



**Title: “We designed the job we love”: Investigating Job Crafting behaviors
and work stress amongst Public and Private School teachers in Durban, South
Africa.**

by

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DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Nerisha Deveduthras, declare that

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In short, I would like to end with this quote as a source of inspiration to other students in the
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“SUCCESS TONIC: 1 tsp confidence; 1 tsp courage; 2 tsp patience; 4 tsp prayer; 4 tsp perseverance; 4 tsp joy; 6 tsp enthusiasm - Take one teaspoonful of this tonic three times daily.”

— Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Samadhi Yoga

ABSTRACT

Education in South Africa is in a transitional phase. Economic deficiencies and inequality arising from apartheid have impacted significantly on the provision of education for learners and have consequently placed immense pressure on school educators to overcome these barriers within the classroom. Job crafting refers to proactive, agentic change whereby employees seek to foster meaning in their work or view their work differently. However, occupational stress remains a critical factor in many organizations, contributing to sickness absence, alcoholism, mental distress, amongst others. However, little is known about how levels of job crafting and occupational stress differ amongst private and public school educators, and whether any relationship exists between the two variables. A comparative study was conducted on a sample of school educators ($N=196$) employed at public ($n=110$) and private schools ($n=86$) in Durban to address the identified research gap. The research instruments used to determine job crafting behavior of school teachers were the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ) and the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R). The Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) was used to determine the levels of occupational stress experienced by school teachers in the workplace. The results revealed that there were no significant differences between job crafting behavior and occupational stress amongst the samples. The results revealed a significantly small, negative correlation between the age of the participant and occupational stress. There was no significant prediction of total stress by job crafting behavior. Insights gained from this study may be useful in assisting education departments and school governing bodies with reviewing the existing and impending structure of teaching jobs with the intent of encouraging these employees to seek satisfaction and meaning in their current occupations.

Keywords: Job crafting, cognitive crafting, meaningful work, task crafting, occupational stress, relational crafting

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Selecting and recruiting suitable educators remains a key priority, as well as a central challenge for many education institutes around the world. In the past few years, the mainstream role of South African educators has been challenged, and there has been a greater focus on inclusive education, resulting in a transformation in the traditional roles of education to being more pupil-centered (Paulse, 2005). While there may be many external factors that inspire many individuals to pursue teaching as a career, internal conditions (such as the working environment, lack of adequate resources and discipline in the classroom) could influence a school educator's sense of fulfillment with their job and their desire to remain in the teaching profession (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006; Johnson, 2015; Field & Buitendach, 2012). This chapter introduces the topic and study area of this dissertation by describing the concepts of job crafting and levels of stress experienced in the workplace (also known as occupational stress). The background and context of the study create a better understanding of the above concepts. This chapter also presents the main research aims, objectives, questions, and hypotheses, which are at the core of this study. Furthermore, Chapter One presents a brief description of the structure of this dissertation and provides a brief overview of what each chapter will discuss.

1.2. Background of the Study

The premise of this study focuses on comparing the job crafting behavior and occupational stress experienced in the workplace amongst private and public school educators

working in Durban, South Africa. According to Sharma and Jyoti (2006), school educators constitute the most significant human capital resource of an education system as well as the highest cost, particularly at the school level. These individuals are the central contributing factors in the development of young children (apart from their parents and family) as educators promote the academic, social, and emotional development of their learners starting in the early years of childhood through to young adulthood. School educators are required to fulfill multiple roles and solve various problems at work, both inside and outside the classroom, while fulfilling their duties towards their family at home.

When the work pressures and demands alone match the knowledge and abilities of employees, they are less likely to view their work as stressful (Leka, Griffiths & Cox, 2004). Hence, it is imperative to highlight and identify the various aspects that play a contributing role in educator satisfaction (or dissatisfaction), and the meaning employees attribute to their work (known as ‘job crafting’) while describing how stress experienced in the workplace affects their effectiveness both inside and outside the classroom. These insights are essential for improving the extent of knowledge required to support a successful educational system (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006).

Employees often complain that stress in the workplace has adverse effects on their functioning, their problem-solving abilities, decision making, and concentration levels while also reducing their ability to complete their work efficiently and effectively (Lyon, 2000; Matla, 2014). Kreitner and Kinicki (2004) defined stress as a response or reaction to an event or occurrence that places excessive demands on an individual (either physical or psychological). This definition applies to the area of occupational stress as a response to

aspects within an individual's work environment that exceeds or challenge employees' knowledge, abilities, and skills to cope with work demands and pressures, therefore eliciting a stressful response (Leka et al., 2004).

According to Devonport, Biscomb, and Lane (2008), the differences in the manner in which participants perceive occupational stress (and opportunities for job crafting) prevalent in the workplace attributes to each individual's unique circumstance. For example, differences in factors such as age, gender, overall well-being, and level of maturity within the organization (such as tenure of the employee) can contribute to the experiences or correlations with occupational stress and job crafting behavior in numerous ways. Various individuals might experience the same situation differently, and no two educators would react equally in any given stressful situation (Olivier & Venter, 2003). In other words, one may assess a situation as stressful while another may not (Roupa, Papathanasiou, Tsaras & Neroliatsiou, 2015). Hence, this study assumes that scores on demographic variables (tenure, age, and gender) may differ for both samples of school educators. This dissertation aims to determine this possibility. The research instrument used to determine levels of occupational stress experienced by school teachers was The Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) developed by Williams and Cooper (1996), which is a cohesive measure of the levels of occupational stress (described as stressors, moderators, and outcomes).

It is postulated that if more employees begin to integrate aspects of job crafting into their work, it may result in decreased levels of occupational stress experienced as their work is more meaningful and satisfying. What comes to mind when considering the term 'job crafting'? Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) described job crafting as the proactive practice of

customizing job-related behaviors, tasks, and relationships in the workplace, which enables staff members to seek meaning and satisfyingly experience their work. A job crafting perspective on work examines how individuals in an organization may participate in the actual work practice and how this may vary significantly from the recommended work practice (Ghitulescu, 2006). The research instruments used to determine job crafting behavior of school teachers were the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ) by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013) and the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R) developed by Tims and Bakker (2010). Tims, Derks, and Bakker (2012) suggest that many individuals attempt to change their job tasks in line with the demands imposed on them at work in an attempt to accommodate their unique preferences and needs; while also crafting their jobs to utilize any resources at their disposal. The authors developed the JD-R model to empirically study job crafting as the model frames the way employees might change their levels of job demands and job resources to suit their abilities and preferences, making the model most appropriate to the objectives of this study. It is postulated that scores on job crafting could potentially predict the scores on occupational stress (which this dissertation seeks to determine).

Unfortunately, today's rapidly changing work environment sets other priorities and challenges for managers and supervisors who are not always available to support their employees in the workplace (Tims et al., 2012). The result is that employees experience added stress and may seek out other ways to gain meaning and satisfaction from their job. Job crafting is an advantageous technique practiced by employees, whereby the activities and parameters of the tasks, relationships, and behaviors at work are tailored to suit each employee (Tims & Bakker, 2010). These elements are referred to as cognitive crafting (altering the

significance and meaning ascribed to work tasks), task crafting (altering how job tasks are completed), and relational crafting (changing with whom and how employees interact with others at work) which results in favorable outcomes for employees such as job satisfaction, increased autonomy, and authority (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

1.3. Nature of the study

The study conducted in this dissertation is a comparative research study and employs a quantitative survey research design. This study seeks to determine and describe any differences in the scores on job crafting behavior (utilizing two scales, namely, the JCQ and JD-R scales) and levels of occupational stress (using the PMI scale) among a sample of public school educators ($n = 110$) and private school educators ($n = 86$). This research study also endeavors to compare and describe the differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ score based on the age of the participant. This study comprised a sample of public school educators ($n=110$) and private school educators ($n=86$) working in various locations across the north coast of Durban and the central Durban area. Peral and Geldenhuys (2016) argued that school educators are employed in a very stressful occupation with the highest prevalence of burnout. Many studies report high incidences of stress and burnout in school educators such as Johnson (2015); Matla (2014); and Schulze and Steyn (2007), to name but a few. School educators encounter various difficult challenges daily, such as work overload, overcrowded classrooms, and catering to a pupil's individual needs (Matla, 2014). According to Field and Buitendach (2012), many schools in South Africa are forced to meet these demands with only minimal resources available, which often results in increased unhappiness and dissatisfaction, particularly amongst high school educators.

Work stress remains an enormous challenge for many employees world-wide and affects both employee and organizational health (Leka et al., 2004). Research indicates that work stress among school educators are strongly correlated with job satisfaction as the stress experienced by educators has an impact on their degree of satisfaction and the quality of life of educators (Schulze & Steyn, 2007; Johnson, 2015; Matla, 2014). Therefore, this study seeks to determine whether there are correlations between the PMI score and demographic variables (such as gender, age, and tenure) for the two samples of school educators, and lastly to determine whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

The type of school (either public or private school) in which participants were employed was included in this study to determine whether this had any effect on job crafting behavior and levels of occupational stress. School-level education in South Africa consists of independent schools, governing-body funded public schools, and government schools (Power, 2011). Government schools are partly funded by the government and are presided over by the school governing body (SGBs selected by the parents of the school), principal, and educators (McKay, 2015). These schools instruct learners, according to the state syllabus set out by the National Department of Education (Power, 2011). School facilities, class sizes, and the extra-curricular activities offered differ amongst various government schools, with the average class size ranging roughly between 30-40 learners to one educator (McKay, 2015).

South Africa's private schooling sector is much smaller than public schooling, with overall enrolment at about 6% of the total school population (Hofmeyr, McCarthy, Oliphant, Schirmer, & Bernstein, 2013). Private or independent schools in South Africa are managed

by the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA) (Mckay, Mafanya & Horn, 2019). Classes tend to be small, ranging from 16 to 25 learners to one educator (Power, 2011). The focus is on the child as an individual, and the school ensures a high quality and high standard of education. In general, private schools are equipped with smaller classes, better school facilities, and a greater variety of extra-curricular activities (McKay, 2015).

1.4. Problem statement

Job crafting is a practice whereby employees create meaning in their work by utilizing opportunities to customize their tasks and interactions at work. Their satisfaction at work, their performance, and their overall morale is enhanced, and they show added initiative towards their work (Siddiqi, 2015). However, stress in the workplace remains a critical factor in many organizations. It is widely recognized that stress is a critical contributing factor leading to alcoholism, lack of mental well-being, sickness absence, and other problems related to the workplace (Megranahan, 2014). Stress has been identified as an ongoing and real phenomenon in many organizations, with an increase in the likelihood of stress being caused by the workplace (Megranahan, 2014). However, there is little research evidence provided on how levels of stress in the workplace and job crafting behavior differ amongst public and private school educators. The purpose of this study is to compare the differences in the scores on job crafting (using the JCQ and JD-R scales) and levels of occupational stress (using the PMI scale) among a sample of public school educators ($n = 110$) and private school educators ($n = 86$). This study also aims to compare and report the differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ score based on the age of the participant. Additionally, this study seeks to determine whether there is a correlation between the PMI score and demographic variables (gender, age,

and tenure) for the two samples of school educators and whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score). Insights gained from this study may be useful in assisting South African education departments and school governing bodies with revising the structure of current and future job tasks for educators with the intent of encouraging these employees to seek greater satisfaction and meaning in their current occupation.

1.5. Research aims and objectives

This is a comparative study which seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Are there any differences between the scores obtained on job crafting behavior and occupational stress based on the type of school educators?
2. Are there any differences in the scores on job crafting and occupational stress based on the age of the participants?
3. Is there a correlation between the PMI score and the demographic differences (age, gender, and tenure) of employees among the two samples?
4. What impact does the JD-R score have on total stress (PMI score)?

The objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the differences obtained in the scores on job crafting behavior based on the type of school educator (public or private).
2. To describe the differences in the score on occupational stress based on the type of school educator (public or private).

3. To compare and describe the differences in the scores on job crafting and occupational stress based on the age of the participant.
4. To determine whether there is a correlation between occupational stress and the demographic variables (age, gender, and tenure) for the two samples of school educators.
5. To determine whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

This study proposes the following hypotheses:

H₀ 1a: There is no significant difference in the score on job crafting behavior for public school educators as compared to private school educators.

H₀ 1b: There is no significant difference in the score on levels of occupational stress experienced in the workplace for public school educators and private school educators.

H₀ 1c: There is no significant difference in the scale scores (PMI, JD-R, and JCQ) among the four different age group categories.

H₀ 2a: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and age for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2b: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and gender for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2c: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and tenure for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 3: In the presence of the others, there will be no significant prediction of total stress (PMI score) by the JD-R score.

