

Job Crafting in Education: Teachers' Responses to High Demands

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Job crafting in education: teachers' responses to high demands

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Abstract

Purpose – This research aimed to explore the relationship between job demands, job crafting and school support among primary school teachers in West Java, Indonesia. By examining how teachers adapt to complex demands through job crafting, the study seeks to provide valuable insights to inform school policies.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were collected via purposive sampling from 278 primary school teachers in Bandung, Indonesia, using a pen-and-paper survey.

Findings – Results indicate that teachers face high job demands and engage in moderate job crafting. However, neither perceived organizational support nor job autonomy significantly moderates the relationship between job demands and job crafting. This suggests that job crafting acts as an essential coping mechanism, enabling teachers to manage their workload independently.

Research limitations/implications – This study relied on self-report measures, which may cause bias, and focused only on job autonomy and organizational support as mediators; future research should examine other mediators to clarify the relationship.

Practical implications – To promote a positive job-crafting culture, educational institutions should focus on workload management programs utilizing digital tools to reduce paperwork. Additionally, promoting collaborative teaching practices can enhance social learning and facilitate effective feedback sessions among educators.

Social implications – By prioritizing workload management, educational institutions can create a supportive environment that reduces teacher workload and fosters innovation. This approach aligns with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting quality education and ensuring the well-being of educators.

Originality/value – This study contributes to limited research on job crafting in Indonesia's education sector, highlighting its importance in managing teacher job demands.

Keywords Job demands, Job crafting, Perceived organizational support, Teachers, Job autonomy, Job resources

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Introduction

Teachers' work demands are escalating globally, particularly in the context of modern and progressive curricula (Bottiani *et al.*, 2019; Stacey *et al.*, 2024; UNESCO and International Task Force on Teachers for Education, 2024). The current curriculum emphasizes the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields and requires seamless integration of digital tools into lessons while staying motivated to adopt new technologies (Sokal *et al.*, 2020). To meet these demands, teachers must adopt innovative approaches to instruction, catering to diverse learning styles and moving beyond rote memorization. In addition, teachers are also confronted with other significant challenges. For example, international benchmarking and standardized testing have raised expectations for student achievement, while non-academic factors such as managing student behavior, parental engagement, and administrative burdens can further strain teachers (Chen *et al.*, 2020; Mäkelä *et al.*, 2015). As a result, teaching has become a highly demanding role (Hlado and Harvankova, 2024), requiring teachers to be agile, innovative, and adaptable to the needs of 21st-century learners.

Teacher wellbeing is a critical global issue, as educators face mounting pressures from underfunding, the ongoing consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rapid technological change, all of which contribute to increased workloads and higher turnover rate, with a projected need for 44 million additional teachers by 2030 (UNESCO and International Task Force on

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Teachers for Education, 2024). These systemic pressures have made it increasingly difficult for schools to recruit and retain qualified teachers, further intensifying the workload for those who remain (Zahrah *et al.*, 2025). As a result, teacher wellbeing has become a central focus for policymakers and education leaders worldwide. According to a research report by UNESCO Office Bangkok and Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific (2015), in the Asia Pacific, teachers face specific challenges, including large class sizes, diverse student populations, longer work hours (over and above the hours contracted), low salaries, and limited resources and personal development. These challenges, coupled with the increasing demand for modern curricula, can lead to teacher burnout and job dissatisfaction (Bottiani *et al.*, 2019; Sokal *et al.*, 2020). Thus, a comprehensive strategy must be designed to help teachers manage complex job demands while staying motivated in their work. For instance, proactive teachers might utilize job-crafting strategies to redesign their work and create more meaningful roles in teaching (De Beer *et al.*, 2016; Lu *et al.*, 2025; van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017). Proactive teachers embrace the challenges as an opportunity to grow and innovate. By strategically allocating time, seeking support from colleagues, and leveraging technology, they can navigate the complexities of the modern classroom and maintain a sense of purpose (Oubibi *et al.*, 2022). Supporting this, a recent study by Khairunnisa and Sartika (2023) involving Indonesian high school teachers demonstrated that job crafting enhances work engagement. This attitude is achieved through behaviors such as increasing job resources, balancing job demands and effectively managing emotional labor. These findings underscore the transformative potential of job crafting in empowering teachers to thrive despite challenging conditions. Furthermore, according to research highlighted in Slemp *et al.* (2021), job crafting can be a valuable strategy for teachers to manage stress and find greater enjoyment in their work. 14

