019; Vanbelle et al., 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2018) that explained that when employees have a satisfactory degree of freedom and the job demands are high, employees will tend to modify aspects of the task according to their skills, and preference. They are even able to increase challenge when the job is under stimulating. Flexibility allows them to reduce job demands that delivered pressure emotionally and physically.

The direct effect of job crafting and well-being was also supported in this study (hypothesis 3). By engaging in job crafting, employees will basically reshape their job to become more closely aligned with their skills, preferences, and motivation for work. This process affects the nature of the job itself, including

the demands experienced, resources, and meaning of the work. This result is parallel with previous studies. Tims et al. (2012; 2013) have found that job crafting enables individuals to strike an equilibrium between the demands and also the personal resources they need to perform that help against burnout, exhaustion, and increases engagement.

Hypothesis 4 stated that job crafting would mediate the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. Perceived autonomy at the workplace would lead to job crafting behavior, which in turn would be associated with higher subjective well-being. The results of this study supported hypothesis 4, which is consistent with what was found by Slemp, Kern, and Vella-Brodrick (2015), and Saragih, Margaretha, and Situmorang (2020). These results indicate that during the pandemic, employees who enjoy flexibility (in choosing time, methods, and place) to accomplish their works are prone to redefine their job to fit their needs and make their job more satisfying, meaningful, and leading to better well-being (Demerouti, 2014).

### **Conclusion and Implication**

Based on the above discussion, this study concludes that job autonomy also harms employees' well-being. In other words, the high levels of flexibility at the workplace contribute to detrimental effects on employees' well-being. Job autonomy creates a curvilinear function, well-being increases from low to medium levels, but it decreases when employees experience an excessive level of freedom. Employees feel more insecure and they are not sure about what they need to do. While job autonomy leads to a voluntary behavior, called job crafting, job autonomy allows employees to take control over how they execute their tasks. Therefore, employees tend to alter the nature of their job to align the demand and resources with their personal preferences. This finding gives practical contribution for organizations and supervisors to provide an optimal level of independence and flexibility at the workplace. In addition, an evaluation standard should be explained beforehand. Therefore, the employees know how they will evaluate and finish their work.

This study agrees that job crafting mediates job autonomy and well-being. Having the flexibility to work remotely during the pandemic increases employees' perception of making more independent and self-directed decisions to accomplish their tasks (Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2014). This relates to higher engagement and subjective well-being. This result also indicates that managers should focus on results delivery because it goes hand-in-hand with job autonomy. When managers give an employee flexibility during remote work, it is important to assess whether they are delivering outstanding results.

Evident from the survey conducted during the pandemic by the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong (Vyas and Butakhieo, 2021), it is found that during WFH employees experience more stress, fear regarding job security, feel anxious, lonely, bored, and exhausted. Therefore, organizations need to provide supports (e.g. trust, clear direction, communication, proper monitoring, and flexibility about specific work arrangements).

Our present study has its limitations that acknowledge points to future studies. First, this study only focused on job autonomy as an independent variable. Future research might help to establish the complex path involving more independent variables (e.g. social support, workload). Second, in this study analysis, job crafting was treated as uni-dimensional variable. Based on the initial study by Tims, Bakker, and Derks

(2012), job crafting consists of 4 dimensions. Future research should treat each job crafting's dimension as an individual dimension in the data analysis.

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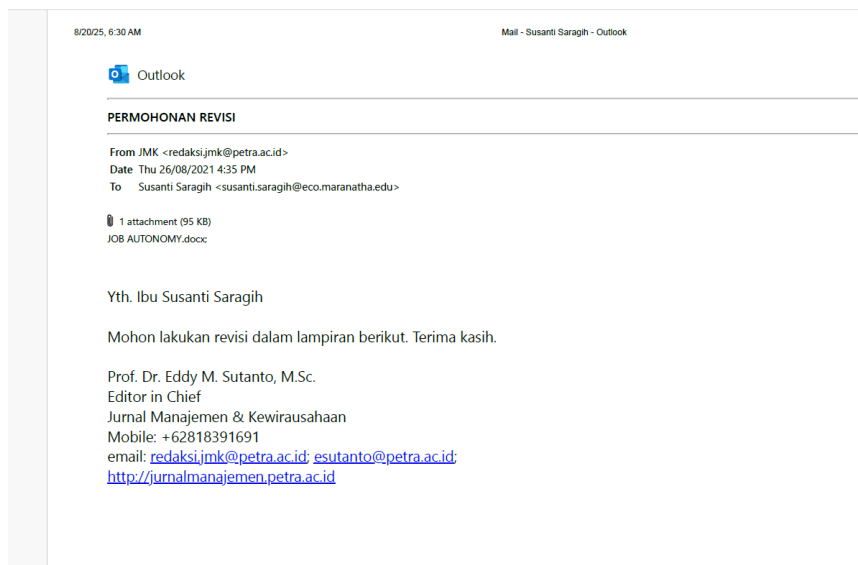
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#### **JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME**

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## **Abstract**

Nowadays, organizations have focused more on employees' well-being because people have to work from home (WFH) or practice hybrid work and adapt to a new routine of work and life since COVID-19 struck the world. During working from home, employees expect more flexibility on how to handle their tasks—this is known as job autonomy. This study aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and employees' well-being during WFH in COVID-19 Pandemic. An online survey was conducted and there were 427 respondents involved. The model was analyzed using WarpPLS 7.0 and the results showed that no significant relationship was found between job autonomy and well-being. However, there was a relationship between job autonomy and job crafting, as well as between job crafting and well-being. Job crafting significantly mediated the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. This study showed that during WFH, employees have experienced an excessive degree of freedom in doing their tasks, and it had given them more pressure and decreased employees' subjective well-being. The findings may be valuable in all kinds of organizational settings when reviewing and proposing job design and well-being policies.

**Keywords:** job crafting, job autonomy, well-being, job design, COVID-19 pandemic

## Introduction

The nature of work has been changing at a faster pace than ever before. Technological advancements have entirely reshaped organizations, implemented various flexible work arrangement (FWA), modified the methods work, and reduced the boundaries between work and personal life (Johnson *et al.*, 2020). These changes are significant because employees can add value by harnessing technologies to be creative, innovative, and adaptable. Nevertheless, employees need to be at a good level of physical, mental, and emotional conditions to accomplish all tasks and adapt to these vast changes. As a result, there are some indications that nowadays employees pay more attention to their well-being as it affects their quality of life.

This growing attention on well-being has gripped the world of work (Simone, 2014). Many organizations have begun implementing well-being programs within the workplace. These have even become more prioritized since COVID-19 struck the world. This pandemic has created an even more uncertain environment for both employers and employees. Workplace stress reaches an unprecedented level because people have to work from home and adapt to a new routine of work and life. Physical activities such as going to the public area, groceries, out to the gym have been disrupted. Employees experience financial and job insecurity because of layoffs, anger and sadness because of loneliness, and loss of a family member (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021). Employees who need to work from the office are more likely to work in fear and stress of the risk of exposure to the virus, and the increased demand for certain tasks and services.