1.6. Significance of the study

According to Leka et al. (2004), employees that are stressed often experience poor motivation are generally less productive and unhealthy. Workers who have more support and control over their work and how they do it often participate in more decisions pertaining to their job, and as a result, they experience less stress (Leka et al., 2004). Job crafting, on the other hand, has several favorable results as employees who are offered opportunities for engaging in job crafting enjoy increased levels of autonomy and authority (Siddiqi, 2015). However, many educators employed in African countries face various challenges, such as high job demands and poor working conditions, which often contributes to negative attitudes towards work and feelings of worthlessness. Hence, educators display high rates of burnout and disengagement as a result (Fouché, Rothmann & Van der Vyver, 2017). This may be due to various contributing factors present within the work environment, such as physical, mental and emotional exhaustion, feelings of isolation from working alone in the classroom, etc. (Johnson, 2015). Although some employees may not be able to customize the purpose of their work, they may find that they are given various job crafting opportunities such as adjusting the way they relate to people, how they value their work, and how they go about completing their tasks (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013). Employees may initially be inspired to become job crafters when they feel the need to make connections with others, improve their self-esteem, or assert control over the job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Job crafting considers the positive aspects of a job where the employee utilizes the resources available at work to create and customize an environment that is conducive to their personalized growth and satisfaction at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016). On the contrary, occupational stress considers the factors of the work environment that elicit a stress response for these employees as they feel vulnerable and helpless in the situation they are in (Fouché et al., 2017; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Studies (such as Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005; Tims et al., 2012) have highlighted the suitability of the JD-R model to predict engagement and burnout amongst educators as well as job crafting behavior. In light of the above, this dissertation aims to determine whether the JD-R score on job crafting would make the most substantial contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

Initially, most of the studies on job crafting were conducted using samples of employees in the nursing, engineering, and food service industries such as in studies conducted by Ghitulescu (2006); Leana, Appelbaum, and Shevchuk (2009); and Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). Organizational professionals and scholars have not given this construct significant consideration. This study attempts to encourage teaching staff to seek greater meaning in their work could potentially lead to higher work engagement, better performance by educators, lower burnout, and retention of educators. This study highlights the need for more studies that focus on job crafting within the South African setting, particularly empirical studies that compare job crafting behavior among private and public school educators. Therefore, this study aims to compare the levels of occupational stress and job crafting behavior for private and public school educators; and seeks to determine whether

there are any differences in the PMI score by comparing the sample of public school educators to the sample of private school educators working in Durban.

Additionally, there is a need to ensure that appropriate strategies and activities are developed to control the amount of stress experienced by teachers in the workplace. This study contributes to the literature on the changing landscape of education in South Africa and the ways this contributes to increasing levels of stress experienced in the workplace. There is an increased need for studies that describe the relationship between occupational stress and other constructs, such as the tenure of employees, gender, and age. More specifically, few studies have sought to determine whether job crafting (JD-R score) would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score). Hence, this study aims to determine the predictive value of the JD-R score on the PMI score on occupational stress while also aiming to describe any relationship between the PMI score and demographic variables such as gender, age, and tenure based on a sample of public and private school educators working in Durban. Insights gained from this study may be useful in assisting education departments and school governing bodies with revising the structure of current and future job tasks with the intent of encouraging these employees to seek satisfaction and meaning in their current occupation.

1.7. Structure of this dissertation

The premise of this dissertation aims to address the objectives and research questions described above through seven chapters and several appendices through the following structure and sequence of chapters:

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Chapter One described the premise of the study by describing the purpose and background of this research study and providing insights into the context of the study. The chapter discussed the nature and significance of the research study conducted with a detailed description of the research objectives, the aims of the research study, the research hypotheses, and the specific questions to be answered in this research study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two reviews the current and prior literature presented on the constructs of job crafting and occupational stress (stress in the workplace) - the main variables which underpin and inform this study. The chapter briefly discusses the primary research studies that had a noticeable impact on the development of these two constructs as well as the role they played in shaping the way these constructs could be studied and improved for current research undertakings.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

This chapter discusses the main theories and concepts underlying the job crafting construct by highlighting the interpersonal sense-making model by Wrzesniewski, Dutton, and Debebe (2003); the job crafting model by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001); and the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker (2010). After that, the chapter will discuss the three theoretical conceptualizations of stress (stress as a stimulus, stress as a transaction, and stress as a response) and will provide a brief discussion on the concept of coping.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the method used to collect the data for this research study by discussing the specific steps and procedures used. Under this chapter, the design applied in this research study, the sample that participated in the study, the data collection technique, and research measures, as well as the statistical procedures employed to generate an analysis of the research data, will be discussed. The ethical considerations that guided this research will be reviewed.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH RESULTS

Chapter five offers a report of the research results and statistical analyses conducted on the data collected, using various tables. The results for the comparison of the two groups (public school educators and private school educators) on the job crafting behavior and occupational stress variables will be presented using Independent-samples *t*-test and One-Way between groups ANOVA statistical techniques. The chapter reports on the analysis of the statistical tests on the relationship between the variables (job crafting and levels of stress in the workplace) using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and the standard multiple regression analysis. The descriptive analysis and inferential statistics conducted on the scale scores and demographic data will be reported showing the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's Alpha (measuring reliability) results.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter will be organized according to the aims and research questions of this study to provide reasons and explanations about the results obtained in the previous chapter.

Each aim and hypothesis will be presented and the findings thereof conceptualized to describe and compare the sample of public school educators to the sample of private school educators

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION, PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter will discuss some of the conclusions that can be assumed based on the analysis and discussion of the results (presented in the previous two chapters) in relation to the prior research and theoretical frameworks surrounding the concepts of job crafting and occupational stress.

1.8. Summary of chapter and transition

Chapter One of this dissertation introduced the reader to the study and shed light on the topic under study. The chapter discussed the background of the study and the context of the study to give the reader greater insight into the topic area. As discussed, the purpose of this study is to compare how job crafting behavior differs for public and private school educators, and whether there is a relationship between job crafting and levels of stress experienced in the workplace for public and private school educators working in Durban. Insights gained from this study may be useful in assisting education departments and school governing bodies with revising the structure of current and future job tasks with the intent of encouraging these employees to seek satisfaction and meaning in their current occupations. The following chapter will provide a review of the available literature for the job crafting variable and occupational stress variable, as well as the measures and operational definitions of these two research variables.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction to the chapter

This chapter presents a survey of the scholarship and early conceptualizations established around the constructs of job crafting and occupational stress - the core variables which underpin and inform this study. The main objective of this literature review is to provide an overview of noteworthy developments in the definitions of job crafting and occupational stress as constructs. This chapter endeavors to describe the most significant measures and operational definitions (conceptualizations) used by various authors to establish job crafting and occupational stress as researchable variables. This chapter seeks to delineate the transformation of the public and private school sectors in South Africa by highlighting the unique characteristics of the work environment and the pressures educators experience as a result. Finally, a summary of the chapter is presented.

2.2. Developments in the foundations and descriptions of job crafting and occupational stress (stress in the workplace)

2.2.1. Job crafting and job satisfaction

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) initially presented the term job crafting to revise the notion of job design. Job design refers to a ranked or ordered approach whereby an organization develops jobs, recruits, hires, and trains the appropriate individuals by preparing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to carry out their work (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Employees may modify management's design of their work in various ways

- this refers to a bottom-top approach whereby personnel customize and create a job that is better suited their tastes, preferences, qualifications, and interests as opposed to the conventional approach of other job designs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Several examples were highlighted in the study based on samples of nurses, engineers, and restaurant chefs. Hence, the theory suggests that the practice of job crafting is initiated when employees are motivated to alter their work identities or their interpretations of the meaning of work (Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewski, 2008; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Bellah (1985) described several orientations that govern how people evaluate their work, with the most significant orientation being that of a “Calling” or having a proactive personality trait (as cited in Wrzesniewski, 2003). The authors argue that “Callers” or people with a proactive personality may tailor how they go about completing their work to experience increased fulfillment and seek increased meaning in their job (Wrzesniewski, 2003). Similarly, those who desire a distinctiveness or uniqueness from others are more likely to engage in job crafting in an attempt to be different from their co-workers (Ghitulescu, 2006). In other words, they take more personal initiative to improve or modify their existing environment to create more favorable conditions and were most likely to be job crafters. The job crafting approach emphasizes that all employees, even those in monotonous jobs, take advantage of their individuality by distinguishing themselves from their co-workers in the way they carry out their jobs (Ghitulescu, 2006).

Research conducted on the practice of job crafting illustrates that individuals with different orientations towards work can structure their jobs in ways that either reinforces or weakens work meanings and job satisfaction (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Wrzesniewski,

2003). Job satisfaction relates to employee's subjective feelings of fulfillment (either positive or negative) with their work (Raj & Lalita, 2013). An educator's satisfaction with his or her career has a substantial impact on student learning. Highly satisfied educators are less likely to change schools or leave the teaching profession altogether than those who are dissatisfied with their work-life, whereas educators with a lower sense of job satisfaction tend to be less motivated to do their best in the classroom (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006). Many studies have focused on job crafting (Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016; Ghitulescu, 2006; and, Lyons, 2008) and job satisfaction (Raj & Lalita, 2013; Crossman & Harris, 2006; and Brunetti, 2001) amongst school educators in isolation but few studies have sought to study job crafting in conjunction with other organizational factors such as occupational stress, which is one of the main aims of this study.

2.2.2. Definition of stress and occupational stress

Stress as a concept is multifaceted, with numerous efforts made to define and conceptualize it. These are categorized into three groups: (1) a stimulus-based stress definition (where an individual interprets a particular life event or stimulus as the cause of stress, such as a divorce or pregnancy), (2) a response-based stress definition (refers to an individual's response/reaction to something going on in the environment which appears threatening), and (3) a transaction based definition of stress (where certain environmental conditions are interpreted as the causes of stress, resulting from an interaction between the person and the environment) (Roupa et al., 2015). As mentioned in Chapter One, Kreitner and Kinicki (2004) defined stress as a response or reaction to an event or occurrence that places excessive demands on an individual, and these demands may be either physical or psychological.

Therefore, occupational stress can be conceptualized as a reaction to factors within the work environment that challenge or exceed an employee's capacity to cope with the pressures and demands of the work, thereby eliciting a stressful response (Leka et al., 2004). This definition lies parallel to Lazarus (1981), who defined stress as demands that surpass or have a toll on accessible resources (either external or internal) as evaluated by the individual. Lazarus's (1981) concept of stress sees stress as the interaction between an individual and their work environment, unlike other authors (Selye, 1956; Holmes & Rahe, 1967) who viewed them separately (Lyon, 2000).

2.3. Measures and operational definitions

2.3.1. Job crafting

Initially, many studies made use of a qualitative approach to study job crafting behavior among employees where the purpose was to understand the reasons and experiences behind why individuals engage in a particular behavior (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009). Lyons (2008), for example, explored the narratives of salespersons, where they described their perceptions of job crafting and why they engaged in it. However, there was a need for more empirical studies. For example, Ghitulescu (2006) used a series of observation techniques amongst groups of manufacturing staff and educators to examine the effect of "discretion in work, task complexity, and task interdependence with others, as well as the influence of workgroup psychological safety and occupational community of practice, on how individuals craft their jobs" (Ghitulescu, 2006, p. 4). Additionally, Leana et al. (2009) conducted a study using performance assessments to examine whether educators and aides engaged in job crafting and whether this had any impact on teaching quality. The authors

proposed that job crafting was associated with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Both authors were able to develop suitable measures to use in the manufacturing and teaching professions in their studies; however, these measures were not applicable outside these professions (Tims et al., 2012). Recently in South Africa, Peral and Geldenhuys (2016) conducted an empirical study in Gauteng examining the benefits of job crafting using a sample of high school educators. Peral and Geldenhuys (2016) concluded that job crafting behaviors such as cognitive crafting and task crafting were most beneficial to educators as it provides them with a greater sense of meaning and work engagement.

Many studies have investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and meaningful work with demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and tenure of employees. Quite a few of these studies focus on job satisfaction and the age of employees yet few studies seek to establish the differences on scores on job crafting among different age groups (Dobrow Riza, Ganzach, & Liu, 2018; Crossman & Harris, 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Research indicates that employees tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction at the beginning of their careers and this tends to fluctuate towards the end of their careers while some studies revealed that older employees (educators in particular) experience increased job satisfaction (Crossman & Harris, 2006; Dobrow Riza et al., 2018). These variations in findings attribute to the fact that younger employees tend to be more enthusiastic and find greater joy in the challenges presented at work (Crossman & Harris, 2006). Alternatively, older employees are better able to develop strategies to cope with work-related problems, have become more acclimatized to their positions in their respective organizations,

and tend to see limited career prospects available to them (Dobrow Riza et al., 2018; Crossman & Harris, 2006).

However, the authors did not state whether job crafting had any effect on the levels of stress experienced by school educators, nor did they make any comparison between public and private school educators. Few authors have sought to study job crafting as a variable (such as Ghitulescu, 2006; Leana et al., 2009), or correlate scores on job crafting with other factors inherent in the work environment with demographic differences such as the age of employees. Therefore, the research undertaken in this dissertation aims to measure job crafting as a variable and seeks to determine whether there are any differences in the scores on job crafting and age of employees, whether scores on job crafting differ among the two samples, and if there is a correlation between scores on job crafting and age of employees.