However, the success of job crafting is contingent upon both the employee's personality and the level of autonomy and support provided by the organization (Jiang *et al.*, 2022). Job autonomy for teachers refers to the extent to which they can independently design their lessons, choose teaching strategies, and make decisions for their students (Bottiani *et al.*, 2019; Zahrah *et al.*, 2025). When schools grant teachers control over their lesson planning, they can tailor lessons according to their student's specific needs and learning styles. This ownership fosters creativity and allows students to experiment with new approaches, leading to more engaging learning activities (Oubibi *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, when schools provide access to professional development opportunities and foster a collaborative environment, teachers are empowered to craft their jobs effectively. This, in turn, can lead to increased innovation, improved student outcomes, and a fostered sense of community and support, boosting morale and problem-solving abilities.

Given the broader challenges faced by teachers in the Indonesian context, a crucial question arises: How do workloads influence job-crafting behaviors among teachers, and what role do organizational support and autonomy play in this relationship? This research is both academically and practically urgent. From an academic perspective, it addresses a gap in understanding how teachers adapt to increasingly complex demands through job crafting—a concept that has not been sufficiently explored in the context of Indonesia's education system. Practically, the findings are vital for shaping school policies to align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which emphasizes ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Literature review

Job demand and job crafting

The job demands-resources (JD-R) model offers a valuable framework for understanding the interplay between the pressures and supports present within a work environment. According to this model, job aspects fit into two categories: job demands and resources (Bakker *et al.*, 2020; Tims *et al.*, 2016). Job demands encompass various elements of a job that require sustained physical or mental exertion. This exertion can manifest in several ways, including physical, emotional, and social strain. Job demands are inherently linked to the potential to incur specific

physiological and psychological costs for employees. These costs can encompass factors such as fatigue, stress, and burnout (e.g. exhaustion). Excessive job demands, while not inherently detrimental, can become potent stressors when they require an unreasonable level of exertion from employees who have not been afforded sufficient time or resources (Crawford *et al.*, 2010; Fernandez de Henestrosa *et al.*, 2023).

In contrast, job resources act as potent tools that empower employees to thrive in their roles. These resources encompass a diverse range of elements, including physical aspects, such as ergonomic workstations; psychological resources, such as clear communication and autonomy; social support from colleagues and supervisors; and organizational structures that promote growth. By strategically providing these resources, organizations can achieve a threefold benefit: first, bolstering employee capacity to effectively achieve work goals; second, mitigating the negative impacts of job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; and finally, fostering an environment that ignites personal growth, learning, and development. At the same time, intensified job demands not only motivate employees but also compel leaders to reshape their daily tasks actively. Through job crafting, employees at all levels, including both staff and managers, can more effectively adapt to work pressure and demands into opportunities for growth (Herttala *et al.*, 2023; Saragih *et al.*, 2021). This holistic approach to work design not only benefits employees' well-being, but also fuels organizational success (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Fernandez de Henestrosa *et al.*, 2023; Slemp *et al.*, 2021).

Further differentiating job demands, Fernandez de Henestrosa *et al.* (2023) explain that job demands can be either "facilitating" or "hindrance." Facilitating demands are those necessary for job performance, while hindrance demands are excessive and interfere with job performance. For instance, employees who are assigned unreasonable and unnecessary tasks can perceive them as stressors in the work context. This can lead to frustration, demotivation, and decreased job satisfaction. By contrast, job demands can stimulate innovation and promote self-actualization and proactiveness (Adler and Koch, 2017). For example, Han *et al.* (2020) found that a stimulating workload was positively related to fatigue but negatively related to work engagement. When job demands are perceived as challenges, they can have a meaningful impact on employee engagement and motivation because employees consider them an important part of their job (Fernandez de Henestrosa *et al.*, 2023; Haines *et al.*, 2022).

When employees face high demands, they might cope with them by modifying or changing some aspects of their jobs. This coping mechanism is known as job crafting (Rudolph *et al.*, 2017; Tims *et al.*, 2015; Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Recent research further demonstrates that intensified job demands, such as increased learning demands, can motivate employees to engage in job crafting as they proactively adjust their tasks or seek resources to maintain optimal engagement and manage workplace pressures (Mauno *et al.*, 2020). Supporting this, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) identified five primary strategies that teachers employ in high-demand work situations: hard-working strategies, recovery strategies, workload reduction strategies, job crafting strategies, and help-seeking strategies. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) proposed the concept of job crafting, empowering individuals to reshape their work environment actively. This proactive approach involves strategically modifying both the physical and cognitive aspects of tasks and relational dynamics within their roles.