A recent study found that the more time employees spent working remotely (versus working from the office) the higher their expectation of flexibility (International Labour Organization, 2020; Palumbo, 2020; Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2014). For instance, employees may be able to change the measurement of productivity by focusing on outcomes rather than working hours, and on unspecific work hours, but total weekly hours remain unchanged, or by utilizing different methods to handle their job demand and responsibilities (International Labour Organization, 2020). Working from home (WFH) should enable employees to take appropriate steps to manage their job situation without direct supervision from their supervisor/manager. This temporary alternative work arrangement requires mutual trust between employees and managers (International Labour Organization, 2020), so employees freely make task-related decisions, scheduling work tasks, and select work methods, this known as job autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Job autonomy and flexibility create an environment where self-initiation, proactivity, and flexibility are promoted (Slomp, Kern, & Vella-Brodick, 2015). Job autonomy increases individual's sense of responsibility for their performance because an employee who has enough independence and freedom to make decision on their daily task will apply their knowledge, preference, and experiences to conduct and perform the job, and even to solve difficult problems at works. Flexibility at work promotes positive results by enhancing employee's engagement, ownership, including recognize the purpose of their job, and willingness to modify the methods of work (Zhou, 2020).

Several studies (Sekiguchi, Li, & Husumi, 2017; Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2019; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020) have shown that employees who perceived enough control over their work are more likely to have higher satisfaction, performance, and well-being. A satisfactory level of autonomy at workplace permits employees to do a more extensive range of tasks, redefine their roles, and modify job

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aspects that will reach an effective method of work, and will then become a precondition for work crafting (Kim, Im, Qu, & Koong, 2018). In reality, an employee becomes “crafter” of their work when the workplace provides flexibility and space for employee to make decision on redesigning their jobs, and balancing workload and resources. Subsequently, this decision-making creates a more engaging, meaningful, and enthusiastic working experience (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Slemp *et al.*, 2015; van Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017) because employee will have a lower stress and a higher psychological availability that could in turn enhance employees’ well-being (van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017).

However, studies on autonomy and positive outcomes during this pandemic revealed a different result. Palumbo (2020) found that autonomy offered in home-based telecommuting work negatively affected employees’ work-life balance and triggered higher fatigue during the pandemic. Often, WFH interferes with personal life, blurs the boundaries of work and personal life because of an increase in work hours and an intensification of work. It is speculated that workers’ well-being and performance will be affected. In Japan, a research showed that working hours and time off ambiguity were the highest-ranked disadvantage of remote working (Sato, 2019). Vyas and Butakhieo (2021) also discovered that work from home during quarantine leads to an unhealthy lifestyle (lying on the sofa all day or sitting on an unsuitable chair), lowers motivation, and enhances cyberslacking.

The key objectives of this study are to explore the association between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediation effect of job crafting on job autonomy and well-being during working from home in COVID-19 Pandemic. This study contributes to the job design literature in exploring the mechanism of job autonomy and its influence on job crafting and well-being. While previous studies have been conducted in various industries and countries on normal situation, this study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reason for doing the study is employees who work remotely have a higher need for autonomy. Moreover, the findings will help the practitioners in facilitating the factors that promote autonomy and well-being during the period of remote working.

### ***Job Autonomy and Well-Being***

A broad theory of human motivation, the self-determination theory, explains that humans have three intrinsic psychological needs: connectedness, autonomy, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Autonomy is characterized as the extent to which the job presents valuable freedom, independence, flexibility to make changes, and choice in determining the procedures to execute the work successfully (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Relatedness represents the individuals’ need to experience a sense of affinity and connection with other people. The need for relatedness is satisfied when the worker has a supportive relationship and feels cared for by others. Meanwhile, competence is defined as the human need to feel capable, successful, and able to accomplish their work effectively.

When employees are granted a satisfactory degree of job autonomy, they can execute their tasks by applying their knowledge, skills, and abilities efficiently. This would lead to a positive effect on employees’ well-being (Park & Searcy, 2012; Petrou, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2012; Park & Jang, 2015; Kim *et al.*, 2018). According to Yang and Zhao (2018) and Petrou *et al.* (2012), individuals’ psychological well-being would increase dramatically when they experience independence and autonomy at the workplace because they would use their creativity, authority, and power to handle their work and have more chances to cope with

the stressful work situation. It also promotes job satisfaction, organizational engagement, worker's mental health, and decreases stress level.

Previous studies proposed that job autonomy has become a precondition of proactive workplace behavior, i.e. job crafting (Chang, Rui, & Wu, 2021; Kim *et al.*, 2018; Li, Han, Qi, & He, 2020). Job crafting is defined as employee's self-initiative actions in changing the physical and cognitive aspect in the task or relational boundaries of their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims, Bakker, & Arnold, 2010). Employees may modify their jobs based on their needs and preferences by changing tasks' scope, number of tasks, skills used at work, or relationships with customers or colleagues (Tims *et al.*, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

This implied that some degree of flexibility during work from home enables the employee to modify aspects of their works to align them with their personal needs and preferences (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012; van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**Work control and design methods and**

*H<sub>1</sub>: Job autonomy will be positively related to employees' well-being.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Job autonomy will be positively related to job crafting.*

#### **Job Crafting and Well-Being**

Job crafting is defined as a mechanism by which employees voluntarily change some aspects of the job (i.e. physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects) to increase performance and fit with their skill, knowledge, and career preference (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims *et al.*, 2012). The motivation for job crafting roots from employees' basic needs, the need to take control, the need to have a meaningful experience, and the need of connection with others. Employee becomes "crafter" of their daily tasks because they want to take control over the method, scope and the result, able to reduce daily stress at workplace, and create work climate in which they can work happier and more motivated (Chang *et al.*, 2021).

Tims *et al.* (2012) stated that job crafting consisted of four dimensions: increasing the structural job resources, increasing challenge on the job, decreasing hindering job demands, and increasing social aspects of the job. Increasing structural job resources refers to the assortment of resource and opportunity for personal growth. This response lowers the adverse effects of high job demand and contributes to higher work dedication and job satisfaction (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010; Tims *et al.*, 2012). Increasing challenging job demands is an opportunity to generate more challenges at work so that employees experience an acceptable degree of challenging job loads and requirements (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Meanwhile, decreasing hindering job demand is defined as a self-initiated change that employees make to lower their job requirements when they perceived that their job loads have become devastating. Decreasing the degree of job demands may reduce the adverse health effects such as burnout and boredom (Tims *et al.*, 2012; van Wingerden *et al.* 2017). Finally, employee crafts their work by changing social aspect of the job (i.e. asking for advice, feedback, and coaching).