2.3.2. Factors contributing to occupational stress in a South African context

Research conducted on occupational stress amongst educators (for example, Steyn & Kamper, 2006; Field & Buitendach, 2012; Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2015) has identified several factors present in many work environments that contribute to occupational stress amongst school educators. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik, (2015), factors such as emotional exhaustion, time pressure, lack of support, and recognition are seen as some of the central causes of burnout amongst school educators. Additionally, Johnson (2015) identified role conflict, role ambiguity, and isolation in the classroom as major contributing factors to stress and burnout amongst school educators.

The South African education system is in a transitional phase with the abolishment of corporal punishment, historical marginalization of learners, lack of discipline in schools, and

a new curriculum approach identified as significant factors contributing to the high incidence of educator stress experienced in the workplace (Paulse, 2005; Ndimande, 2016). George, Louw, and Badenhorst (2008) found significant correlations between emotional exhaustion, poor job satisfaction, and depersonalization that impacted education professionals from functioning effectively. Ndimande (2016) identified a lack of resources and under-funding as the central factors affecting many South African schools. Additionally, diversity in terms of the individuals with whom they work with and teach, confrontations with co-workers, and lack of motivation of co-workers are significant factors affecting educators within South African schools (Paulse, 2005).

However, many of the studies conducted on levels of occupational stress among school educators in South Africa have focused on identifying the factors and significant stressors that impact educator effectiveness in the workplace. Authors such as Schulze and Steyn (2007) conducted a study across all provinces in South Africa and found that most South African educators experienced: changes within the school, poor learner discipline, negative learner attitudes towards themselves, and uninvolved parents as the most significant stressors that impact educator effectiveness country-wide. Hence, occupational stress is not a single-source issue and has been defined in many empirical and non-empirical ways in order to document its many foundations and problems (Steyn & Kamper, 2006). These factors challenge employee's abilities to cope with work; hence, they experience increased levels of stress.

Occupational stress affects the level of job satisfaction that educators experience at work, while also impairing their effectiveness with pupils and in the classroom (Prilleltensky,

Neff & Bessell, 2016). Additionally, Johnson (2015) notes that stress also leads to incidences of physical and mental illness amongst educators - thereby harming the quality of teaching and the relationship between educators and students. Although the work environment has undergone rapid changes in recent years, these factors remain significant contributors to stress experienced in the workplace. According to Leka et al. (2004), poor work organization (such as the design of work systems and how they are managed) leads to occupational stress. Gilbert (2000) notes that in recent years, many educators face greater responsibilities as student enrolment numbers in schools continue to increase each year, which also impacts overall on their workload being increased (as cited in Coetzee & Rothmann, 2005; pp.47). When employees are generally unhappy in their jobs, they tend to have less attachment and commitment to their work. Similarly, many educators are required to meet the demands placed on them by their work with little or few resources available to them (Field & Buitendach, 2012).

Traditionally, levels of stress in the workplace have been measured using the Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI) developed by Osipow (1992; 1998). This model is theory-based and assesses the effects of stress on the individual based on three factors (occupational roles, psychological strain, and coping resources) across fourteen dimensions (Osipow, 1992; 1998). Later, a more concise model called the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) was developed by Williams and Cooper (1996). The PMI consists of 120 items and provides a cohesive measure of the levels of occupational stress, which are outcomes, stressors, and moderators (Williams & Cooper, 1996). The authors introduced the PMI as a reliable and comprehensive version of the OSI, and several research studies have effectively

utilized the scale to date (Williams & Cooper, 1996). This dissertation utilized 20 items from the stressor scale of the PMI to measure aspects of the work environment, which elicit a stressful response from individuals within the South African school environment.

However, few studies have sought to compare the levels of occupational stress experienced by school educators working in public schools and private schools to determine if there are any significant differences among the two groups, this is one of the main aims and objectives of this research dissertation. The type of school (either public or private school) in which participants were employed was included in this study to determine whether this had any effect on the JD-R and JCQ scores on job crafting and the PMI score on levels of occupational stress. This will be discussed further in the section below.

2.4. Public and private schooling in the South African context

Schulze and Steyn (2007) stated that the teaching context and environment in post-apartheid South Africa is in a constant state of flux. New demands and pressures are continuously being exerted on educators as new rules and policies alter the governing bodies of schools and the traditions of dealing with discipline (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). During the apartheid years, the education system in South Africa aimed to privilege white learners over all other racial groups (Pienaar & McKay, 2014). The State dominated the provision of education, and the policies put in place at the time ensured that schools remained racially segregated and decidedly unequal (McKay et al., 2018). This inequality could be seen in instances where the bulk of the education budget was allocated to white schools, resulting in the schools for other race groups being under-resourced, ill-equipped, and poorly staffed (McKay et al., 2018). There was a lack of black-only schools available at the time, with the

majority of these schools being overcrowded (Maile, 2004). By 1990, the government received immense pressure to allow black learners to attend predominantly white schools; the result was that the State decided to desegregate and semi-privatize white schools (Kalloway, 1997 as cited in McKay et al., 2018).

In 1994, the election of the democratic government marked the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Education in South Africa became deracialized, leading to a transformation in the administration, curriculum, and methods of teaching in the majority of the schools (McKay et al., 2018). However, funding remained a massive problem, and the majority of the former Black-African-only schools are still under-resourced and ill-equipped, resulting in inadequate learning opportunities, producing poor matriculation results, substance abuse, wrought with crime and violence (Maforah & Schulze, 2012; McKay et al., 2018). Hence, many of the public schools located in previously segregated areas remain under-resourced and under-staffed.

As a result, there has been an increase in the number of semi-private and private schools in South Africa. Pre-1994, private schooling cost more generally (as compared to the cheap or free public education at the time), had smaller class sizes, better equipment, and school facilities, was perceived to offer a “better quality” of education, and was the first to racially de-segregate (McKay, 2018). For example, class sizes in private schools have 16 learners on average, whereas most public schools have about 30 learners (Tooley, 2005). Hence, the need for private schooling in South Africa has risen significantly over the past few years, and this attributes to the unmet demand for education that public schools could not provide at the time (McKay et al., 2018).

There is a myriad of factors and challenges that impose unique constraints on the efficient delivery of education within the South African context. Factors include continuous changes to the curriculum and government policies, the effect of HIV/AIDS, and unsatisfactory matric pass rates (Maforah & Schulze, 2012). School educators face immense pressure to improve learners' performance at school, and often they are compelled to offer extra classes after school, on the weekend, and in the holiday, resulting in feelings of emotional exhaustion and fatigue among educators (Maforah & Schulze, 2012). Another significant challenge affecting schools in recent years is violence in schools. In some schools, incidences of violence and a lack of student discipline remain an ongoing problem (Johnson, 2015). This violence includes clashes among learners, learner-to-educator, and educator-to-learner aggression (Maforah & Schulze, 2012).

Most schools in South Africa are ill-equipped with the primary resources needed to create conducive learning and teaching environments for learners and staff alike. Currently, majority of our schools encounter numerous problems, for example, under-funding and poorly staffed (Maforah & Schulze, 2012), a lack of resources which include insufficient desks for pupils, a lack of textbooks and various other teaching materials needed for real learning to take place (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). Taking into consideration the above factors, the education system in South Africa places considerable demands and challenges on its employees, requiring individuals working in these environments to utilize any resources they may have available to them and be productive in the duties they fulfill.

From a review of the literature, it is clear that the constructs of job crafting and levels of stress in the workplace (referred to as occupational stress) has been developed and

described by many authors over the years, and their valid contributions have helped steer future research in these topic areas. However, it is also evident that most of these studies have viewed job crafting and occupational stress separately. There have been little known attempts to determine and describe any relationship between these two constructs with other factors such as age, gender, and tenure of employees. Therefore, this study aims to determine, compare and describe the differences in the job crafting behavior and levels of occupational stress of public and private school educators working in the Durban area in South Africa, while also seeking to determine if there are any differences in the scores on job crafting and occupational stress based on age. This study also seeks to determine and describe whether there is a relationship between occupational stress and demographic differences such as age, gender, and tenure of employees. Insights gained from this study may help education departments and management staff at schools develop interventions to help their teaching staff cope with the stress they experience in the workplace and also revise current job designs to encourage more employees to engage in job crafting.

2.5. Summary of chapter

The chapter endeavored to review the literature on job crafting and occupational stress. Firstly, this chapter described job crafting as a process where individuals structure their jobs in ways that either reinforce or weaken the meaning and satisfaction derived from their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Wrzesniewski, 2003). Secondly, this chapter discussed the development of this definition and its various underlying concepts. Additionally, the concept of stress was described. Lastly, the chapter addressed the measures and operational definitions of job crafting and occupational stress by looking at various studies in the field such as Slep

and Vella-Brodrick (2013); Peral and Geldenhuys (2016); and Skaalvik, and Skaalvik (2015) as significant studies that contributed to the development of these constructs in recent years.

This dissertation aims to address the gaps identified in the literature by linking and describing any differences in job crafting behavior and levels of occupational stress of public and private school educators working in the Durban area in South Africa. This study also seeks to determine and describe whether there is a relationship between occupational stress and demographic differences such as age, gender, and tenure of employees. The ensuing chapter provides a detailed description of the theoretical framework used to guide the research conducted in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Introduction to chapter

This chapter will discuss the central theoretical frameworks for job crafting and stress in the workplace (occupational stress) by highlighting the critical theories and concepts that underpin these topics. Under this section, the development of the Job Crafting Theory will be described by discussing the concept of interpersonal sense-making and the meaning of work proposed by Wrzesniewski, Dutton, and Debebe (2003). Thereafter, the job crafting model by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) and the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker (2010) will be discussed. Additionally, this section will discuss the three theoretical conceptualizations of stress and coping. Lastly, a summary of the chapter will be discussed.

3.2. Interpersonal sense-making and the meaning of work

Traditionally, work delineated the environments in which people developed and was closely linked to their identity (Steger & Dik, 2010). Work plays a significant role in the manner in which people make sense of their lives and their surroundings (the world they live in) (Steger & Dik, 2010). According to Wrzesniewski, Dutton, and Debebe (2003), the meaning that people attribute to their work is directly connected to their attitudes towards their job as well as their overall well-being and can directly influence the amount of satisfaction they derive from their job as well as their job performance. Employees who view their work as more meaningful tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction, work cohesion, and better psychological adjustment (Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012). Meaningful work stems from employees having a more definite sense of themselves, an authentic notion of the

expectations and the nature of their work environments, and through cognizance of how to interact with their organization to accomplish their work objectives (Steger & Dik, 2010).

Wrzesniewski et al., (2003) proposed a model of interpersonal sense-making which centers around the idea that “the meaning of work is significantly affected by the interpersonal episodes that employees have with others on the job” (p.94) and further supports earlier research conducted on the role of relationships and job attitudes in an organization. The authors further state that every job requires individuals to interact with other people such as co-workers, subordinates, customers or supervisors and these factors influence employee’s attitudes, feelings, and thoughts towards their job and the tasks they perform as well as the role that work plays in their lives (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). The more support employees receive from others at work and from supervisors, the less stress they experience (Leka et al., 2004). The ideas presented in this model guided the development of the concept of relational crafting, which is one of the three significant behavioral characteristics found in job crafting.

3.3. Job crafting theory

3.3.1. Job crafting model (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001)

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) initiated work on the concept of job crafting by developing the job crafting model which theorized job crafting behavior as a practice whereby the limits, relationships at work, and job-related tasks were altered as it constitutes the meaning of the job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). The practice of job crafting involves instituting and creating change with regards to one’s job and work (Wrzesniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, & Berg, 2013). This model highlighted the various reasons as to why employees choose to customize their work and how this changes the meaning of their work and their

work identities (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). The authors propose that employees engage in job crafting by using relational, cognitive, and task crafting to shape the limits or boundaries of their jobs. The boundaries of a job refer to the parameters of a job that people use to delineate the limits around the emotional, relational, or physical systems (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013).

More specifically, cognitive crafting behavior relates to employees' perceptions and attitudes towards their work, relational crafting involves altering specific relationships and interactions at work, and lastly, task crafting involves employees altering the number of tasks carried out - thus establishing the job crafting theory (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). These behaviors are interchangeable, and employees may engage in any one of the three or a combination (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). Job crafting refers to proactive, agentic variations made by employees in various styles, which gives them the opportunities to customize the aims of the job and experience their work differently (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). The above job crafting behaviors have various favorable outcomes for employees, such as increased autonomy, better well-being, and job satisfaction (Siddiqi, 2015).

Ghitulescu (2006) proposed that many employees engage in job crafting in different ways based on either individual skills, interests, initiative, and their interpretations. According to Lyons (2008), job crafting refers to employee-initiated job changes and remains unseen mainly by management. Previous research in the area of job crafting suggests that employees primarily take on job tasks in a specific, prescribed way, with the majority of work carried out in organizational settings according to written manuals or training programs (Ghitulescu, 2006). However, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) proposed that the incentive for job

crafting stems from an employee's necessity to assert control over their job and connect with others while sustaining and creating a positive self-image.

Other motivations include creating meaningful work, having a significant impact in some manner while also leading to more satisfied employees as job crafting can enhance the meaning of work and work identity of employees across a wide range of job situations (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting stems from employees' needs to create positive meaning and identity in their work over time and can be applied to any work context - from the most repetitive to the most complex jobs - to improve their experience of work (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013).