Moreover, Tims *et al.* (2015) introduced job crafting as a powerful approach in which employees take the initiative to adjust their job resources and demands. This tailoring allows them to leverage their strengths and preferences, ultimately leading to more fulfilling work experiences. Tims *et al.* (2016) developed three dimensions to capture job crafting based on the JD-R model: (1) increasing job resources, (2) increasing challenging job demands, and (3) decreasing hindering job demands. The appraisal process described in the challenge-hindrance framework helps explain why, when employees interpret high job complexity as a challenge or hindrance, they may actively engage in job crafting as a way to adapt their roles and manage strain (Tian *et al.*, 2022). When employees are facing a high-demand job, they might increase their job resources, for example, by asking for help from supervisors or colleagues, which in

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turn would buffer the pressure from highly demanding work. In the context of education, the implementation of collaborative teams has been identified as a strategy for enhancing job resources (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2021). This approach facilitates the sharing of responsibilities among educators and fosters an environment conducive to learning and growth.

Additionally, when work is stimulating, it has been observed that boredom can play a role in absenteeism and job dissatisfaction. This demotivation could lead to a decline in employee engagement and organizational productivity. In response, employees may increase their job demands to maintain their motivation (Adler and Koch, 2017; Fernandez de Henestrosa *et al.*, 2023). For example, teachers might volunteer to lead an after-school math club to help students who are struggling to catch up on class material. The third dimension, decreasing the level of hindering job demands, is predicted to occur when employees perceive that their demands have become overwhelming and proactively reduce them. For example, customer service representatives may attempt to avoid talking to difficult customers. In the teaching profession, a teacher might establish clear boundaries regarding after-hours communication with students, parents, and colleagues to reduce negative engagement.

Building on the job demands-resources (JD-R) model, it is plausible to hypothesize that job demands will positively predict job crafting. When employees encounter high job demands, such as sustained physical, emotional, or cognitive effort, they are likely to experience increased strain and potential negative outcomes like energy depletion, burnout and counterproductive work behavior (Tian *et al.*, 2022). To manage these pressures and regain balance, employees may proactively engage in job crafting, modifying their tasks, relationships, or perceptions of work to align their skills and preferences better (Harju *et al.*, 2021; Lu *et al.*, 2025). This adaptive behavior allows individuals to either seek additional resources, increase challenging demands, or reduce hindering demands, ultimately aiming to maintain well-being and work engagement. Therefore, higher job demands can be expected to stimulate greater job crafting as employees strive to cope with and optimize their work environment. Based on the evidence provided in the prior literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Job demands are positively associated with job crafting.

Job autonomy as a moderator variable

Prior research has shown that job demands influence employees' well-being and engagement through various mechanisms. Emphasizing this causal relationship, Han *et al.* (2020) found that challenging job demands directly contribute to increased emotional exhaustion among employees. Excessive job demands may surpass employees' capacities, thereby impairing their accomplishments, goal realization, and workplace ingenuity (Adler and Koch, 2017). While a number of studies have proven that job demands can be a trigger for job crafting, the extent to which employees can respond proactively often depends on the level of autonomy given to them. Job autonomy plays a crucial role in determining whether employees have the power to redesign their work and make it more manageable and align with their skills, abilities, and preferences (Herttala *et al.*, 2023). However, excessive autonomy can become counterproductive, as it may create ambiguity. Employees might be unsure of how to accomplish the job, either information overload or lack of guidance (Zhou, 2020). In such cases, employees may experience increased pressure or overwork, ultimately diminishing well-being and leading to negative outcomes (Saragih *et al.*, 2021). When demand is high and employees have high autonomy, they are more likely to engage in job crafting. On the other hand, when demands are high and employees are only granted a little control, employees may feel powerless and less motivated to make changes (Zhou, 2020). Importantly, a satisfactory level of autonomy at work not only reduces constraints from formal rules and procedures but also allows individuals to express their ideas, be involved in making decisions over their work, and demonstrate their personal thoughts and uniqueness (Dehkordi *et al.*, 2024). This

empowerment encourages employees to modify their tasks, processes and relationships at work that will lead to innovation. Based on the evidence provided in the prior literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. Job autonomy moderates the relationship between job demands and job crafting.