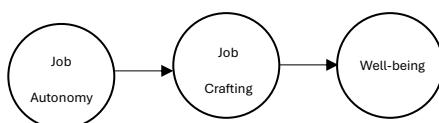
Prior research that has applied person-job fit theory (e.g. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005) enlightens that poor employee well-being is a result of misfit between the abilities, needs, and values of the worker. During work from home, employees' daily living routines have been disrupted, which may cause added stress, tension, and physical. Therefore, if an employee has the flexibility to modify their work (i.e. the ability to arrange the number and types of daily tasks, the amount of interaction with others, and how they think about or perceive their jobs), it will lead to a fitness between person and job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). Crafting work with these three methods would enable an employee to work according to their values and preferences, more engaged at work (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2015; van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017), be satisfied with their work, perform better (Guan & Frenkel, 2018), and experience lower levels of stress (Singh & Singh, 2018). Therefore, we hypothesize:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Job crafting will be positively related to employees' well-being*

### ***Job Autonomy, Job Crafting, and Well-being***

It has been stated that job autonomy is a requirement for employees to craft their daily tasks. A high degree of job autonomy will trigger job crafting by signaling employees that they have enough opportunity and independence to take initiative changes (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Sekiguchi *et al.*, 2017; Debus *et al.*, 2019; Saragih *et al.*, 2020). In addition, studies indicate that a higher level of autonomy encourages employees to execute a range of tasks, responsibilities, and will be positively related to a higher level of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Slemp *et al.*, 2015; Saragih *et al.*, 2020). Not only increase motivation, the Job Demand-Resource Model (JD-R model) also improves the number of structural resources, social resources, and challenges at a job. These could be improving one's capabilities, asking for coaching or advice, proactively participate in new projects, making the job mentally less intense). Therefore, the employee would also have a sense of energy and engagement with their works and experiencing a sense of significance and satisfaction (van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017; Singh & Singh, 2018). As a consequence, this could enhance the well-being of the employees. Thus, it is hypothesized that job autonomy would increase well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable (Figure 1).

*H<sub>4</sub>: Job autonomy is related to well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable.*



**Figure 1. The conceptual research framework**

### **Research Method**

#### ***Sample and Procedure***

The sample of this study is employees who have been working for a minimum of 1 year in Bandung and Jakarta. The minimum sample size was calculated based on the number of parameters. An online

survey was conducted by targeting employees who have been working for one year in Bandung or Jakarta and 427 respondents participated in this research (Table 1). Respondents were categorized in gender, age, educational background, and employment status. The majority of respondents were female (47%) and the prevailing age was in the age range of > 46 years old (19.6%). Nearly one-third of the respondents have a bachelor's degree (31.5%) and works as permanent workers (54.8%).

**Table 1**

**Respondents Profile (n = 427)**

	# of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	139	22.7
Female	288	47.0
Age		
23–28	84	13.7
29–34	88	14.4
35–40	85	13.9
41–46	50	8.2
>46	120	19.6
Education		
High School	7	1.1
Diploma	169	27.6
Bachelor's degree	193	31.5
Master's degree	58	9.5
Employment Status		
Permanent Worker	336	54.8
Temporary Worker	91	14.8

### **Measures**

**Job crafting.** This study followed the instrument developed by Tims *et al.* (2012). It consists of four dimensions (increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands). A sample of the item is “I make sure that my work is mentally less intense”. There are 21 items on a five-point Likert scale measuring each of the four dimensions. **Job autonomy.** The scale adopted the instrument developed by Breauigh (1999) that consists of nine items. A sample item is “I am free to choose the methods to use in carrying out my work”.

**Workplace well-being (WWB).** The survey adopted the instrument developed by Warr (1990). It consists of 12 descriptor words (both positive affect and negative affect). Respondents indicate the frequency of each emotion they experience at work for the last two months.

To examine whether the variables (job autonomy, well-being, and job crafting) assessed were distinct from one another, we conducted reliability test using WarpPLS 7.0. Table 2 described the loading factors' results. Indicators' loading factor should be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). All indicators in Job Autonomy (JA) had a satisfactory structure loading (greater than 0.5). Mean-

while, some items in job crafting (JC) and Well-being (WWB) must be deleted because showed unsatisfactory validity score (loading factors were under 0.5). There are 7 indicators deleted in JC and 6 indicators in well-being.

Table 2  
Loading Factors

	Job Autonomy	Job Crafting	Well-Being
ja1	(0.777)		
ja2	(0.816)		
ja3	(0.793)		
ja4	(0.704)		
ja5	(0.694)		
ja6	(0.757)		
ja7	(0.675)		
ja8	(0.642)		
ja9	(0.650)		
jc1		(0.687)	
jc2		(0.658)	
jc3		(0.602)	
jc5		(0.756)	
jc8		(0.687)	
jc11		(0.629)	
jc13		(0.562)	
jc14		(0.619)	
jc15		(0.608)	
jc16		(0.549)	
jc18		(0.526)	
jc19		(0.647)	
jc20		(0.756)	
wwb1			(0.822)
wwb2			(0.861)
wwb3			(0.814)
wwb7			(0.783)
wwb8			(0.790)
wwb9			(0.836)

Commented [A2]: Harap angka decimal disesuaikan jumlah angkanya di belakang titik. Apabila satu angka, maka semuanya disesuaikan secara konsisten.

To ensure that all items in the questionnaire met the requirement of internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha was tested. Composite reliability and the Cronbach alpha coefficients should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The result of the reliability check is shown in Table 3 and all variables assessed in this study had a satisfactory score of composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.886–0.924.

Table 3  
Reliability Check

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Job Autonomy	0.909	0.886
	0.900	0.879
Job Crafting	0.924	0.901



Well-Being

## Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables are presented in Table 4. The result shows that job autonomy is correlated positively with job crafting ( $r = 0.735^{**}, p < 0.01$ ), but correlated negatively with well-being ( $r = -0.218^{**}, p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, job crafting is negatively linked to the well-being of the employees ( $r = -0.277^{**}, p < 0.01$ ). The results also showed the highest mean score for job autonomy (mean = 4.49) and the lowest mean score for well-being (mean = 2.31).

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviation and Correlations for All Variables ( $n = 427$ )

	Mean	SD	Age	Gender	Education	Employment Status	JA	JC	Well being
Age	-	-	1	.101*	-.077	-.020	.048	.065	.076
Gender	-	-		1	-.235**	.069	-.085	-.038	.114*
Education	-	-			1	-.179**	-.135**	-.064	.087
Emp. Status	-	-				1	-.007	-.031	-.029
JA	4.49	0.640					1	.735**	-.218**
JC	4.41	0.479						1	-.277**
Wellbeing	2.31	0.764							1

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Hypothesis Testing

We estimated the research model by conducting a path analysis through WarpPLS 7.0. The model is considered to be fit if it meets 3 (three) fit model size criteria, such as Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Block Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF). The results showed that the research model after data analysis using the WarpPLS program was fit indicated by general information. Based on the results, the proposed model is accepted (Table 5) because APC is 0.533 ( $p < 0.001$ ); ARS is 0.332 ( $p < 0.001$ ), AFVIF 1.900, GoF value 0.422 (larger than 0.36).