3.3.2. The Job Demands-Resources model (Tims & Bakker, 2010)

Tims and Bakker (2010) proposed the Job Demands-Resources model (the JD-R model) as an empirical measure of job crafting behavior. The model proposes that each occupation has specific work characteristics associated with employee effectiveness and well-being - these characteristics arise due to two sets of working conditions (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Firstly, there are job demands, which are the physical, social, and organizational features of work that could potentially induce stress if they go beyond workers' abilities (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Examples of job demands are demanding work shifts, time pressure, and long work hours, which lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout if not moderated or balanced with other positive behaviors (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Job resources, secondly, refers to the psychological, social, and physical features of the job, which are beneficial in limiting job demands and attaining work goals, inspiring personal growth, learning and development and are functional in achieving work goals. Examples of job resources are autonomy, career

opportunities, and role clarity, which foster work engagement and positive organizational outcomes (Tims & Bakker, 2010). These resources are essential in managing job demands; therefore - the more job resources there are available, the more likely that employees will feel involved in their work (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

The authors later extended the model to a four-factor model on job crafting with four characteristics related to job demands and job resources (Tims et al., 2012). This dissertation utilized the JD-R model to empirically measure the job crafting behavior of individuals employed in public and private schools across Durban. The appropriateness of the JD-R model to the premise of this study stems from its ability to frame the way employees customize levels of job demands and job resources to suit their abilities and preferences, one of the main characteristics of job crafting behavior.

From an analysis of the literature, one of the objectives of this dissertation is to determine whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score). Various authors have attempted to extend the JD-R model to apply it to various work conditions such as Prieto, Soria, Martínez, and Schaufeli (2008), who further extended the JD-R model to predict engagement and burnout amongst educators. The authors propose that the JD-R model categorizes psychosocial factors (such as stress, depression, and job control) into job demands and resources to see how these categories influence illness and organizational commitment. Bakker et al. (2005) argue that the JD-R model is a comprehensive empirical model and can be applied to any occupational setting regardless of the demands and resources involved. Additionally, the authors showed that interactions between demands and resources explained a unique proportion of the variance in

exhaustions and cynicism outcomes (Bakker et al., 2005). As previously mentioned, when the work pressures and demands alone match the knowledge and abilities (resources) of employees, they are less likely to view their work as stressful (Leka et al., 2004). Since both scales used to measure job crafting and occupational stress determine how well employees use their job resources to meet their job demands, this study anticipates that the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

3.4. Theoretical conceptualizations of stress and coping

Traditionally, there are three theoretical conceptualizations of stress presented in the literature: stress as a response, stress as a stimulus, and stress as a transaction. Hans Selye (1956) initially developed the response-based orientation to stress and defined stress as the body's non-specific response to harmful stimuli or any demands applied to it, therefore making it a dependent variable in research on stress (Roupaet al., 2015; Cunanan et al., 2018; Lyon, 2000). Selye's work centered around the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) model, which he used to distinguish between the cause of stress from a response, thereby introducing the term 'stressor' (Roupa et al., 2015; Dillard, 2019). According to Selye (1956), a stressor refers to "any factor (that) can cause stress and affect the balance of the individual" (as cited in Roupa et al., 2015; pp 46). The basic premise of the GAS model states that stress occurs within the human body and manifests by the release of hormones, this results in changes to the structure and chemical composition of the body (Roupa et al., 2015; Dillard, 2019; Lyon, 2000). Later, Selye proposed ideas on negative and positive stress (eustress) experiences that could be moderated by cognitive factors (Lyon, 2000). According to Leka et al. (2004), eustress is the pressure that is perceived as acceptable by an individual and can contribute to

keeping workers alert and motivated. However, Selye's theoretical premise has been criticized for assessing stress purely as an outcome and for not taking into account the role of psychological factors (such as meaning and appraisal); therefore, it was not possible to use the theory to account for psychological stress (Cunanan et al., 2018). Additionally, Selye's model assumed that responses to stress were uniform; however, later research suggests that not all individuals respond to stress in the same way (Roupa et al., 2015; Davenport et al., 2008; Matla, 2014).

As a response, psychologists in the 1960s began to apply the concept of stress to psychological experiences (Lyon, 2000). Holmes and Rahe (1967) began to study the effects of changes in life circumstances or events in an individual's life and developed the stimulus-based theory of stress (Sanders, 2019; Roupa et al., 2015; Lyon, 2000). Their theory proposed that positive and negative life changes (such as pregnancy, death, or divorce) are stimuli that are considered stressful (Roupa et al., 2015), thus making it an independent variable in research conducted on stress (Sanders, 2019; Lyon, 2000). Hence, the central premise of the model by Holmes and Rahe (1967) states that if individuals experience too many life changes too quickly, they will be more vulnerable to illness (as cited in Lyon, 2000). Later, the researchers added the person's interpretation of the life event to their theory, which could be either a positive or negative experience (Roupa et al., 2015). However, this theory tends to assume that individuals interact passively with stress and do not actively process stress (Sanders, 2019) whereas research evidence suggests that many employees are actively aware of the stress they experience and how it affects their lives (Matla, 2014; Johnson, 2015; Prilleltensky, Neff & Bessell, 2016)

It was Lazarus and Folkman (1984) who then developed the transactional theory of stress. This theory highlighted the fact that individuals interpret stress as a stimulus or as a response in different ways, hence previous theories on stress (such as those mentioned above) could not adequately explain why some individuals can manage stress better than others (Roupa et al., 2015). Lazarus emphasized the importance of cognitive factors (primary appraisal) - a person's subjective perception of the quality and nature of the stressful stimulus - and one's assessment of their resources and ability to cope or manage with a stressor (secondary appraisal) (Roupa et al., 2015; Dillard, 2019). Lazarus argued that individuals screen "potentially emotional experiences" by assessing the degree to which they believe they can minimize harm, or challenge behaviors that elicit stress (Dillard, 2019; pp. 27). In other words, stress consisted of a set of cognitive, affective, and coping factors (Lyon, 2000). Lazarus and Folkman's theory (1984) asserted that appraisal or self-evaluation comprised an integral role in how an individual reacts, behaves, and feels. The authors stated that the events that occur during appraisal determines an individual's emotions and coping behavior, making it a central premise of the transactional theory of stress (Roupa et al., 2015; Dillard, 2019; Lyon, 2000). However, critiques of the theory suggest a reliance on subjective experiences (appraisals) of an event as the cause of stress (Dillard, 2019).

Occupational stress occurs when there is a perceived imbalance between environmental demands and an individual's capabilities (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Employees experience stress when the demands at work exceed their adaptive responses. This research study focuses on Lazarus and Folkman's definition of stress. Hence, the transactional theory of stress can be applied to school educators and their experiences of stress

in the workplace as follows: stress results when educator's perceptions of the demands or the inability to meet those demands arise due to an absence of sufficient coping resources. The results are increasing threats to educators' physical and mental well-being (Johnson, 2015). The research conducted in this dissertation utilizes the stressor scales of the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) by Williams and Cooper (1996) to empirically measure the extent of which aspects of the work environment of public and private schools contribute to the levels of occupational stress experienced by the individuals working there, to determine whether there is a difference in the scores on occupational stress among public and private school educators in Durban.

Another essential concept in the transaction theory of stress by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) is the concept of coping. Coping is seen as a process, not merely a trait or an outcome, defined as efforts used by individuals to mediate or manage the perceived threat or stressful situation (seen as problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping) (Lyon, 2000). In problem-focused coping, the aim is to identify the problem, create alternative solutions, consider the costs and benefits of various actions, take actions, and, if possible, learn new skills (Dillard, 2019). Problem-focused coping can be directed externally to change some aspect of the environment or internally to change some aspect of the individual, to improve an unpleasant experience or reduce the effects of it (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Dillard, 2019).

Emotion-focused coping, on the other hand, are strategies and efforts aimed at decreasing the effects of stressful feelings and regulating emotions (Dillard, 2019; Roupa et al., 2015). Lazarus et al. (1986) described three ways in which positive emotions and

experiences influence coping by serving as breaks from stressful encounters, sustaining coping activity, and restoring depleted resources used in recovering from harm or loss. Emotion-focused coping includes strategies such as selective attention, avoidance, seeking social support, and venting emotions (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Ben-Zur, 2017). According to research (Dillard, 2019; Roupa et al., 2015), individuals use both forms of coping in almost every stressful situation. In this study, participants answered two open-ended questions where they were requested to discuss any activities or other ways with which they try to manage the stress they experience in the workplace as a means of coping. The aim was to determine the coping strategies of school educators.

3.5. Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter discussed the major theories and concepts related to the two constructs used in this study – job crafting and stress. Under this chapter, the development of the Job Crafting Theory was described by discussing the interpersonal sense-making model by Wrzesniewski et al., (2003), which highlighted how social support at work helps individuals create meaning in their work. Additionally, the job crafting model by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) and the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker (2010) was discussed, these models gave rise to the main concepts and theories around job crafting. Lastly, the theories and concepts of stress were discussed by looking at stress as a stimulus (Selye, 1956), stress as a response (Holmes & Rahe, 1967) and stress as a transaction (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). These are the main concepts and theories that have introduced, developed, and advanced research conducted in the areas of job crafting and occupational stress. Using these concepts and theories, the ensuing chapter looks at the methodology used to design,

conduct, and collect the research data for this study to meet the aims and fill in the research gaps identified.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHOD

4.1. Introduction to chapter

The following section will describe the research of this study and dissertation. A study's research methodology refers to the system of investigation used to study a particular phenomenon, and it involves shifting from the primary theoretical assumption to formulating a research design and collecting the data (Myers, 2009). Hence, methodology refers to the process of acquiring data and analyzing it and consists of logical steps needed to work towards the purpose of the research questions and objectives.

This chapter begins by explicitly describing the research design adopted in this study and the sample of participants that the study comprised. The data collection procedure used in this study will also be described in detail as well as the research instrument used to collect the data. The chapter concludes with a description of statistical procedures as well as ethical considerations adhered to while conducting this research. The purpose of this study is to compare the differences in the scores on job crafting (using the JCQ and JD-R scales) and levels of occupational stress (using the PMI scale) based on a sample of school teachers working in Durban, South Africa ($N=196$) with a specific focus on public school educators ($n = 110$) and private school educators ($n = 86$). This study also aims to compare and describe the differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ score based on the age of the participant. Additionally, this study seeks to determine whether there is a correlation between the PMI score and demographic differences (age, gender, and tenure) of employees for the two samples

of school educators and whether the JD-R score would make the most substantial contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

4.2. Research Design and Rationale

A research design consists of the method by which a researcher plans to go about addressing the research questions and objectives of the study - it specifies how the researcher intends on collecting the data, the resources needed, and the ethical guidelines to be followed (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). This research study adopts a non-experimental, quantitative research design. It is a comparative study that makes use of numerical data (or hard data) collected using a quantitative survey method. This approach is an effective way of collecting data and allows information on many cases to be examined at one point in time (Neuman, 2013). Quantitative methods establish relationships or connections between variables and constructs to test a hypothesis by analyzing and explaining how and when a particular phenomenon occurred (Pallant, 2013; Creswell, 2008).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a quantitative research study stresses the importance of neutrality and objectivity, depends on the principle of replication, adheres to standardized procedures, measures using numbers, and analyses the data using statistics (Pallant, 2013). This research design was selected not only to describe and examine the current job crafting behavior and occupational stress of school educators employed at public and private schools in Durban but also to compare these constructs and describe how they differ based on the different work environments of the sample.

4.3. Methodology

4.3.1. Sampling and sampling procedure

A sample refers to a small set of cases selected by a researcher from a population of participants, the data collected from a sample is examined, and the results are generalized to the entire population (Neuman, 2013). In this study, the sample comprised of participants from a population of public and private school educators employed in Durban using a non-probability sampling method.

Non-probability sampling involves the use of non-random methods in which elements (such as the participants) do not have an equal chance of being selected - the advantages of this sampling method are that it is a convenient and less complicated method to use that saves time, is cost-effective and less complicated than probability methods as the sample can be chosen in many ways (Neuman, 2013). However, the main disadvantage of using a non-probability sampling method is that the sample represents a less accurate proportion of the population. For the scale and purpose of this study, it was not possible to survey the entire population of school educators working in Durban; therefore, the non-probability sampling method was employed.

The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. Out of a possible 200 participants, 196 school educators participated. The public school sample ($n=110$) comprised mostly Indian (54.5%) and White (27.3%) school educators, with only a few African (16.4%) and Colored (1.8%) school educators. The majority of the public school sample were females (83.6%). Most of the public school sample were aged either 51 and older (34.5%) or between 31-40 (22.7%), between 20-30 (21.8%) and 41-50 (20.9%), respectively.

School educators in the public school sample held various degrees, with the majority of these participants having graduated with either a Bachelor's degree (40%) or postgraduate studies (38.2%) in their respective fields. Educators working in public schools had varying degrees of tenure in their establishment (as shown in Table 1), with most educators working for three years (11.6%), four years (9.3%), and fifteen years (9.3%). Some had been working at their respective teaching establishment for as long as twenty years (3.5%) and thirty-six years (1.2%).