POS as a moderator variable

Perceived organizational support (POS) is an instrumental in shaping how employees respond to job demands, particularly in service-based sectors where employees must continuously adapt their approaches to address the diverse needs of those they serve. POS is a multidimensional construct that captures employees' beliefs and perceptions concerning the degree to which they recognize, prioritize, and demonstrate genuine care (Bonaiuto *et al.*, 2022; Eisenberger *et al.*, 2016). It has been conceived of as a powerful driver in meeting employees' core psychological needs for respect, recognition, belonging, and emotional security (Margaretha *et al.*, 2023; Zeng *et al.*, 2024). This robust support system fosters a work environment in which employees feel valued, empowered, and ultimately more engaged in their roles (Khajuria and Khan, 2021; Ramaci *et al.*, 2024; Zahrah *et al.*, 2025).

Prior research consistently shows that POS is positively linked to beneficial work outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction (Oubibi *et al.*, 2022; Ramaci *et al.*, 2024) and reduced stress (Hsieh *et al.*, 2019), particularly in demanding professions like healthcare (Ramaci *et al.*, 2024) and teachers (Ingusci *et al.*, 2016; Zeng *et al.*, 2024). High levels of POS can act as a buffer, protecting employees from the negative effects of excessive job demands, while low POS may leave employees feeling unsupported and vulnerable to burnout. In service contexts, POS encourages employees to proactively craft their tasks and service delivery methods, supporting both individual well-being and organizational performance (Kyei-Frimpong *et al.*, 2024). Importantly, POS also plays a pivotal role in fostering innovation and creative work behaviors (Aldabbas *et al.*, 2023). By providing resources, recognition, and emotional backing, POS enables employees to transform challenging job demands into opportunities for creativity and innovation. This is aligned with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits POS as a job resource that can buffer the negative effects of high job demands. When employees perceive strong organizational support, they are more likely to stay technologically up-to-date and continuously develop their digital skills, as this supportive environment enhances satisfaction and encourages a learning orientation-factors that foster job crafting and innovative practices within the organization (Zahoor *et al.*, 2022). Given the assumptions of the JD-R model (Fila *et al.*, 2017; van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017), and based on the evidence provided in the prior literature, we hypothesized the following:

H3. Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between job demand and job crafting.

Methodology

Sample and data collection

The objective of this study is to investigate the job demands experienced by primary teachers in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. Specifically, we focused on primary teachers who have been actively engaging with innovative teaching methods. Teachers have an inherent autonomy in their classrooms. This situation allows them to leverage job crafting strategies such as adjusting lesson plans, utilizing technology creatively, and seeking collaborative learning opportunities to meet the demands of the modern curriculum. Thus, teachers are considered well-suited for this study. Using purposive sampling, this study selected participants who have taught for at least one year and currently reside in Bandung to accurately reflect the target population. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, and 278

were returned, resulting in a response rate of 79%. All respondents came from 30 registered primary schools across Bandung, representing a diverse geographic distribution: 18 schools in North Bandung, 6 in South Bandung, and 4 in East Bandung. This wide coverage ensures the findings are representative of the varied teaching environments within the city.

The participants primarily involved female educators (88.7%). Based on Trading Economics (2025), the World Bank reported that in 2023, women make up nearly 72% of primary school teachers in Indonesia. This number highlights the significant representation of women in the teaching profession in Indonesia. The age distribution leaned towards those above 43 years (16.3%) and those between 23 and 28 years (12.9%). In terms of education and employment, the majority held bachelor's degrees (46.9%) and permanent positions (37.2%). Additionally, a substantial number of participants had over 10 years of teaching experience (35.6%). Weekly teaching hours typically fell within the 10–25 range (45.4%), with class sizes averaging 15–25 students (63.2%).