Table 5

Measurement Model

Fit Indicators	Recommendation Value	Value

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APC		0.533 (P<0.001)
ARS		0.332 (P<0.001)
AFVIF	≤ 3.3	1.900
GoF	≥ 0.36 (large)	0.422
RSCR	≥ 0.9	1.00
SSR	≥ 0.7	1.00

Furthermore, the *R-square* for job crafting is 0.564 and well-being is 0.100 (Table 6). Also, we assessed the predictive validity associated with each latent variable in the model by evaluating the *Q-square* coefficient (Table 6). If the *Q-square* value showed > 0, we can conclude that the model has predicate relevance (vice versa). The *Q-square* coefficient in this study is 0.6076. Therefore, 60.76% of employees' well-being were explained by job crafting and job autonomy.

*Q-square* value estimation (predicate relevance/*Q2*):

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - R12) (1 - R22)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (1 - 0,564) (1 - 0,100)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - (0,436) (0,90)$$

$$Q2 = 1 - 0,3924$$

$$Q2 = 0.6076$$

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**Table 6**  
*R-square*

Dependent Variable	R-square
Job Crafting	0.564
Well-Being	0.100

**Table 7**

**Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Coef.	Prob.	Conclusion
Job Autonomy → Well-Being	-0.05	p < 0.164	Hyp. rejected
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting	0.75	p < 0.001	Hyp. accepted
Job Crafting → Well-Being			Hyp. accepted
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting → Well-Being	0.28 -0.209	p < 0.001 p < 0.001	Hyp. accepted

Based on the results shown in Table 7, it revealed an interesting point. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being ( $\beta = -0.05; p < 0.164$ ) was not significant; hence this result did not support the hypothesis. We also found a significant association between job autonomy and job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75; p < 0.001$ ). Table 7 showed that job crafting is positively and significantly associated with well-being ( $\beta = 0.28; p < 0.001$ ). In the association of work autonomy and well-being, the mediating role of job creation is supported in this study ( $\beta = -0.200; p < 0.001$ ). Remarkably, the result revealed a negative direction in the association of job autonomy and well-being ( $\beta = -0.209$ ). Unlike prior research that has largely emphasized the positive direction, this result gave a different view of these variables association.

### Discussion

The high attention to employees' well-being has become prominent since COVID-19 hit the world. Workplace stress reaches a peak level because people have to adapt to a new routine and ways of work and life. COVID-19 pandemic has changed employees' expectancy of a workplace. Employees are looking for higher flexibility to experience better well-being. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. More specifically, the purpose was to address the mediating effects of job crafting on the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. As a result, this study shines a light on current insight into job design and factors that promote well-being.

Hypothesis 1 stated that a curvilinear relationship would exist between job autonomy and well-being. This means that when employees experienced a high job autonomy, their well-being would increase (Yang & Zhao, 2018). The result of the analysis did not support a positive relationship. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being is not significant. This result challenged the previous finding that have a positive effect of job autonomy on well-being. This study was conducted during the pandemic when employees have to work from home without proper monitoring policy. Accordingly, employees experience an excessive degree of job flexibility and it gave them more work pressure, aggravated job burnout, created an opportunity for deceitful behavior, and reduced their subjective happiness (Zhou, 2020; Kubicek, Paskvan, & Bunner, 2017). Crawford and LePine (2013) stated that "too-much-of-a-good-thing" might make the loss larger compared to the benefit expected (Figure 2).

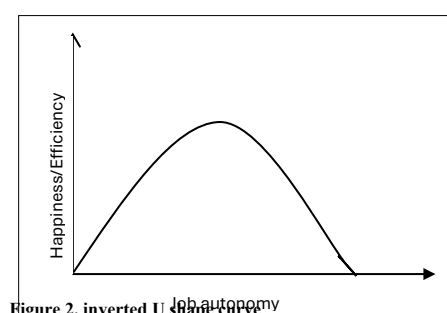


Figure 2. inverted U shape curve  
Source: Zhou (2020)

Job autonomy is hypothesized to be related to job crafting in hypothesis 2. Theoretically, job autonomy provides the precondition that enables more self-determined and discretionary behaviors in an organization, such as job crafting. Job crafting is a voluntary behavior aimed at finding significance and personal development by asking colleagues for advice, asking for more assignments and challenges, reducing emotional and mental requirements, changing physical workspace. The result revealed that job autonomy significantly affects job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75; p < 0.001$ ). This supports previous findings (e.g. Debus *et al.*, 2019; Vanbelle *et al.*, 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2018) that explained that when employees have a satisfactory degree of freedom and the job demands are high, employees will tend to modify aspects of the task according to their skills, and preference. They are even able to increase challenge when the job is under stimulating. Flexibility allows them to reduce job demands that delivered pressure emotionally and physically.

The direct effect of job crafting and well-being was also supported in this study (hypothesis 3). By engaging in job crafting, employees will basically reshape their job to become more closely aligned with their skills, preferences, and motivation for work. This process affects the nature of the job itself, including the demands experienced, resources, and meaning of the work. This result is parallel with previous studies. Tims *et al.* (2012; 2013) have found that job crafting enables individuals to strike an equilibrium between the demands and also the personal resources they need to perform that help against burnout, exhaustion, and increases engagement.

Hypothesis 4 stated that job crafting would mediate the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. Perceived autonomy at the workplace would lead to job crafting behavior, which in turn would be associated with higher subjective well-being. The results of this study supported hypothesis 4, which is consistent with what was found by Slomp *et al.* (2015), and Saragih *et al.* (2020). These results indicate that during the pandemic, employees who enjoy flexibility (in choosing time, methods, and place) to accomplish their works are prone to redefine their job to fit their needs and make their job more satisfying, meaningful, and leading to better well-being (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014).

## Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, this study concludes that job autonomy also harms employees' well-being. In other words, the high levels of flexibility at the workplace contribute to detrimental effects on employees' well-being. Job autonomy creates a curvilinear function, well-being increases from low to medium levels, but it decreases when employees experience an excessive level of freedom. Employees feel more insecure and they are not sure about what they need to do. While job autonomy leads to a voluntary behavior, called job crafting, job autonomy allows employees to take control over how they execute their tasks. Therefore, employees tend to alter the nature of their job to align the demand and resources with their personal preferences. This finding gives practical contribution for organizations and supervisors to provide an optimal level of independence and flexibility at the workplace. In addition, an evaluation standard should be explained beforehand. Therefore, the employees know how they will evaluate and finish their work.

This study agrees that job crafting mediates job autonomy and well-being. Having the flexibility to work remotely during the pandemic increases employees' perception of making more independent and self-directed decisions to accomplish their tasks (Gajendran *et al.*, 2014). This relates to higher engagement and subjective well-being. This result also indicates that managers should focus on results delivery

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because it goes hand-in-hand with job autonomy. When managers give an employee flexibility during remote work, it is important to assess whether they are delivering outstanding results.