The sample of private school educators ($n=86$) differed slightly. In this sample, the majority of the educators were predominantly White (45.3%) and Indian (40.7%). Most of the private school sample were also female (68.6%), while most of the educators were married (68.6%). In this sample, the majority of the educators comprised the 31-40 (31.4%) and 41-50 (25.6%) age groups. School educators in the private school also held various degrees, with the majority of the sample having completed either a Bachelor's degree (48.8%) or Postgraduate studies (38.4%).

Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of the sample demographics characteristics

Demographic characteristics	Total	Category	Public School (n=110)		Private school (n=86)	
			f	%	f	%
Age	N = 196					
		20-30	24	21.8	18	20.9
		31-40	25	22.7	27	31.4
		41-50	23	20.9	22	25.6
		51 and older	38	34.5	19	22.1
Gender	N = 196					
		Male	18	16.4	27	31.4
		Female	92	83.6	59	68.6
Marital Status	N = 196					
		Unmarried	23	20.9	17	19.8
		Married	74	67.3	59	68.6
		Divorced	9	8.2	8	9.3
		Widowed	4	3.6	0	0
		Other	0	0	2	2.3
Do you have any children?	N = 196					
		Yes	80	72.7	55	64
		No	30	27.3	31	36
Number of children	N = 196					
		0	32	29.1	32	37.2
		1	21	19.1	10	11.6
		2	38	34.5	30	34.9
		3	16	14.5	12	14
		4	3	2.7	2	2.3
Race	N = 196					
		White	30	27.3	39	45.3
		African	18	16.4	9	10.5
		Colored	2	1.8	3	3.5
		Indian	60	54.5	35	40.7
		Other	0	0	0	0
Educational status	N = 196					
		Diploma	11	10	6	7
		Higher Certificate	9	8.2	4	4.7
		Bachelors	44	40	42	48.8
		Postgraduate studies	42	38.2	33	38.4
		Other	4	3.6	1	1.2

4.3.2. Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

For the data collection process, gatekeepers at various schools were contacted via email and through telephonic conversations to make appointments to meet with the principals or deputy principals. Afterward, various face-to-face meetings were held with either the principals or deputy principals at four private schools and eight public schools to discuss the purpose of the study and seek permission to conduct the study at the relevant schools. Most of the principals seemed keen but wanted to speak with the staff before they gave their consent to participate.

Out of a possible fifteen schools contacted, eleven schools showed a keen interest and granted permission to conduct the study at their teaching institution. Written permission to conduct the study (included as Appendix C) was obtained from the principals of each school. Staff members were required to fill out a short questionnaire (included in Appendix B) on the school premises during their morning briefings, during staff breaks or after work hours, and the data collected shortly after. The gatekeepers were responsible for distributing the questionnaires to the staff members and for collecting them after a period of two to three weeks. Each participant was required to sign an informed consent form (included as Appendix B) before participating in the study while ensuring the anonymity of each participant and their privacy. The identity of the schools and the participants were kept confidential and was not published in the research findings. The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal gave ethical clearance for the study to be conducted (protocol reference no: HSS/0613/018M, included in Appendix A).

4.4. Research instrument

This study made use of a quantitative survey method. The core ideas and central constructs relating to the research topic were identified and the key factors highlighted in the questionnaire (refer to Appendix B). The questionnaire comprised of three main sections.

4.4.1. Section A

Section A of the questionnaire comprised of biographical data.

4.4.1.1. Biographical data

This section comprised various items used to determine the demographics of the sample. Participants answered a series of categorical items pertaining to age, gender, race (e.g., “how would you classify yourself”), number of years of employment, whether they work overtime (e.g., “do you work extra hours”). Participants were also asked to indicate the reason they worked extra hours (e.g., “expected to, through choice, to get the job done”).

4.4.2. Section B

Section B comprised of The Job Crafting Questionnaire (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013) and the Job Demands-Resources model (Tims & Bakker, 2010).

4.4.2.1. The Job Crafting Questionnaire (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013)

Part 1 of this section comprised of the Job Crafting Questionnaire by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013) which is a six-point rating scale consisting of fifteen items with ratings ranging from (1) Hardly Ever to (6) Very Often (with 'Very Often' representing as often as possible in the workplace). The scale items rate different characteristics such as task crafting (items 1-5 such as “give preference to work tasks that suit your skills or interests”), cognitive

crafting (items 6-10 such as “think about how your job gives your life purpose”), and relational crafting (items 11-15 such as “make an effort to get to know people well at work”) which indicate the various processes through which employees may take active roles in determining their experience at work (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013). Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013) obtained a Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 for the fifteen items on job crafting, which is well above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Pallant, 2013).

4.4.2.2. The Job Demands-Resources model (Tims & Bakker, 2010)

The second part of Section B comprised a table made up of twenty items taken from the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker (2010). This scale comprises twenty-one items which frame the way employees might change their levels of job demands and job resources to suit their abilities and preferences (e.g., “I use the skills I learn at work for personal tasks”), one item was left out in the construction of the questionnaire for this research study due to it being less suited to the current sample. The table was presented in the form of a Likert Scale with options ranging from (1) Never to (5) Very Frequently. Tims, Derks, and Bakker (2010) established internal consistency values ranging from 0.75-0.82 for the twenty-one items of the Job Demands-Resources model, which is well above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Pallant, 2013).

4.4.3. Section C

Section C comprised a table made up of twenty items taken from the stressor scales of the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) by Williams and Cooper (1996).

Participants were asked to describe the ways they attempt to cope with the stress they experience in the workplace in the form of an open-ended question (e.g., “please describe the activities that you engage in to reduce and cope with the stress you experience at work”). Many of the participants answered this question with detail.

4.4.3.1. The Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1996)

The Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) by Williams and Cooper (1996) was used to measure the characteristics of the work environment that cause educators to experience stress in the workplace. The table was presented in the form of a Likert Scale with options ranging from (1) Definitely not a source to (4) Definitely is a source. Williams and Cooper (1996) presented the PMI as a shorter and comprehensive way to measure occupational stress; their study established internal consistency values ranging from 0.64-0.89 for all the items of the Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1996).

4.5. Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 25). Data obtained from the research instrument were cleaned, and the data entered onto an Excel 2016 spreadsheet before being transferred to the SPSS program. Various descriptive and inferential procedures were conducted on the three scales and for the demographic data to address the research problems and hypotheses (such as frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, Cronbach alphas, means, skewness, and kurtosis). An overview of each of the analyses and its purpose will be outlined below.

4.5.1. Descriptive and inferential statistics

Descriptive statistics quantitatively summarize data collected from a sample, while inferential statistics use this descriptive analysis to make generalizations and estimates about a population from the sample (Neuman, 2013). The descriptive statistics of the sample were computed in the form of frequencies (f) (the number of observations) and percentages (%) for: (1) the demographic (biological) data, (2) the Job Demands-Resources model, (3) the Job Crafting Questionnaire, and (4) the Pressure Management Indicator. Descriptive statistics consist of the mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, frequency, percentage, skewness, and kurtosis values for a particular data set.

In order to summarize the information about a variable into a single number, measures of central tendency are used; there are three measures of central tendency, which are the mean, median, and mode. To define these briefly, the mean score (M) of a sample is a measure of central tendency and represents the arithmetic average of the distribution of scores, and it is the most commonly used measure of central tendency (single numbers that summarize a collection of scores) (Neuman, 2013). The mode is the most common or frequently occurring number, and the median is the middle point of the distribution of scores (in other words, the point at which half the cases are above and half below it) (Neuman, 2013).

All three measures of central tendency will be equal to each other if the frequency distribution produces a bell-shaped distribution (Neuman, 2013). A skewed distribution would imply that most of the cases are either in the upper scores (this means the distribution is negatively skewed and the scores fall toward the higher side of the scale, there are very few low scores) or lower scores (this means the distribution is positively skewed and the scores

fall toward the lower side of the scale, there are very few high scores) and the three measures of central tendency will not be equal (Neuman, 2013).

The means and standard deviations for the demographic data and the three scales were computed. The standard deviation score (*SD*) is a measure of variability or dispersion and represents the average by which scores cluster around the mean. The minimum in a data set refers to the lowest score in a data set, and maximum refers to the highest score in a data set. Kurtosis refers to the degree of "peakedness" of a distribution of scores and describes the shape of a distribution's tail in relation to its overall shape (Neuman, 2013; Pallant, 2013).

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (α) was computed to assess the reliability (or internal consistency) of the scale scores. According to Pallant (2013), internal consistency values of 0.70 and above are acceptable, while values 0.80 and above are usually preferable. As presented below in Table 2, the three scales surpass the desired reliability level of 0.80. Therefore, these can be considered as reliable measures of job crafting and occupational stress, respectively.

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha values for the population sample (N=196).

	No. of items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α
JCQ Scale	15	68.76	8.477	0.816
JD-R Scale	20	80.418	7.951	0.832
PMI Scale	20	53.148	13.061	0.934

4.5.2. Statistical tests of difference

An Independent samples *t*-test was used to assess how the job crafting behavior and the occupational stress variables differed for the sample of public school educators and private

school educators. This method was employed to indicate whether there were any significant differences between the mean score of the public school educators compared to that of the private school sample on the job crafting behavior variable. The procedure was repeated for the occupational stress variable. A *t*-test value where $p < 0.05$ indicated a significant difference between the variables among both samples of educators.

A One-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare how the three scale scores (PMI, JD-R, and JCQ) differed among the four age group categories based on each sample of school educators. The ANOVA (*F* test) was used to compare the mean scores of two or more groups on a continuous variable by comparing one independent variable to your dependent variable. Hence, the ANOVA method used in this study indicated whether there were any significant differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ scores among the four age group categories (Pallant, 2013). Post-hoc analysis using Tukeys HSD allowed the researcher to determine which groups were significantly different from one another. An ANOVA value (*F* value) where $p < 0.05$ indicated that there was a significant difference among the four age group categories for private school educators compared to public school educators (Pallant, 2013).

4.5.3. Statistical techniques to explore relationships between variables

The statistical relationship between the variables (the PMI score and demographic differences) was examined using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient (*r*) represents the linear correlation between two variables and describes the direction and strength of a relationship between two variables. In this study, the objectives were to determine the correlation between work stress and the participants'

demographic variables. This study proposed the following hypotheses: H₀ 2a determined the relationship between the PMI score and age; H₀ 2b determined the relationship between the PMI score and gender, and H₀ 2c determined the relationship between the PMI score and tenure. The correlation coefficient (r) within a range of -1 to +1 indicated that the direction of the relationship that can be either positive or negative (Pallant, 2013). According to Pallant (2013), the strength of a relationship could be interpreted as either small (0.01 to 0.29), moderate (0.30 to 0.49), or large (0.50 to 1.0) (Neuman, 2013).

Hypothesis 3 proposed that the JD-R score would make a significant prediction of total stress (the PMI score). To test this hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis technique was employed. The standard multiple regression consisted of several techniques used to explore which variable in a set of variables was the best predictor of a particular outcome. The R Square (R^2) value told the researcher about the variance in the dependent variable (PMI score) explained by the model (which includes the JCQ and the JD-R scores). It was expressed as a percentage (multiply the R^2 value by 100). The researcher then reported the beta values, a beta value of $p < 0.05$ indicated which independent variable (the JCQ or JD-R score) made the strongest contribution to explaining the dependent variable (the PMI score) when all other variables in the model were controlled for (Pallant, 2013).

4.6. Ethical Procedures

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal specifies in their ethics code that individuals conducting research should inform their participants about the purpose, research, and goal of the study and obtain participants informed consent before initiating any research study. An application to The

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal was submitted. The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal gave full ethical clearance for this study to be conducted (protocol reference no: HSS/0613/018M, see Appendix A). The following sections will outline the steps taken to collect the data ethically as prescribed by the committee.

4.6.1. Informed Consent

Before commencing, the consent of the participant needs to be obtained by the researcher before participation in the study and before research can take place. The researcher is required to specify the aims, purpose, and benefit of the research - these should be written in the consent form. Participants should not be coerced or lured to participate in the research with the prospects of incentives. Any concerns expressed by the participants need to be addressed at the outset, and it should be clearly stated as to why they are participating in the research project. This is in line with the ethics code stipulated by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. The participant's rights should be outlined clearly that participation in the research is voluntary, and they have the choice of not participating in the research study.

The participants needed to sign an informed consent form before completing the survey which included an information sheet explaining the aim of the study and the purpose for collecting the data, it also included the contact details of the researcher, supervisor and HSSREC administrator should the participants have any queries (please refer to Appendix B). The informed consent document stipulated that participation in the study was voluntary and that the participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were

assured that their privacy and confidentiality of their responses would be ensured at all times. This is in line with the ethics code stipulated by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. This study did not require any information from young children, marginalized or underrepresented groups to be collected as these are considered vulnerable populations. This study ensured that all participants were protected from harm, and their privacy and confidentiality of information were respected.