Additional testing was conducted based on the characteristics of the respondents. A pivot table analysis was performed to determine whether respondents exhibiting high, moderate, or low job crafting were influenced by their work experience. The results indicate that among teachers with less than five years of experience, only 17.98% (16 respondents) engaged in high levels of job crafting, while 79.78% demonstrated moderate job crafting. In contrast, for teachers with more than ten years of experience, 25.23% actively modified their work, and 66.36% exhibited moderate job crafting. A similar trend was observed among teachers with five to ten years of experience, where the majority (84.15%) engaged in moderate job crafting. This finding suggests that the majority of respondents still demonstrate moderate job crafting, highlighting the need to promote a work environment that supports proactive behaviors, particularly for teachers with low experience, to foster innovation. These findings are presented in Table 1.

Measure

The measurement scales used in this study possess well-established validity, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of our findings. All the items used the same five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Job crafting was assessed using a 21-item scale developed by Tims *et al.* (2012). As an example, the measurement included questions: Learning from my supervisor inspired me. To measure job autonomy, we adopted the instrument developed by Breugh (1999) consisting of nine questions. The sample items are I have some control over the sequencing of my work activities (when I do what). This measure

Table 1. Level of job crafting based on working experience

Working experience/level of job crafting	Frequency	Percentage
<5 years of experience	89	
1. High job crafting	16	17.98%
2. Low job crafting	2	2.25%
3. Moderate job crafting	71	79.78%
>5–10 years of experience	82	
1. High job crafting	11	13.41%
2. Low job crafting	2	2.44%
3. Moderate job crafting	69	84.15%
>10 years of experience	107	
1. High job crafting	27	25.23%
2. Low job crafting	9	8.41%
3. Moderate job crafting	71	66.36%

Source(s): Output from SPSS analysis

has relatively good dependability, ranging from $\alpha = 0.85\text{--}0.93$. In the present study, a reliability of 0.84 was estimated. This study assessed the level of job demands experienced by employees using a measurement set developed by van Wingerden *et al.* (2017), which demonstrated a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.88. Job demands were divided into three main dimensions: the amount of work required, mental demand, and emotional challenges faced at work (emotional demand). For example, some of the questions included statements like "I have too much to do." The study used a questionnaire developed by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) to understand how much support employees felt they received from their organizations. The measurement set contained only eight questions, which have Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.71 to 0.84. Examples of the questions include statements like "This organization throws its full weight behind me, ensuring I have everything I need to excel."

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Data analysis

The data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique with Smart Partial Least Square (SmartPLS 4) software. SEM is a sophisticated statistical approach that enables researchers to examine complex relationships between observed and latent variables, providing valuable insights into the underlying dynamics of the data (Gaskin and Lowry, 2014). In SmartPLS 4, data analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage comprises the evaluation of the measurement model, also known as the outer model, whereas the second stage consists of evaluating the structural model, also known as the inner model (Ringle *et al.*, 2023).

Results

Given that this research relies on self-reported data, the potential for common method bias (CMB) exists, which may lead to inflated correlations among the variables (Kock, 2021). To address this concern, Harman's Single Factor Test was conducted prior to analyzing the structural model. The results (Table 2) indicated that the single factor extracted accounted for 18.12% of the total variance. Since this percentage is below the 50% threshold, it suggests that common method bias is not a significant issue in our data. This finding reinforces the validity of our analyses and supports the integrity of the relationships observed among the study variables.

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Evaluation of the measurement (outer) model

Hair *et al.* (2022) proposed a four-pronged measurability analysis method to evaluate the quality of a measurement model. This analysis encompassed indicator reliability (outer loadings), composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity.

Table 2. Harman's single factor test

Total variance explained				Extraction sums of squared loadings		
Factor	Initial eigenvalues		Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
	Total	% of variance				
1	10,693	18,124	18,124	9,888	16,760	16,760
2	4,472	7,579	25,703			
3	3,523	5,970	31,674			
4	2,623	4,446	36,120			
5	2,165	3,669	39,789			

Source(s): Output from SPSS analysis

Four assessments of the measurement model are discussed below. Table 3 summarizes the convergent validity test results, a type of construct validity that assesses whether two measures that are theoretically related actually correlate with each other (Henseler et al., 2015). The result shows that each item's factor loading value ranges from 0.514 to 0.866, which exceeds the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). This demonstrates that all items were significant, provoking the convergent validity of the measurement model.