Evident from the survey conducted during the pandemic by the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021), it is found that during WFH employees experience more stress, fear regarding job security, feel anxious, lonely, bored, and exhausted. Therefore, organizations need to provide supports (e.g. trust, clear direction, communication, proper monitoring, and flexibility about specific work arrangements).

Our present study has its limitations that acknowledge points to future studies. First, this study only focused on job autonomy as an independent variable. Future research might help to establish the complex path involving more independent variables (e.g. social support, workload). Second, in this study analysis, job crafting was treated as uni-dimensional variable. Based on the initial study by Tims *et al.* (2012), job crafting consists of four dimensions. Future research should treat each job crafting's dimension as an individual dimension in the data analysis.

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## 5. Respon terhadap permintaan revisi tahap 2 (2 September 2021)





### Authors' comments

No.		
1	(A1) dan (A6) Permintaan agar referensi di lengkapi	Referensi sudah diperbaharui dan di lengkapi sesuai dengan sitasi yang ada di artikel.
2	(A2) Harap angka desimal disesuaikan jumlah angkanya	Semua angka desimal sudah di sesuaikan menjadi 2 angka di belakang koma.
3	(A3) Tabel harap dituliskan ulang tabelnya	Tabel 4 sudah di tulis ulang.
4	(A4) Tidak menggunakan kata ganti orang	Sudah diganti
5	(A5) Periksa penulisan rumus	Sudah diperbaiki

## **JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME**

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### **Abstract**

Nowadays, organizations have focused more on employees' well-being because people have to work from home (WFH) or practice hybrid work and adapt to a new routine of work and life since COVID-19 struck the world. During working from home, employees expect more flexibility on how to handle their tasks—this is known as job autonomy. This study aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and employees' well-being during WFH in COVID-19 Pandemic. An online survey was conducted and there were 427 respondents involved. The model was analyzed using WarpPLS 7.0 and the results showed that no significant relationship was found between job autonomy and well-being. However, there was a relationship between job autonomy and job crafting, as well as between job crafting and well-being. Job crafting significantly mediated the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. This study showed that during WFH, employees have experienced an excessive degree of freedom in doing their tasks, and it had given them more pressure and decreased employees' subjective well-being. The findings may be valuable in all kinds of organizational settings when reviewing and proposing job design and well-being policies.

**Keywords:** job crafting, job autonomy, well-being, job design, COVID-19 pandemic

## Introduction

The nature of work has been changing at a faster pace than ever before. Technological advancements have entirely reshaped organizations, implemented various flexible work arrangement (FWA), modified the methods work, and reduced the boundaries between work and personal life (Franken *et al.*, 2021). These changes are significant because employees can add value by harnessing technologies to be creative, innovative, and adaptable. Nevertheless, employees need to be at a good level of physical, mental, and emotional conditions to accomplish all tasks and adapt to these vast changes. As a result, there are some indications that nowadays employees pay more attention to their well-being as it affects their quality of life.

This growing attention on well-being has gripped the world of work (Simone, 2014). Many organizations have begun implementing well-being programs within the workplace. These have even become more prioritized since COVID-19 struck the world. This pandemic has created an even more uncertain environment for both employers and employees. Workplace stress reaches an unprecedented level because people have to work from home and adapt to a new routine of work and life. Physical activities such as going to the public area, groceries, out to the gym have been disrupted. Employees experience financial and job insecurity because of layoffs, anger and sadness because of loneliness, and loss of a family member (Vyas & Butakhico, 2021). Employees who need to work from the office are more likely to work in fear and stress of the risk of exposure to the virus, and the increased demand for certain tasks and services.

A recent study found that the more time employees spent working remotely (versus working from the office) the higher their expectation of flexibility (International Labour Organization, 2020; Palumbo, 2020; Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2014). For instance, employees may be able to change the measurement of productivity by focusing on outcomes rather than working hours, and on unspecific work hours, but total weekly hours remain unchanged, or by utilizing different methods to handle their job demand and responsibilities (International Labour Organization, 2020). Working from home (WFH) should enable employees to take appropriate steps to manage their job situation without direct supervision from their supervisor/manager. This temporary alternative work arrangement requires mutual trust between employees and managers (International Labour Organization, 2020), so employees freely make task-related decisions, scheduling work tasks, and select work methods, this known as job autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Job autonomy and flexibility create an environment where self-initiation, proactivity, and flexibility are promoted (Slomp, Kern, & Vella-Brodict, 2015). Job autonomy increases individual's sense of responsibility for their performance because an employee who has enough independence and freedom to make decision on their daily task will apply their knowledge, preference, and experiences to conduct and perform the job, and even to solve difficult problems at works. Flexibility at work promotes positive results by enhancing employee's engagement, ownership, including recognize the purpose of their job, and willingness to modify the methods of work (Zhou, 2020).

The positive impact of job autonomy on the psychological level of employees is mainly divided into two aspects. On the one hand, it is conducive to improving employees' mental health and job satisfaction; on the other hand, it can reduce employee burnout and reduce intentions to leave. The positive impact of job autonomy on the psychological level of employees is mainly divided into two aspects. On the one hand, it is conducive to improving employees' mental health and job satisfaction; on the other hand, it can reduce employee burnout and reduce intentions to leave. The positive impact of job autonomy on the psychological level of employees is mainly divided into two aspects. On the one hand, it is conducive to improving employees' mental health and job satisfaction; on the other hand, it can reduce employee burnout and reduce intentions to leave.

Several studies (Sekiguchi, Li, & Husumi, 2017; Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2019; Saragih, Margaretha, & Situmorang, 2020) have shown that employees who perceived enough control over their work are more likely to have higher satisfaction, performance, and well-being. A satisfactory level of autonomy at workplace permits employees to do a more extensive range of tasks, redefine their roles, and modify job aspects that will reach an effective method of work, and will then become a precondition for work crafting (Kim, Im, Qu, & Koong, 2018). In reality, an employee becomes "crafter" of their work when the workplace provides flexibility and space for employee to make decision on redesigning their jobs, and balancing workload and resources. Subsequently, this decision-making creates a more engaging, meaningful, and enthusiastic working experience (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Slomp *et al.*, 2015; Van-Wingerden, Bakker & Derks, 2017) because employee will have a lower stress and a higher psychological availability that could in turn enhance employees' well-being (Van-Wingerden *et al.*, 2017).