4.6.2. Privacy and confidentiality of the participants

Participants need to be assured that all information collected from them will be treated as confidential, that anonymity will be ensured and that the data will be destroyed in the case of the participant withdrawing from the study. The limits to confidentiality should also be explained to the participant, such as data coding, sharing, and archiving, and when confidentiality must be broken.

All information collected by the survey regarding the sample of participants shall remain private and confidential at all times. Any personal or sensitive information that would identify the participants or their work institutions was excluded from the study. Participation was voluntary, and participants were assured that no physical, legal, economic, or psychological harm would result from the study. Participants were given the choice of not participating in the study. The actual data (hard copies of the surveys) will be kept in secured premises for a prescribed duration of five years and afterward destroyed either through shredding or incineration.

4.6.3. Permission from gatekeepers

If access to a study population is required, the researcher needs to contact and seek permission to use the facility and gain access to staff members via specific gatekeepers of the respective establishments. To gain access to possible participants for this study, and the distribution and collection of the data, various gatekeepers' permission was sought. A signed letter (see Appendix C) was obtained from the various gatekeepers indicating permission to conduct research and collect data from their teaching establishments.

4.7. Summary of chapter

Chapter four outlined the research methodology used in this study. In summary, this study adopted an empirical research design and applies the principles defined by survey research. Hence, a quantitative survey design was applied to gather the data. The sample used in this study consisted of public school educators ($n=110$) and private school educators ($n=86$) employed in the Durban area.

To collect the data, a quantitative survey was distributed to various schools in the Durban area. Gatekeeper's permission from the various teaching institutions was sought and granted; afterward, the data for the study collected. The nature and purpose of the study were described to all participants before the commencement of this study, and all participants were required to sign an informed consent form, which clarified that participation was voluntary and all information will be kept private and confidential. Ethical clearance for this research study was granted by the HSSREC of UKZN (protocol reference no: HSS/0613/018M, see Appendix A). This chapter also described the methods used to analyze the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25).

Descriptive and inferential statistics (such as means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis, and Cronbach's alpha) for the scales and demographic data will be measured; these statistics are used to summarize a set of data while also enables the researcher to make generalizations about a population from the sample. To assess how the job crafting behavior and the occupational stress variables would differ for both samples of educators, an Independent sample t-test was conducted. To assess how the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ scores differ among the age groups, a One-way between groups ANOVA was conducted. To assess the relationship between the PMI score and the demographic variables of employees, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used. A standard multiple regression analysis will be used to assess whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score). The ensuing chapter presents a complete report of the research results obtained in this study.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained in the study from a statistical analysis of the research data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25) was used to conduct various data analyses. This chapter is structured according to the data analyses proposed, and the results are presented under each heading. The descriptive analysis of the participant's demographics and the statistical tests of difference, namely, the Independent samples t-test and ANOVA tests of difference, will be presented. Afterward, the multiple regression and Pearson product-moment correlation analysis will be presented. Finally, a summary of the chapter will be presented.

5.2. Descriptive analysis

5.2.1. Background and characteristics of participants

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample. The total sample in this study ($N=196$) consisted of female (77%) and male participants (23%). The majority of the sample was either between the ages of 31-40 (26.5%) or 51 and over (29.1%). Most participants were married (67.9%) or unmarried (20.4%), while 8.7% and 2% were divorced or widowed, respectively. There was a broad diversity of participants in this study, with the majority of the sample being predominantly Indian (48.5%), White (35.2%), and African (13.8%), only 2.6% of the sample was Colored. Overall all the participants had differing levels of education with most participants holding a Bachelor's degree (43.9%) or having completed

Postgraduate studies (38.3%), whereas 8.7% of the sample had completed a Diploma and 6.6% had completed a Higher Certificate in their designated field of study.

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of demographic characteristics for the population sample (N=196).

Demographic characteristics	Category	f	%
Age		196	100
	20-30	42	21.4
	31-40	52	26.5
	41-50	45	23.0
	51 and older	57	29.1
Gender		196	100
	Male	45	23.0
	Female	151	77.0
Marital Status		196	100
	Unmarried	40	20.4
	Married	133	67.9
	Divorced	17	8.7
	Widowed	4	2.0
	Other	2	1.0
Do you have any children?		196	100
	Yes	135	68.9
	No	61	31.1
Number of children		196	100
	0	64	32.7
	1	31	15.8
	2	68	34.7
	3	28	14.3
	4	5	2.6
Race		196	100
	White	69	35.2
	African	27	13.8
	Colored	5	2.6
	Indian	95	48.5
	Other	0	0
Educational status		196	100
	Diploma	17	8.7
	Higher Certificate	13	6.6
	Bachelors	86	43.9
	Postgraduate studies	75	38.3
	Other	5	2.6

Table 4. Descriptive statistics table showing tenure and overtime worked.

Characteristic	Category	Total (N=196)		Public School (n=110)		Private school (n=86)	
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Tenure							
	1-5 years	60	30.5	25	22.6	35	40.6
	6-10 years	43	22	20	18.2	23	26.8
	11-15 years	36	18.3	18	16.4	18	21.1
	16-20 years	27	13.7	21	19.1	6	7
	21-25 years	13	6.5	10	9	3	3.5
	26-30 years	10	5.1	10	9	0	0
	31-35 years	5	2.5	5	4.5	0	0
	36-40 years	2	1	1	0.9	1	1.2
Do you work overtime?							
	Yes	164	83.7	90	81.8	74	86.0
	No	32	16.3	20	18.2	12	14.0
Reason for working overtime							
	No overtime worked	20	10.2	15	13.6	5	5.8
	Through Choice	27	13.8	16	14.5	11	12.8
	Expected to	52	26.5	21	19.1	31	36.0
	To get the job done	97	49.5	58	52.7	39	45.3

5.2.2. Descriptive analysis of scale scores for the job crafting and occupational stress variables

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of the scales used in this study. Information on the number (*N*), items, minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis are provided for the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ), the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) and Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) scales. The scores of the three measures are distributed normally, according to Table 3. The low skewness scores on the JCQ, JD-R, and PMI indicate that the sample data for job crafting and occupational stress are approximately symmetric but slightly skewed to the left (Neuman, 2013).

The descriptive statistics in Table 4 indicates that public school sample scored higher ($M = 69.56$, $SD = 8.42$) on the JCQ scale as compared to the private school sample ($M = 67.73$, $SD = 8.48$). The private school sample scored slightly higher on the JD-R scale ($M = 80.43$, $SD = 8.10$) as compared to the public school sample ($M = 80.41$, $SD = 7.86$). The private school sample also scored higher on the PMI scale ($M = 53.42$, $SD = 12.58$) as compared to the public school sample ($M = 52.94$, $SD = 13.48$).

Table 5. Descriptive analysis of JCQ, JD-R, and PMI Scales for the job crafting and occupational stress variables.

Variables	<i>N</i>	Items	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Job Crafting								
JCQ Scale	196	15	44.00	90.00	68.760	8.477	- 0.271	0.318
Public school sample	110		46.00	85.00	69.563	8.422	- 0.313	0.075
Private school sample	86		44.00	90.00	67.733	8.484	- 0.229	0.773
JD-R Scale	196	20	58.00	99.00	80.418	7.951	- 0.136	- 0.218
Public school	110		62.00	97.00	80.409	7.864	- 0.156	- 0.621
Private school	86		58.00	99.00	80.430	8.107	- 0.114	0.297
Occupational Stress								
PMI	196	20	22.00	78.00	53.148	13.060	- 0.398	- 0.571
Public school	110		22.00	78.00	52.936	13.477	- 0.398	- 0.559
Private school	86		23.00	78.00	53.419	12.580	- 0.396	- 0.590

Note. JCQ=Job Crafting Questionnaire; JD-R=Job Demands-Resources model; PMI=Pressure Management Indicator

5.3. Independent-Samples *t*-test

5.3.1. Differences among the job crafting variable

To determine and describe the differences in job crafting behavior between the private school sample ($n=86$) and the public school sample ($n=110$), the following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1a: There is no significant difference in job crafting behavior for public school educators as compared to private school educators.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if engaging in job crafting depended on the type of school (either public or private) an educator worked in. Analysis of the results (presented in Table 5.1 and 5.2.) indicates that there was no significant difference in the JCQ scores of public school educators ($M = 69.56, SD = 8.42$) and private school educators ($M = 67.73, SD = 8.48$); $t(194) = 1.51, p > 0.05$. Hence Hypothesis 1a was accepted.

Analysis of the results (presented in Table 6.1. and 6.2.) indicates that there was no significant difference in the JD-R scores of public school educators ($M=80.41, SD=7.86$) and private school educators ($M=80.43, SD=8.11$); $t(194) = - 0.02, p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1a was accepted.

Table 6. Group statistics for the JCQ scale and JD-R scale.

	Type of school	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error Mean
Total JCQ	Public school	110	69.564	8.422	0.803
	Private school	86	67.733	8.484	0.912
Total JD_R	Public school	110	80.409	7.863	0.750
	Private school	86	80.430	8.107	0.874

Note. JCQ=Job Crafting Questionnaire; JD-R=Job Demands-Resources model

Table 7. Independent samples t-test for the job crafting variable on the JCQ scale and JD-R scale.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total JCQ score	Equal variances assumed	0.324	0.570	1.506	194	0.134	1.831	1.216	-0.567	4.230
	Equal variances not assumed			1.504	182.12	0.134	1.831	1.217	-0.571	4.233
Total JD-R score	Equal variances assumed	0.162	0.688	-0.018	194	0.985	-0.021	1.147	-2.284	2.242
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.018	180.06	0.985	-0.021	1.152	-2.294	2.251

Note. JCQ=Job Crafting Questionnaire; JD-R=Job Demands-Resources model

5.3.2. Differences among the occupational stress variable

To determine and describe the differences in the levels of occupational stress experienced by public school educators ($n=110$) and private school educators ($n=86$), the following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1b: There is no significant difference in the levels of occupational stress experienced in the workplace for public school educators and private school educators.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if levels of occupational stress differed with the type of school (either public or private) an educator worked. Analysis of the results indicated that there was no significant difference in the levels of occupational stress experienced by the public school sample ($M=52.94$, $SD=13.48$) and the private school sample ($M=53.42$, $SD=12.58$); $t(194) = -0.26$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1b was accepted.

Table 8.1. Group statistics for the PMI scale

	Type of school	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error Mean
Total PMI	Public school	110	52.936	13.477	1.285
	Private school	86	53.419	12.581	1.357

Note. PMI=Pressure Management Indicator

Table 8.2. Independent samples t-test for the occupational stress variable

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total PMI score	Equal variances assumed	0.680	0.411	-0.256	194	0.798	-0.482	1.884	-4.199	3.234
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.258	187.96	0.797	-0.482	1.869	-4.168	3.204

Note. Pressure Management Indicator

5.4. ANOVA results

A One-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were any differences in the scale scores (PMI score, JCQ score, and the JD-R score) based on the age of the participants for the two samples. The following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1c: there is no significant difference in the scale scores (PMI, JD-R, and JCQ) among the four different age group categories.

The results obtained were as follows.

5.4.1. Differences between occupational stress (PMI score) age of the participant

Public school sample (*n* = 110):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.064) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 31-40 age group ($M = 56.16$; $SD = 10.32$) exhibited more occupational stress compared to the other three age groups. The 45-50 age group mean ($M = 54.00$; $SD = 12.96$) on occupational stress (PMI score) was significantly higher than the 20-30 age group ($M = 50.42$; $SD = 14.87$) and the 51 and over age group ($M = 51.76$; $SD = 14.68$).

The ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the PMI score on occupational stress and age of the participant: $F(3, 106) = 0.898$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample.

Private school sample ($n = 86$):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.936) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 20-30 age group ($M = 57.83$; $SD = 13.09$) exhibited more occupational stress compared to the other age groups. The 31-40 age group mean ($M = 55.15$; $SD = 12.41$) on the PMI score was higher than the 41-50 age group ($M = 53.00$; $SD = 12.27$) and the 51 and over age group ($M = 47.26$; $SD = 11.10$).

The ANOVA showed that there was no significant difference in the PMI score on occupational stress among the four age groups: $F(3, 82) = 2.57$, $p > 0.05$. However, after conducting a Post hoc test (using Tukey HSD), it was revealed that the mean score for the 20-30 age group ($M = 57.83$; $SD = 13.09$) was significantly different from the 51 and over age

group ($M = 47.26$; $SD = 11.10$), $p = 0.05$. There was no significant difference between the 20-30, 31-40, and 40-50 age groups. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was rejected for this sample.

Table 9.1. ANOVA results for the PMI score for the two samples.

Age of participant	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Public school (n = 110)					
Between Groups	490.493	3	163.498	0.898	0.445
Within Groups	19308.062	106	182.152		
Total	19798.555	109			
Private school (n = 86)					
Between Groups	1155.339	3	385.113	2.568	0.060
Within Groups	12297.592	82	149.971		
Total	1342.930	85			

5.4.2. Differences between the JD-R score and age of the participants

Public school sample (n = 110):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.390) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 20-30 age group ($M = 81.17$; $SD = 8.75$) exhibited more job crafting compared to the other three age groups. The 51 and over age group mean ($M = 80.74$; $SD = 7.13$) on the JD-R score was significantly higher than the 31-40 age group ($M = 79.60$; $SD = 7.15$) and the 41-50 age group ($M = 79.96$; $SD = 9.13$).

The ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the JD-R score on job crafting and age of the participant: $F(3, 106) = 0.21$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample.

Private school sample ($n = 86$):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.304) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 20-30 age group ($M = 82.78$; $SD = 8.90$) exhibited more job crafting compared to the other age groups. The 31-40 age group mean ($M = 80.19$; $SD = 6.94$) on the JD-R score was higher than the 41-50 age group ($M = 79.41$; $SD = 6.68$) and the 51 and over age group ($M = 79.74$; $SD = 10.32$).

The ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the JD-R score and age of the participant: $F(3, 82) = 0.67$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample.

Table 9.2. ANOVA results for the JD-R score for the two samples.

Age of participant	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Public school (n = 110)					
Between Groups	38.933	3	12.978	0.205	0.893
Within Groups	6701.658	106	63.223		
Total	6740.591	109			
Private school (n = 86)					
Between Groups	132.894	3	44.298	0.666	0.575
Within Groups	5454.188	82	66.514		
Total	5587.081	85			

5.4.3. The JCQ score and age of the participants

Public school sample ($n = 110$):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.271) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly

similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 51 and over age group ($M = 71.37$; $SD = 8.75$) exhibited more job crafting behavior compared to the other three age groups. The 41-50 age group mean ($M = 69.87$; $SD = 9.93$) on the JCQ score was significantly higher than the 31-40 age group ($M = 67.16$; $SD = 7.71$) and the 20-30 age group ($M = 68.92$; $SD = 6.65$). The ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the JCQ score on job crafting and age of the participant: $F(3, 106) = 1.33, p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample.

Private school sample ($n = 86$):

The assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated as the sig. value of Levene's test (0.713) was greater than $p = 0.05$. This study concluded that variances are fairly similar. The descriptive statistics indicate that the 51 and over age group ($M = 69.79$; $SD = 9.54$) exhibited more job crafting behavior compared to the other age groups. The 20-30 age group mean ($M = 69.17$; $SD = 7.44$) on the JCQ score was higher than the 31-40 age group ($M = 65.85$; $SD = 7.34$) and the 41-50 age group ($M = 67.09$; $SD = 9.54$).

The ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the JD-R score and age of the participant: $F(3, 82) = 1.03, p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample.

Table 9.3. ANOVA results for the JCQ score for the two samples.

Age of participant	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Public school (n = 110)					
Between Groups	280.410	3	12.978	1.330	0.269
Within groups	7450.644	106	63.223		
Total	7731.055	109			
Private school (n = 86)					
Between Groups	221.965	3	73.988	1.029	0.384
Within Groups	5896.883	82	71.913		
Total	6118.849	85			

5.5. Pearson r correlation co-efficient

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was conducted to determine if a linear relationship exists between the biographical variables, gender, age, and tenure with occupational stress. The following hypotheses were proposed:

H₀ 2a: there is no significant relationship between the PMI score and age for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2b: there is no significant relationship between the PMI score and gender for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2c: there is no significant relationship between the PMI score and tenure for the sample of public and private school educators.

The results for the sample of public school educators and the sample of private school educators are presented below:

5.5.1. Correlations between demographic variables and occupational stress (public school sample)

The relationship between age, gender, tenure of employees with levels of occupational stress was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient. The results for the public school sample did not reveal a significant correlation between the age of an employee and the PMI score on occupational stress, $r(110) = -0.002$; $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 2a was accepted for this sample.

There was no significant correlation between gender and the PMI score, $r(110) = -0.01$; $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 2b was accepted for this sample.

Lastly, there was no significant correlation between tenure of employees and the PMI score on occupational stress, $r(110) = 0.02$; $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 2c was accepted for the sample of public school educators.

Table 10.1. Pearson product-moment correlations among the public school sample's (n=110) job crafting and occupational stress scores.

	1	2	3	4
1. Total PMI score	-			
2. Age	- 0.002	-		
3. Gender	- 0.013	- 0.015	-	
4. Tenure	0.020	0.780**	- 0.094	-

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

5.5.2. Correlations between demographic variables and occupational stress (private school sample)

The relationship between age, gender, tenure of employees with the PMI score was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient. The results for the public school sample revealed a significantly small negative correlation between the age of an employee and the PMI score, $r(86) = -0.29$; $p < 0.01$. Hence, Hypothesis 2a was rejected for this sample.

There was no significant correlation between gender and the PMI score on occupational stress, $r(86) = 0.12$; $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 2b was accepted for this sample. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between tenure and the PMI score on occupational stress, $r(86) = -0.09$; $p > 0.05$. Hence, Hypothesis 2c was accepted for this sample.

Table 10.2. Pearson correlations among the private school sample's (n=86) job crafting and occupational scores

	1	2	3	4
1. Total PMI score	-			
2. Age	-0.285**	-		
3. Gender	0.115	-0.305**	-	
4. Tenure	-0.089	0.588**	-0.083	-

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

5.6. Standard Multiple regression

5.6.1. Public school educators sample

To determine whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score), a standard multiple regression analysis was used.

The following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 3: In the presence of the others, there will be no significant prediction of total stress (PMI score) by the JD-R score.

To test Hypothesis 3, a standard multiple regression analysis was used. The results revealed that the JD-R and JCQ score explains 3.9% of the variance in occupational stress (PMI score) ($R^2 = 0.039$). The JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the variance in the PMI score ($\beta = -0.204, p > 0.05$). Similarly, the JCQ score did not make a significant contribution to the variance in the PMI score ($\beta = 0.018, p > 0.05$). Hence, Hypothesis 3 was rejected for the public school sample.

Table 11.1 Multiple Regression Correlations among the public school sample (n =110).

		Total PMI	Total JD-R	Total JCQ
Pearson Correlation	Total PMI	1.000	- 0.196	- 0.075
	Total JD-R	- 0.196	1.000	0.456
	Total JCQ	- 0.075	0.456	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Total PMI	.	0.020	0.219
	Total JD-R	0.020	.	0.000
	Total JCQ	0.219	0.000	.
N	Total PMI	110	110	110
	Total JD-R	110	110	110
	Total JCQ	110	110	110

Table 11.2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.197	0.039	0.021	13.337

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total JCQ, Total JD-R

b. Dependent Variable: Total PMI

Table 11.3. Table showing coefficients of multiple regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		Collinearity Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	79.055	14.104		5.605	0.000	51.095	107.015					
	TOTAL JD-R	-0.350	0.182		-1.919	0.058	-0.712	0.012	-0.196	-0.182	-0.182	0.792	1.262
	TOTAL JCQ	0.029	0.170		0.172	0.863	-0.308	0.367	-0.075	0.017	0.016	0.792	1.262

a. Dependent Variable: Total PMI

5.6.2. Private school sample

To test Hypothesis 3 that the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution out of the two job crafting scales to the unique variance in total stress (PMI), a standard multiple regression analysis was used. The results revealed that the JD-R and JCQ score explains 0.4% of the variance in occupational stress (PMI score) ($R^2 = 0.004$). The JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the variance in the PMI score (beta = 0.09, $p > 0.05$). Similarly, the JCQ score did not make a significant contribution to the variance in the PMI score (beta = -0.06, $p > 0.05$). Hence, Hypothesis 3 was rejected for the sample of private school educators.

Table 12.1 Multiple Regression Correlations among the private school sample ($n = 86$).

		Total PMI	Total JCQ	Total JD-R
Pearson Correlation	Total PMI	1.000	0.001	0.051
	Total JCQ	0.001	1.000	0.651
	Total JD-R	0.051	0.651	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Total PMI	.	0.495	0.320
	Total JCQ	0.495	.	0.000
	Total JD-R	0.320	0.000	.
N	Total PMI	86	86	86
	Total JD-R	86	86	86
	Total JCQ	86	86	86

Table 12.2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.066	0.004	- 0.020	12.703

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total JCQ, Total JD-R

b. Dependent Variable: Total PMI

Table 12.3. Table showing coefficients of multiple regression analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		Collinearity Statistics			
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	48.099	14.012		3.433	0.001	20.229	75.969						
	TOTAL JCQ	-0.083	0.214	- 0.056	- 0.386	0.701	- 0.508	0.343	0.001	- 0.042	- 0.042	0.576	1.737	
	TOTAL JD-R	0.136	0.224	0.087	0.606	0.546	- 0.310	0.581	0.051	0.066	0.066	0.576	1.737	

a. Dependent Variable: Total PMI

5.7. Summary of Chapter Five

This chapter reported the research results of this study. Firstly, the descriptive statistics for the sample on the three scales (the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ), the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) and the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI)) were presented.

Secondly, the chapter presented the analysis of results using an Independent sample *t*-test to study Hypothesis 1a and 1b. A One-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to test Hypothesis 1c. Thirdly, the Pearson product-moment results were presented, and lastly, the standard multiple regression results were presented for the private school sample and the public school sample. The following chapter (Chapter 5) presents a detailed discussion based on the analysis of results obtained in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1. Introduction to the chapter

This chapter will provide an evaluation of the findings obtained based on the aims and hypotheses of this study to seek consensus with the present findings or differences encountered in this sample. Each hypothesis will be presented, and the findings thereof conceptualized to describe and compare the sample of public school educators to the sample of private school educators. The research results are described in connection to prior research and theoretical conceptualizations established in the fields of job crafting and occupational stress.

The purpose of this study was to compare the differences in the scores on job crafting (using the JCQ and JD-R scales) and levels of occupational stress (using the PMI scale) among public school educators ($n = 110$) and private school educators ($n = 86$) using an Independent samples t -test. This study also aimed to compare and describe the differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ score based on the age of the participant using a One-way between groups ANOVA. Additionally, this study aimed to determine whether there was a correlation between the PMI score and demographic differences (specifically looking at the age, gender, and tenure) of employees for the two samples of school educators using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score) using a standard multiple regression analysis. The constructs measured in this research study was occupational stress [using the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI scale)] and job crafting [using the Job

Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ scale), the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R scale)], these were described in detail in Chapter Two and Three. The type of school (either public or private school) in which participants were employed was included in this study to determine whether this had any effect on the JD-R and JCQ scores on job crafting and the PMI score on levels of occupational stress. The scales adapted to this study were all reliable, which is in line with prior research in the field. A comprehensive discussion of the research results follows.

6.2. Differences among the samples

6.2.1. Differences in the scores on job crafting

The purpose of this study was to compare the job crafting behavior of public school educators and private school educators working in Durban, South Africa. To determine if there were any differences amongst the public and private school samples, the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ) and the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R) was utilized. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the JCQ by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013) measures the extent to which school educators engage in cognitive, task and relational crafting (which are essential components of job crafting behavior) whereas the JD-R model by Tims and Bakker (2010) measures the extent to which employees might change their levels of job demands and job resources to suit their abilities and preferences. Based on the above definitions, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1a: There is no significant difference in the scores on job crafting behavior for public school educators as compared to private school educators.

To test this hypothesis and describe the differences in job crafting behavior scores among public and private school educators, an Independent-samples *t*-test (also known as a

statistical test of difference) was used. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the *t*-test value indicates whether there are any significant differences between the mean score of the private school educators ($n=86$) compared to that of the public school sample ($n=110$) on the job crafting variable. Results obtained from the Independent-samples *t*-test analysis indicated that there were no significant differences among the two groups on the JCQ and JD-R score; hence, Hypothesis 1a was accepted.

The teaching background in post-apartheid South Africa is continuously changing with new rules and policies being enforced regularly, which changes the structures of schools and the customs of dealing with discipline (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). Additionally, educators must continuously seek ways to deal with a greater workload, such as additional administration work and severe disciplinary problems (Paulse, 2005). This places a considerable amount of pressure on employees working in a school environment; however, it did not affect the job crafting opportunities presented to this sample. This is due to the specific nature of an educator's job and the circumstances that they face daily while at work. For example, an educator's work focuses on acquiring and transferring knowledge and skills to learners (irrespective of the type of school they teach in). Hence, both samples valued/rated items on job crafting quite similarly (there were no significant differences between the two samples) (Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016). Hence, the school educators in this sample experienced more autonomy, affording them more opportunities to apply job crafting techniques in their workplace. Hence, Hypothesis 1a can be accepted.

Job crafting is initiated by employees (rather than management), it involves a method of proactive behavior at work and reflects an employee's efforts to make a job better fit his or

her preferences and competencies (Leana et al., 2009). According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), employees often customize the task and relational boundaries of their jobs, which in turn influences how they shape their work identities, how they come to make sense of their work, and how they define themselves (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). For example, the sample of school educators in this study would have varied ratings for each aspect on job crafting as their occupation is a blend of their attitudes and interpretations of the tasks and relationships at work. However, there were no significant differences in job crafting scores for either the public or private school groups of educators. The job crafting opportunities presented to educators employed within a South African work climate are highly dependent on the individual's work and social context, however, it did not influence the job crafting behaviors in their respective organization (Ghitulescu, 2006). This is in stark contrast to most other knowledge-based professions (such as medicine, law, and engineering) where employees are required to complete specific tasks customarily and are afforded little if not any forms of autonomy in the structure of their jobs (Slomp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013).