Cronbach's alpha for all variables ranged from 0.822 to 0.845, which is above the acceptable level of 0.60 (Hair et al., 2022). The composite reliability value also ranges from 0.826 to 0.865, which is higher than 0.70, as recommended by Sarstedt et al. (2022). Moreover, all AVE (average variance extracted) values for job demands, job crafting, perceived organizational support, and job autonomy were 0.484, 0.536, 0.55, and 0.501, respectively, which outstripped the acceptable level of 0.40 (Hair et al., 2022; Lam et al., 2012). Discriminant validity was examined using the Fomell-Larcker criterion. Discriminant validity test values must be greater than 0.7084 (Henseler et al., 2015). The results of the discriminant validity test are presented in Table 2. As shown in Table 4, the study variables are valid because the resulting Fomell-Larcker criterion value is greater than 0.708. Based on the above examination, it is considered that the measurement model validates convergent and discriminant validity.

Evaluation of the structural (inner) model

The subsequent stage of the Smart PLS data analysis focuses on evaluating the structural model. This evaluation centers on the path coefficients (β), t -statistics, and p -values obtained

Table 3. Validity and reliability test

Construct	Items	Standardized factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Job demands	JD1	0.716	0.822	0.826	0.484
	JD10	0.671			
	JD2	0.729			
	JD4	0.618			
	JD6	0.742			
	JD7	0.655			
	JD9	0.730			
	JC1	0.866			
	JC16	0.514			
Job crafting	JC18	0.594	0.845	0.865	0.536
	JC2	0.885			
	JC21	0.561			
	JC3	0.831			
	JC4	0.774			
	D02	0.775			
Perceived organizational support	D04	0.785	0.822	0.854	0.55
	D05	0.775			
	D06	0.743			
	D07	0.720			
	D01	0.643			
	JA1	0.779	0.843	0.843	0.501
Job autonomy	JA2	0.729			
	JA3	0.809			
	JA4	0.740			
	JA5	0.669			
	JA8	0.602			
	JA9	0.600			

Source(s): Output from Smart PLS analysis

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker criteria

	JAu	JCraf	JDem	POSup
JAu	0.708			
JCraf	0.543	0.732		
JDem	0.311	0.563	0.696	
POSup	0.291	0.236	0.200	0.742

Note(s): JDem = job demand; JCraf = job crafting; JAu = job autonomy; Psup = perceived organizational support

Source(s): Output from Smart PLS analysis

through the Smart PLS bootstrapping method. These metrics collectively assess the strength and significance of the relationships between variables, ultimately revealing whether the hypothesized relationships hold. The acceptable value of *t*-statistics and *p*-values are 1.96 and 0.05 respectively, as suggested by Hair *et al.* (2022).

Table 5 presents the results of the structural model analysis used to test all hypotheses in this study. This includes both the direct and moderating effects. The first hypothesis (H1) was used to measure the impact of job demands on job crafting. The results showed that the relationship between job demands and job crafting suggests a positive, moderate-strength relationship (R-Square: 0.472). This result supports those of earlier studies conducted (e.g. Han *et al.*, 2020; Schaufeli, 2017).

Meanwhile, this study found no statistically significant effect of the moderating role of job autonomy on job demands and job crafting ($\beta = -0.061$, *p*-value = 0.192). The results also showed that there was no statistically significant effect of the moderating role of perceived organizational support on job demands and job crafting ($\beta = 0.03$, *p* = 0.543). Consequently, H2 and H3 were not supported. These results indicate that job autonomy and perceived organizational support do not moderate the relationship between job demands and job crafting among teachers. The research model analysis is presented in Figure 1.

Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the direct effects of job demands on job crafting among primary school teachers in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. The roles of job autonomy and perceived organizational support in mediating this relationship were also examined. The results of this study found that high job demands can push employees to modify their jobs (H1 is accepted). Faced with significant workloads, teachers in this study demonstrated a proactive approach to managing their work. They took the initiative to reshape their tasks, making them more manageable and meaningful, revealing both the pressures

Table 5. Hypotheses testing result

Hypotheses	Path coefficients	P-value	95% confidence level	
			Lower limits	Upper limits
H1	Jdem → JCraf	0.436	0	0.295
H2	Jdem x JAu → JCraf	−0.061	0.192	−0.151
H3	Jdem x Psup → JCraf	0.03	0.543	−0.068

Note(s): JDem = job demand; JCraf = job crafting; Jau = job autonomy; Psup = perceived organizational support