However, studies on autonomy and positive outcomes during this pandemic revealed a different result. Palumbo (2020) found that autonomy offered in home-based telecommuting work negatively affected employees' work-life balance and triggered higher fatigue during the pandemic. Often, WFH interferes with personal life, blurs the boundaries of work and personal life because of an increase in work hours and an intensification of work. It is speculated that workers' well-being and performance will be affected. In Japan, a research showed that working hours and time off ambiguity were the highest-ranked disadvantage of remote working (Sato, 2019). Vyas and Butakhieo (2021) also discovered that work from home during quarantine leads to an unhealthy lifestyle (lying on the sofa all day or sitting on an unsuitable chair), lowers motivation, and enhances cyberslacking. The key objectives of this study are to explore the association between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediation effect of job crafting on job autonomy and well-being during working from home in COVID-19 Pandemic. This study contributes to the job design literature in exploring the mechanism of job autonomy and its influence on job crafting and well-being. While previous studies have been conducted in various industries and countries on normal situation, this study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The reason for doing the study is employees who work remotely have a higher need for autonomy. Moreover, the findings will help the practitioners in facilitating the factors that promote autonomy and well-being during the period of remote working.

### ***Job Autonomy and Well-Being***

A broad theory of human motivation, the self-determination theory, explains that humans have three intrinsic psychological needs: connectedness, autonomy, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Autonomy is characterized as the extent to which the job presents valuable freedom, independence, flexibility to make changes, and choice in determining the procedures to execute the work successfully (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Relatedness represents the individuals' need to experience a sense of affinity and connection with other people. The need for relatedness is satisfied when the worker has a supportive relationship and feels cared for by others. Meanwhile, competence is defined as the human need to feel capable, successful, and able to accomplish their work effectively.

When employees are granted a satisfactory degree of job autonomy, they can execute their tasks by applying their knowledge, skills, and abilities efficiently. This would lead to a positive effect on employees' well-being (Park & Searcy, 2012; Petrou, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2012; Park & Jang, 2015; Kim *et al.*, 2018). According to Yang and Zhao (2018) and Petrou *et al.* (2012), individuals' psychological well-being would increase dramatically when they experience independence and autonomy at the workplace because they would use their creativity, authority, and power to handle their work and have more chances to cope with the stressful work situation. It also promotes job satisfaction, organizational engagement, worker's mental health, and decreases stress level.

Previous studies proposed that job autonomy has become a precondition of proactive workplace behavior, i.e. job crafting (Chang, Rui, & Wu, 2021; Kim *et al.*, 2018; Li, Han, Qi, & He, 2020). Job crafting is defined as employee's self-initiative actions in changing the physical and cognitive aspect in the task or relational boundaries of their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims, Bakker, & Arnold, 2010). Employees may modify their jobs based on their needs and preferences by changing tasks' scope, number of tasks, skills used at work, or relationships with customers or colleagues (Tims *et al.*, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

This implied that some degree of flexibility during work from home enables the employee to modify aspects of their works to align them with their personal needs and preferences (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012; Van-Wingerden *et al.*, 2017; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

can control and de-

cide on their own methods of work, work arrangements, and work standards

*H<sub>1</sub>: Job autonomy will be positively related to employees' well-being.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Job autonomy will be positively related to job crafting.*

### ***Job Crafting and Well-Being***

Job crafting is defined as a mechanism by which employees voluntarily change some aspects of the job (i.e. physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects) to increase performance and fit with their skill, knowledge, and career preference (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims *et al.*, 2012). The motivation for job crafting roots from employees' basic needs, the need to take control, the need to have a meaningful experience, and the need of connection with others. Employee becomes "crafter" of their daily tasks because they want to take control over

the method, scope and the result, able to reduce daily stress at workplace, and create work climate in which they can work happier and more motivated (Chang *et al.*, 2021).

Tims *et al.* (2012) stated that job crafting consisted of four dimensions: increasing the structural job resources, increasing challenge on the job, decreasing hindering job demands, and increasing social aspects of the job. Increasing structural job resources refers to the assortment of resource and opportunity for personal growth. This response lowers the adverse effects of high job demand and contributes to higher work dedication and job satisfaction (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010; Tims *et al.*, 2012). Increasing challenging job demands is an opportunity to generate more challenges at work so that employees experience an acceptable degree of challenging job loads and requirements (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Meanwhile, decreasing hindering job demand is defined as a self-initiated change that employees make to lower their job requirements when they perceived that their job loads have become devastating. Decreasing the degree of job demands may reduce the adverse health effects such as burnout and boredom (Tims *et al.*, 2012; Van-Wingerden *et al.* 2017). Finally, employee crafts their work by changing social aspect of the job (i.e. asking for advice, feedback, and coaching).

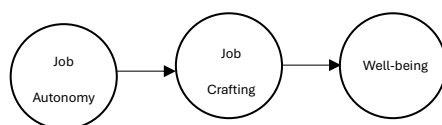
Prior research that has applied person-job fit theory (e.g. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005) enlightens that poor employee well-being is a result of misfit between the abilities, needs, and values of the worker. During work from home, employees' daily living routines have been disrupted, which may cause added stress, tension, and physical. Therefore, if an employee has the flexibility to modify their work (i.e. the ability to arrange the number and types of daily tasks, the amount of interaction with others, and how they think about or perceive their jobs), it will lead to a fitness between person and job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). Crafting work with these three methods would enable an employee to work according to their values and preferences, more engaged at work (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2012; Van-Wingerden *et al.*, 2017), be satisfied with their work, perform better (Guan & Frenkel, 2018), and experience lower levels of stress (Singh & Singh, 2018). Therefore, we hypothesize:

*H3: Job crafting will be positively related to employees' well-being*

#### **Job Autonomy, Job Crafting, and Well-being**

It has been stated that job autonomy is a requirement for employees to craft their daily tasks. A high degree of job autonomy will trigger job crafting by signaling employees that they have enough opportunity and independence to take initiative changes (Petrou *et al.*, 2012; Sekiguchi *et al.*, 2017; Debus *et al.*, 2019; Saragih *et al.*, 2020). In addition, studies indicate that a higher level of autonomy encourages employees to execute a range of tasks, responsibilities, and will be positively related to a higher level of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Slemp *et al.*, 2015; Saragih *et al.*, 2020). Not only increase motivation, the Job Demand-Resource Model (JD-R model) also improves the number of structural resources, social resources, and challenges at a job. These could be improving one's capabilities, asking for coaching or advice, proactively participate in new projects, making the job mentally less intense). Therefore, the employee would also have a sense of energy and engagement with their works and experiencing a sense of significance and satisfaction (Van-Wingerden *et al.*, 2017; Singh & Singh, 2018). As a consequence, this could enhance the well-being of the employees. Thus, it is hypothesized that job autonomy would increase well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable (Figure 1).

*H4: Job autonomy is related to well-being through job crafting as a mediating variable.*



**Figure 1. The conceptual research framework**

#### **Research Method**

##### **Sample and Procedure**

The sample of this study is employees who have been working for a minimum of 1 year in Bandung and Jakarta. The minimum sample size was calculated based on the number of parameters. An online survey was conducted

by targeting employees who have been working for one year in Bandung or Jakarta and 427 respondents participated in this research (Table 1). Respondents were categorized in gender, age, educational background, and employment status. The majority of respondents were female (47%) and the prevailing age was in the age range of > 46 years old (19.6%). Nearly one-third of the respondents have a bachelor's degree (31.5%) and works as permanent workers (54.8%).