Source(s): Output from Smart PLS analysis

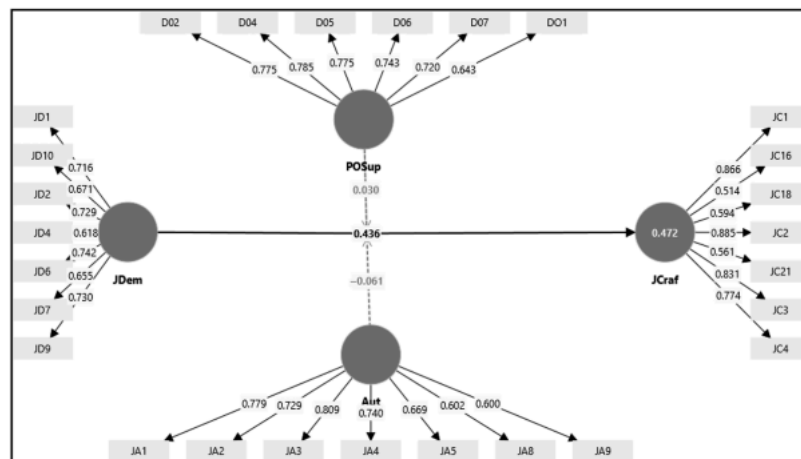


Figure 1. Research model analysis. Source: Output from Smart PLS analysis

they face and their resourcefulness in coping with them. However, this proactive approach (job crafting) can be a double-edged sword. According to Tims *et al.* (2016), job crafting consists of three key dimensions: (1) enhancing job resources, (2) optimizing job challenges, and (3) mitigating hindering demands. Teachers who actively enhance their job resources by, for example, collaborating with colleagues to share best practices and improve their skill through social learning. Proactive teachers might also optimize job challenges by embracing new stimulating tasks. However, this behavior might also raise concerns about long-term sustainability. Teachers who are actively crafting their jobs might find it is overwhelming and leads to stress. Thus, demonstrating job crafting might be a powerful strategy to ignite personal growth and fuel job contentment (Bruning and Campion, 2019; Knight *et al.*, 2021), it poses a significant risk to well-being if mismanaged. In conclusion, when employees perceive a mismatch between demanding tasks and available resources, they become empowered agents of change. By strategically employing the three complementary strategies of job crafting, employees can actively reshape their work environment to achieve a more optimal and fulfilling fit.

This finding is largely consistent with previous research. For instance, Lee *et al.* (2017) proposed that while job demands can lead to negative consequences, they can also foster positive outcomes through job crafting. Lu *et al.* (2025) also found that daily time pressure, as a form of job demand, plays a significant role in predicting the adoption of active job crafting. Similarly, Mauno *et al.* (2020) argued that demands offering growth opportunities motivate employees to shape their roles proactively. Consequently, teachers facing high demands are likely to employ job crafting to manage their workload.

However, this study revealed that the willingness to demonstrate job crafting behavior does not depend on the availability of organizational support and job autonomy. The analysis shows that job autonomy and organizational support did not moderate the relationship between job demand and job crafting. This finding offers a detailed perspective, differing from prior research. While Hertalampi *et al.* (2023) propose that autonomy moderates the relationship between job demands and positive outcomes, associating it with leaders' autonomous work planning that positively influences followers, the current study suggests a distinct dynamic within the teaching profession. Under intense workload pressure and in challenging situations, teachers may be compelled to engage in job crafting as a necessary means of accomplishing

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their duties, potentially diminishing the moderating effect of formal job autonomy. Furthermore, the inherent flexibility of teaching tasks may lead to job autonomy being perceived as an intrinsic characteristic of the profession rather than an external factor that actively stimulates proactive behaviors like job crafting. Consequently, the expected moderating influence of job autonomy on the demand-crafting relationship might be less pronounced in this context.

Similarly, the lack of a significant moderating effect for perceived organizational support (POS) warrants further consideration. Contrary to prior research suggesting POS facilitates proactive responses to job demands, such as job crafting (Kyei-Frimpong *et al.*, 2024; Oubibi *et al.*, 2022; Ramaci *et al.*, 2024), this study found no such relationship. This might be explained by the specific context of teachers in Indonesia, as highlighted by Chang *et al.* (2014) who often experience resource constraints and limited training opportunities. In such environments, job crafting becomes a primary strategy for managing workload and stress, irrespective of the level of perceived organizational support. Consequently, the impetus for engaging in job crafting under high job demands may be driven more by necessity and the immediate need to cope, rather than being contingent on feeling supported by the organization.