**Table 1**  
**Respondents Profile (*n* = 427)**

	# of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	139	22.7
Female	288	47.0
Age		
23–28	84	13.7
29–34	88	14.4
35–40	85	13.9
41–46	50	8.2
>46	120	19.6
Education		
High School	7	1.1
Diploma	169	27.6
Bachelor's degree	193	31.5
Master's degree	58	9.5
Employment Status		
Permanent Worker	336	54.8
Temporary Worker	91	14.8

### Measures

**Job crafting.** This study followed the instrument developed by Tims *et al.* (2012). It consists of four dimensions (increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands). A sample of the item is “I make sure that my work is mentally less intense”. There are 21 items on a five-point Likert scale measuring each of the four dimensions. **Job autonomy.** The scale adopted the instrument developed by Breugh (1999) that consists of nine items. A sample item is “I am free to choose the methods to use in carrying out my work”.

**Workplace well-being (WWB).** The survey adopted the instrument developed by Warr (1990). It consists of 12 descriptor words (both positive affect and negative affect). Respondents indicate the frequency of each emotion they experience at work for the last two months.

To examine whether the variables (job autonomy, well-being, and job crafting) assessed were distinct from one another, we conducted reliability test using WarpPLS 7.0. Table 2 described the loading factors' results. Indicators' loading factor should be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). All indicators in Job Autonomy (JA) had a satisfactory structure loading (greater than 0.5). Meanwhile, some items in job crafting (JC) and Well-being (WWB) must be deleted because showed unsatisfactory validity score (loading factors were under 0.5). There are 7 indicators deleted in JC and 6 indicators in well-being.

**Table 2**  
**Loading Factors**

	Job Autonomy	Job Crafting	Well-Being
ja1	(0,77)		
ja2	(0,81)		

ja3	(0,79)	
ja4	(0,70)	
ja5	(0,69)	
ja6	(0,75)	
ja7	(0,67)	
ja8	(0,64)	
ja9	(0,65)	
jc1	(0,68)	
jc2	(0,65)	
jc3	(0,60)	
jc5	(0,75)	
jc8	(0,68)	
jc11	(0,62)	
jc13	(0,56)	
jc14	(0,61)	
jc15	(0,60)	
jc16	(0,54)	
jc18	(0,52)	
jc19	(0,64)	
jc20	(0,75)	
wwb1		(0,82)
wwb2		(0,86)
wwb3		(0,81)
wwb7		(0,78)
wwb8		(0,79)
wwb9		(0,84)

To ensure that all items in the questionnaire met the requirement of internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha was tested. Composite reliability and the Cronbach alpha coefficients should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The result of the reliability check is shown in Table 3 and all variables assessed in this study had a satisfactory score of composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.88–0.92.

**Table 3**  
**Reliability Check**

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Job Autonomy	0.90	0.88
Job Crafting	0.90	0.87
Well-Being	0.92	0.90

### Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables are presented in Table 4 and 5. The result shows that job autonomy is correlated positively with job crafting ( $r = 0.73^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), but correlated negatively with well-being ( $r = -0.21^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). On the other hand, job crafting is negatively linked to the well-being of the employees ( $r = -0.27^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results also showed the highest mean score for job autonomy (mean = 4.49) and the lowest mean score for well-being (mean = 2.31).

**Table 4**  
**Means and Standard Deviation**

	Mean	SD
1	-	-

2	-	-
3	-	-
4	-	-
Job Autonomy	4,49	0,64
Job Crafting	4,41	0,47
Wellbeing	2,31	0,76

**Table 5**  
**Correlations for All Variables (*n* = 427)**

	1	2	3	4	JA	JC	WB
1	1	.10*	-.07	-.02	.48	.06	.07
2		1	-.23**	.69	-.08	-.03	.11*
3			1	-.17**	-.13**	-.06	.08
4				1	-.00	-.03	-.02
JA					1	.73**	-.22**
JC						1	-.27
WB							1

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Hypothesis Testing

The proposed model was estimated by conducting a path analysis through WarpPLS 7.0. The model is considered to be fit if it meets 3 (three) fit model size criteria, such as Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Block Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF). The results showed that the research model after data analysis using the WarpPLS program was fit indicated by general information. Based on the results, the proposed model is accepted (Table 6) because APC is 0.53 ( $p < 0.00$ ); ARS is 0.33 ( $p < 0.00$ ), AFVIF 1.90, GoF value 0.42 (larger than 0.36).

**Table 6**  
**Measurement Model**

Fit Indicators	Recommendation Value	Value
APC		0.53
ARS		( $P < 0.00$ )
		0.33 ( $P < 0.00$ )
AFVIF	$\leq 3.30$	1.90
GoF	$\geq 0.36$ (large)	0.42
RSCR	$\geq 0.90$	1.00
SSR	$\geq 0.70$	1.00

Furthermore, the *R-square* for job crafting is 0.56 and well-being is 0.10 (Table 7). Also, we assessed the predictive validity associated with each latent variable in the model by evaluating the *Q-squared* coefficient (Table 7). If the *Q-squared* value showed  $> 0$ , we can conclude that the model has predicate relevance (vice versa). The *Q-squared* coefficient in this study is 0.38. Therefore, 38% of employees' well-being were explained by job crafting and job autonomy.

*Q-squared* value estimation (predicate relevance/ $Q^2$ ):

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2) (1 - R_2^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.56^2) (1 - 0.10^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.31) (1 - 0.10)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (0.68) (0.9)$$



$Q^2 = 1 - 0,62$   
 $Q^2 = 0.38$

**Table 7**  
**R-square**

Dependent Variable	R-square
Job Crafting	0.56
Well-Being	0.10

**Table 8**  
**Hypothesis Testing**

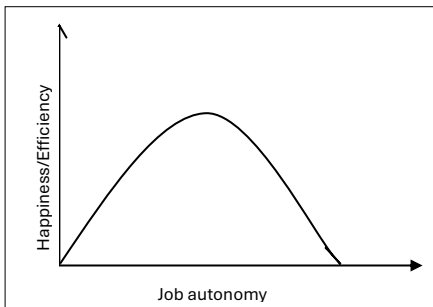
Hypothesis	Coef.	Prob.	Conclusion
Job Autonomy → Well-Being	-0.05	$p < 0.16$	
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting	0.75	$p < 0.00$	Hyp. rejected
Job Crafting → Well-Being			Hyp. accepted
Job Autonomy → Job Crafting → Well-Being	0.28	$p < 0.00$	Hyp. accepted
			Hyp. accepted
	-0.20	$p < 0.00$	

Based on the results shown in Table 8, it revealed an interesting point. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being ( $\beta = -0.05$ ;  $p < 0.16$ ) was not significant; hence this result did not support the hypothesis. We also found a significant association between job autonomy and job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ). Table 8 showed that job crafting is positively and significantly associated with well-being ( $\beta = 0.28$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ). In the association of work autonomy and well-being, the mediating role of job creation is supported in this study ( $\beta = -0.20$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ). Remarkably, the result revealed a negative direction in the association of job autonomy and well-being ( $\beta = -0.20$ ). Unlike prior research that has largely emphasized the positive direction, this result gave a different view of these variables association.

### Discussion

The high attention to employees' well-being has become prominent since COVID-19 hit the world. Workplace stress reaches a peak level because people have to adapt to a new routine and ways of work and life. COVID-19 pandemic has changed employees' expectancy of a workplace. Employees are looking for higher flexibility to experience better well-being. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. More specifically, the purpose was to address the mediating effects of job crafting on the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. As a result, this study shines a light on current insight into job design and factors that promote well-being.

Hypothesis 1 stated that a curvilinear relationship would exist between job autonomy and well-being. This means that when employees experienced a high job autonomy, their well-being would increase (Yang & Zhao, 2018). The result of the analysis did not support a positive relationship. The direct relationship between job autonomy and employee's well-being is not significant. This result challenged the previous finding that have a positive effect of job autonomy on well-being. This study was conducted during the pandemic when employees have to work from home without proper monitoring policy. Accordingly, employees experience an excessive degree of job flexibility and it gave them more work pressure, aggravated job burnout, created an opportunity for deceitful behavior, and reduced their subjective happiness (Zhou, 2020; Kubicek, Paskvan, & Bunner, 2017). Crawford and LePine (2013) stated that "too-much-of-a-good-thing" might make the loss larger compared to the benefit expected (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. inverted U shape curve**

Source: Zhou (2020)

Job autonomy is hypothesized to be related to job crafting in hypothesis 2. Theoretically, job autonomy provides the precondition that enables more self-determined and discretionary behaviors in an organization, such as job crafting. Job crafting is a voluntary behavior aimed at finding significance and personal development by asking colleagues for advice, asking for more assignments and challenges, reducing emotional and mental requirements, changing physical workspace. The result revealed that job autonomy significantly affects job crafting ( $\beta = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ). This supports previous findings (e.g. Debus *et al.*, 2019; Vanbelle *et al.*, 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2018) that explained that when employees have a satisfactory degree of freedom and the job demands are high, employees will tend to modify aspects of the task according to their skills, and preference. They are even able to increase challenge when the job is under stimulating. Flexibility allows them to reduce job demands that delivered pressure emotionally and physically.

The direct effect of job crafting and well-being was also supported in this study (hypothesis 3). By engaging in job crafting, employees will basically reshape their job to become more closely aligned with their skills, preferences, and motivation for work. This process affects the nature of the job itself, including the demands experienced, resources, and meaning of the work. This result is parallel with previous studies. Tims *et al.* (2012; 2013) have found that job crafting enables individuals to strike an equilibrium between the demands and also the personal resources they need to perform that help against burnout, exhaustion, and increases engagement.

Hypothesis 4 stated that job crafting would mediate the relationship between job autonomy and well-being. Perceived autonomy at the workplace would lead to job crafting behavior, which in turn would be associated with higher subjective well-being. The results of this study supported hypothesis 4, which is consistent with what was found by Slemp *et al.* (2015), and Saragih *et al.* (2020). These results indicate that during the pandemic, employees who enjoy flexibility (in choosing time, methods, and place) to accomplish their works are prone to redefine their job to fit their needs and make their job more satisfying, meaningful, and leading to better well-being (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014).

## Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, this study concludes that job autonomy also harms employees' well-being. In other words, the high levels of flexibility at the workplace contribute to detrimental effects on employees' well-being. Job autonomy creates a curvilinear function, well-being increases from low to medium levels, but it decreases when employees experience an excessive level of freedom. Employees feel more insecure and they are not sure about what they need to do. While job autonomy leads to a voluntary behavior, called job crafting, job autonomy allows employees to take control over how they execute their tasks. Therefore, employees tend to alter the nature of their job to align the demand and resources with their personal preferences. This finding gives practical contribution for organizations and supervisors to provide an optimal level of independence and flexibility at the workplace. In addition, an evaluation standard should be explained beforehand. Therefore, the employees know how they will evaluate and finish their work.

This study agrees that job crafting mediates job autonomy and well-being. Having the flexibility to work remotely during the pandemic increases employees' perception of making more independent and self-directed decisions to accomplish their tasks (Gajendran *et al.*, 2014). This relates to higher engagement and subjective well-being. This result also indicates that managers should focus on results delivery because it goes hand-in-hand with job autonomy. When managers give an employee flexibility during remote work, it is important to assess whether they are delivering outstanding results.

Evident from the survey conducted during the pandemic by the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021), it is found that during WFH employees experience more stress, fear regarding job security, feel anxious, lonely, bored, and exhausted. Therefore, organizations need to provide supports (e.g. trust, clear direction, communication, proper monitoring, and flexibility about specific work arrangements).

Our present study has its limitations that acknowledge points to future studies. First, this study only focused on job autonomy as an independent variable. Future research might help to establish the complex path involving more independent variables (e.g. social support, workload). Second, in this study analysis, job crafting was treated as uni-dimensional variable. Based on the initial study by Tims *et al.* (2012), job crafting consists of four dimensions. Future research should treat each job crafting's dimension as an individual dimension in the data analysis.

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RE. : Publication Notice

### Ms. Susanti Saragih


Herewith, on behalf of the editorial board of the Journal of Management and Entrepreneurship I'm glad to announce that your article below:

#### **JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME**

is published on the Volume 23 Number 2 Year 2021. It also could be found on the website: [jurnalmanajemen.petra.ac.id](http://jurnalmanajemen.petra.ac.id) for your perusal.

Thank you very much for your meaningful contribution. Looking forward to your other articles in the future.

Surabaya, September 22, 2021



Prof. Dr. Eddy Madiono Sutanto, M.Sc.  
Editor in Chief

The signature is a stylized, handwritten name in blue ink. To the right of the signature is a circular blue stamp. The stamp contains the text 'UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA' around the top and 'Jurnal Manajemen dan Kewirausahaan' around the bottom. In the center of the stamp is a stylized logo.

## 7. Tulisan dipublikasikan (25 Januari 2022)

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### JOB AUTONOMY, JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING DURING WORKING FROM HOME

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Keywords: job crafting, job autonomy, well-being, job design, COVID-19 pandemic

**Abstract**

Workplace stressed employees' well-being because people have to work from home (WFH) and adapt to a new routine of work and life since Covid-19 spread the world. Employees who WFH increase their perception of more autonomy on how to handle their tasks, this is known as job autonomy. This study aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and well-being, and the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and employees' well-being during WFH in Covid-19 pandemic, an online survey was conducted and there were 427 respondents involved. The model was analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0 and the results showed that no significant relationship was found between job autonomy and well-being. However, job autonomy and job crafting were related.

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