In conclusion, teachers represent a workforce that is consistently confronted with high job demands and numerous challenges. The findings of this study underscore the necessity for educational institutions to effectively manage these job demands to promote a positive culture of job crafting. This research reveals that the ability of employees to adapt is paramount, irrespective of the level of organizational support or autonomy they receive. Job crafting emerges as a vital coping mechanism that enables teachers to handle the uncertainties and frequent changes inherent in their work environments. It is a multifaceted process influenced by various factors that shape an employee's decision to modify their tasks, relationships, and perceptions of their roles. Ultimately, encouraging a workplace that encourages job crafting can not only enhance teachers' resilience but also improve their overall job satisfaction and effectiveness. As educators face increasingly complex demands, understanding and supporting their adaptive strategies becomes essential for promoting their well-being and sustaining a thriving educational ecosystem.

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Implications for theory and practice

The findings of this study have theoretical implications by challenging previous research that emphasizes the significance of moderating organizations support and autonomy in these relationships. However, in this research context of Indonesian primary school teachers, job crafting may be more self-driven and less dependent on external factors. This finding calls for a re-examination of the boundary conditions of job crafting theory. Moreover, this theoretical implication invites a re-examination of the universality of established moderators within job crafting theory.

This study also highlights that job crafting serves as a coping mechanism for teachers to deal with the current uncertain working situation. To foster a positive job-crafting culture, educational institutions in Indonesia should go beyond providing autonomy and support by effectively managing their job demands. This involves implementing strategies to manage workloads by leveraging digital tools to reduce the burden of paperwork, freeing up valuable time and reducing teacher stress over administrative works. However, while job crafting is beneficial, it can also present risks if not approached strategically; without alignment with school goals, additional efforts may lead to overload or reduced job satisfaction, effectively serving as a double-edged sword. Therefore, it is essential to encourage teachers to engage in job crafting purposefully. For instance, volunteering to provide extra classes after school should be aligned with the school's strategic goals to ensure that such efforts are meaningful (Bruning and Campion, 2019; Knight *et al.*, 2021) and contribute to organizational objectives. Without this alignment, embracing new challenges may lead to feelings of being overwhelmed or result in work that lacks purpose or value.

Some other practical approaches include creating structured opportunities for teachers to collaborate on projects, sharing best practices, conducting regular check-ins or feedback sessions, and facilitating activities such as mentoring or student-led initiatives, which can enhance relational and cognitive aspects of job crafting. By supporting educators in this way, educational institutions can not only enhance teacher well-being but also improve public perceptions of teaching as a responsive and dynamic profession. Additionally, equipping teachers with training to manage workloads, prioritize tasks, and delegate responsibilities can empower them to handle highly demanding tasks more effectively. This approach aligns with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting quality education and ensuring the well-being of educators.

Limitations and further research

Job demands have received attention because of increased work pressure in modern workplaces, including schools. Prior findings reflect that when employees receive a high demand, it leads to job crafting behaviors as a coping mechanism to deal with intense work pressure. This research then added literature on job demands, particularly in teacher-working situations. We also included job autonomy and perceived organization support as moderators. Excessive job demands enhance the possibility of modifying jobs when employees grant authority over their work and satisfactory support from supervisors and organizations. Even though this study did not find any significant effect of these moderators, it does not necessarily negate their importance. Future research should explore these moderators in different industries. For organizations, it is important to be aware that excessive job demands might lead to issues such as modifying work to a lower standard and increasing job stress. Thus, the organization should offer workshops or training to equip teachers to improve their jobs and redefine their daily tasks to be more creative in accomplishing their tasks.

It is important to acknowledge that this study is not without its limitations. Although the findings offer valuable insights, several aspects warrant further exploration in future research. First, we used self-report measures, which could lead to common methodological bias. Even though we have conducted Harman's single-factor test, the next investigation could incorporate a multi-source collection of data (i.e. job crafting reported by a direct supervisor) to minimize the problem of common method bias. Second, it relates to the research sample, which is relatively limited in types of occupation (primary school teachers). Thus, to further generalize the results, examining their applicability in diverse occupational contexts could be a valuable avenue for future research. Third, the insignificant role of moderating variables implies that certain moderators may exist. Therefore, future research should consider other moderating variables, such as individual characteristics (personality) or specific school cultures and levels.

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