Using the JD-R model, it can be assumed (from the results obtained) that the school educators in both samples actively engage in activities that increase their job resources and challenging job demands while decreasing hindering job demands (these contribute both positively and negatively to the attainment of work goals) (Tims et al., 2012). For example, the educators in this study were able to alter their job tasks based on the work demands to meet their preferences while utilizing the resources available to them (Tims et al., 2012). This supports the research findings by Ghitulescu (2006), who proposed that educators regularly craft their work in order to cope with the intricate and often demanding nature of their work.

6.2.2. Differences in levels of occupational stress

To measure the levels of stress experienced by employees in the workplace, the stressor scales from the Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) by Williams and Cooper (1996) was used to measure the characteristics of the work environment that causes educators to experience stress in the workplace. As mentioned in Chapter One, occupational stress may be defined as a response to aspects within an individual's work environment that exceeds or challenge their knowledge and abilities to cope with work demands and pressures and therefore elicits a stressful response (Leka et al., 2004). An Independent samples *t*-test determined the differences between the mean scores of both samples were compared. The following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1b: There is no significant difference in the score on levels of occupational stress experienced in the workplace for public school educators and private school educators.

The *t*-test analysis revealed that there were no statistically significant differences among the two groups on the PMI score; hence, Hypothesis 1b was accepted. The results obtained indicated that the two groups are, in fact, similar in terms of the levels of stress they experience in the workplace.

The South African education system has experienced various challenges, both internally and externally, due to changing political circumstances in the country over the years. As a result, school educators would most likely experience increased levels of stress due to the changes to the structure of teaching (Paulse, 2005). The research results revealed that both samples of school educators experienced similar levels of occupational stress; in other words, there were no significant differences among the two groups (public and private

school educators). These findings support the argument by Vazi et al. (2013), who stated that stress is an occupational reality and is characteristic of most professions that involve working with other people, such as teaching. Hence, both samples revealed similar ratings/scores on the PMI scale.

Using Lazarus' transactional theory of stress, it can be assumed that school educators experience stress in the workplace when their perceptions of the demands or the inability to meet those demands arise due to an absence of practical coping resources. For example, the educators in this study rated/scored factors such as keeping up to deadlines and various time pressures, multi-tasking, having to deal with over-crowded classrooms (a typical case in many public schools) and disruptive student behavior (common in both private schools and public schools alike) as the central factors contributing to the levels of stress they experience in the workplace. This is supported by the argument presented by Ouellette et al. (2018) that schools with poor, limited or lacking resources, overcrowding and negative attitudes towards work are some of the factors that attribute to feelings of failure and frustration amongst school educators which often leads to withdrawal from work, reduced motivation, and commitment, a theme common in most public schools across Durban.

Although many of the private schools in South Africa are generally better resourced than public schools (McKay, 2015), the specific duties that an educator is expected to fulfill remains the same (such as keeping up to deadlines and various time pressures, they are often expected to multi-task and deal with disruptive behavior, etc.), regardless of the type of school, they are employed in (Fouché et al., 2017; Vazi et al., 2013; McKay, 2015). Hence, there were no significant differences in the scores on occupational stress for both samples.

This supports the notion that many educators employed in African countries face various challenges such as high job demands and having to raise their voices in order to gain student's attention, which increases educator stress levels even further (Field & Buitendach, 2012). These factors often contribute to negative attitudes towards work as well as feelings of worthlessness; as a result, educators display high rates of burnout and disengagement. (Fouché et al., 2017). The stress that educators experience has a ripple effect on their students as well, as some students may feel afraid to approach an educator who shows signs of being overly stressed (Johnson, 2015). Increased levels of stress amongst educators may result in educators leaving their job within the first five years of employment (Vazi et al., 2013).

Increased levels of stress among school educators attribute to having to deal with difficult learners, and other barriers to learning that may arise in the classroom (Vazi, et al., 2013). The lack of discipline in schools, the abolishment of corporal punishment, large pupil-educator ratios, and a new curriculum approach can be seen as the central contributing factors to stress experienced in the workplace for all school educators (Olivier & Venter, 2003). School educators play a vital role in the development of young children (apart from a parent) as educators contribute to the social, emotional, and academic development of their students during the most integral years of a child's life through to young adulthood. Therefore, educator disengagement and increased stress amongst school educators can result in low student achievement and disrupted student-educator relationships. Stress in the workplace exerts a strain on an individual, either in the short-term or the long-term, and is a central problem affecting educators and the teaching profession, making it a global concern needing attention (Mostert, Rothmann, Mostert & Nell, 2008).

6.2.3. Differences in the PMI score, JCQ score and JD-R score based on age

A One-way between groups ANOVA was used to determine if there were any differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ scores based on the age of the participants. The following hypothesis was proposed:

H₀ 1c: There is no significant difference in the scale scores (PMI, JD-R, and JCQ) among the four different age group categories.

Results obtained from the ANOVA analysis indicated that the four age groups did not differ with regards to the PMI score for the public school sample of school educators. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for this sample. However, Post-hoc analysis using the Tukeys HSD test revealed that the 20-30 age group was significantly different from the 51 and over age group for the private school sample. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was rejected for this sample.

As discussed in Chapter One, work stress remains an enormous challenge for many employees world-wide and affects both employee and organisational health (Leka et al., 2004). According to Devonport, Biscomb, and Lane (2008), the differences in the manner in which participants perceive the levels of occupational stress prevalent in the workplace can be attributed to the process of appraisal, in that each individual's circumstance is unique. The descriptive analysis obtained in Chapter Five indicated that the majority of the participants from the private school sample of educators were mainly from the younger age group. Post-hoc analysis revealed that the 20-30 age group was significantly different from the 51 and over age group; hence, younger employees in private schools experienced their jobs as more stressful as compared to the older employees. This notion is reinforced by the research

conducted by Antoniou, Polychroni, and Vlachakis (2006), which indicated that younger employees (especially educators) generally display higher levels of stress due to depersonalization or emotional exhaustion as compared to older employees. For example, young individuals in the profession experience greater difficulty concerning their ability to incorporate the coping strategies needed to effectively reduce the occupational stress imposed on them by the job (Dobrow Riza et al., 2015). Alternatively, each individual might experience the same situation in different ways and no two educators would react in the same way in any given stressful situation, which would account for the differences between the age groups on the PMI score (Olivier & Venter, 2003; Roupa et al., 2015; Dobrow Riza et al., 2015).

Although there are various underlying factors inherent in the work environments and situations of the two samples, the ANOVA analysis did not reveal any significant differences in the JD-R score or JCQ score on the age of the participants for both samples of employees. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for both samples on the JD-R and JCQ scores. For example, younger employees are at the beginning of their careers and tend to be more enthusiastic and ambitious in their views of work tasks, relations with co-workers and their career progression while older educators are more settled in their careers and are better able to cope with work-related issues (compared to their younger counterparts). Hence, there were no significant differences in the scores on job crafting based on the age of the participant.

6.3. Exploring relationships between the variables

6.3.1. Relationship between the PMI score and the demographic variables

This study aimed to determine whether a relationship exists between the PMI score and demographic differences of employees, which are the age, gender, and tenure of employees in public schools and private schools, in Durban. In order to meet this objective, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H₀ 2a: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and age for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2b: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and gender for the sample of public and private school educators.

H₀ 2c: There is no significant relationship between the PMI score and tenure for the sample of public and private school educators.

To test these hypotheses, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the co-efficient (r) represents the linear relationship between two variables and the strength and direction of this linear relationship between two variables described.

The data analysis revealed that the public school sample did not reveal a significant relationship between the PMI score on either age, gender, or tenure of employees; hence, Hypotheses 2a; 2b and 2c were accepted for the public school sample. The similarities in the scoring and the lack of significant correlations amongst the sample of the public school educators based on age and tenure could be since many of the ‘new’ educators in the sample

(having been employed for 0-5 years in their respective schools) could consist of a combination of young employees (aged between 20- and 40- years old), and older educators (40-years and older) who have changed professions (Crossman & Harris, 2006). Additionally, previous studies on gender and occupational stress show inconsistent findings, while some support the results obtained in this study, such as Dobrow et al. (2015); and Matla (2014). It can also be assumed that the work environment of public schools is orientated to adopt a more collaborative approach where newer employees would be integrated into their new work situation in a more holistic manner (Muijs & Rumyantseva, 2014). Therefore, the small number of young employees in the public school sample benefit more from the support they receive from their older colleagues, allowing them to manage the stress they experience. Occupational stress is not a single-source issue and affects all employees regardless of gender and tenure (Roupa et al., 2015). This notion supports the findings obtained in this research study as there was no significant relationship between the PMI score on either gender or tenure of employees for the private school sample; hence, hypotheses 2a and 2b were accepted for this sample as well.

However, in contrast to the above argument, the results obtained for the private school sample revealed that there was a significantly small, negative correlation between the age of an employee and the PMI score for the private school sample. Hence, Hypothesis 2a was rejected for this sample. The levels of stress experienced in the workplace decreased as employees aged; hence, younger employees reported higher levels of stress than older employees. Coetzee and Rothmann (2005) proposed that work relationships are one of the significant occupational stressors in higher education institutions. Workers who have more

support and control over their work and how they do it generally participate more in decision-making strategies pertaining to their job; hence, they experience less stress (Leka et al., 2004). Good work relationships could potentially help individuals to cope with the stress they experience at work (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Hence, the younger employees in this sample experience increased levels of stress as they are 'new' to their work environments and have not been able to establish meaningful work relationships as yet. Therefore they lack the support needed to deal with the stress they experience.

Additionally, the majority of the participants from the private school sample of educators were mainly from the younger age group as compared to the public school sample (presented in Table 1). Dobrow Riza et al. (2015) reported that young educators are at the beginning of their careers and will invest all of their energy to achieving their initial objectives while having to cope with various stressful and intense demands from their work environment. This impacts their satisfaction at work and leads to disengagement and considerable effort regarding their job (Dobrow Riza et al., 2015). Therefore, the younger educators in the private school sample experienced greater difficulty in activating the necessary coping strategies to reduce levels of occupational stress imposed by the challenges of the job (Antoniou et al., 2006). On the other hand, Crossman and Harris (2006) suggest that as employees age and mature within the organization their expectations alter, and they become better at coping with the levels of stress they experience as they have developed strategies to cope with work-related issues. Hence, the results reflected a significantly small, negative correlation between age and scores on the PMI, where older employees in the organization reported lower scores and younger employees reported higher scores.

Educators in South Africa face an overwhelming myriad of factors within the workplace that impairs their effectiveness within the classroom such as limited connections with colleagues, perceptions of poor communication, and negative student-educator relationships which all contribute to and increase levels of stress amongst school educators (Ouellette et al., 2018). Young professionals entering the teaching profession in light of the above are still learning to cope and navigate a career in light of these factors. According to Matla (2014), educators reported that continuous changes to the curriculum were a significant source of stress impacting negatively on most educators in South African schools. Most teaching degrees at higher education institutions take a minimum of four years to complete, but preparation for a new curriculum takes place over a three-day training workshop, which is inadequate to prepare educators for change. As a result, educators have to increase the amount of preparation time before teaching, and most are still unsure of what they are going to teach (Matla, 2014).

6.3.2. Standard Multiple regression analysis

A standard multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether the JD-R score would make the strongest contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score).

H_o 3: In the presence of the others, there will be no significant prediction of total stress (PMI score) by the JD-R score.

The results obtained for the public school sample revealed that the JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the unique variance in the PMI score. Hence, Hypothesis 3

was rejected for the public school sample. Similarly, the results obtained for the private school sample revealed that the JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the unique variance in the PMI score. Hence, Hypothesis 3 was rejected for the sample of private school educators.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the JD-R model proposes that the work conditions of employees can be categorized into demands and resources. Job demands refer to aspects of the job such as long work hours, demanding work shifts and high time pressure which lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout if not moderated or balanced with other positive behaviors, whereas job resources are skills utilized by employees (such as autonomy, career opportunities, and role clarity) which foster work engagement and positive organizational outcomes (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Job resources are functional in stimulating personal growth and the attainment of work goals (Prieto et al., 2008).

This study applied the JD-R model to job crafting as it frames the way employees might change their levels of job demands and job resources to suit their abilities and preferences, hence, the model was used in this study to measure the extent to which school educators employed in private schools and public schools in Durban might engage in job crafting behavior and whether the public school sample differed significantly to the private school sample.

Alternatively, various authors have attempted to extend the JD-R model to apply it to various work conditions. Bakker, Demrtouti, and Euwema (2005) argue that the JD-R model can be suitably applied in any occupational setting regardless of the demands and resources involved. Additionally, the authors showed that interactions between demands and resources

explained a unique proportion of the variance in exhaustions and cynicism outcomes (Bakker et al., 2005). However, the research results of this study indicated that the JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the unique variance in the PMI score. Therefore, scores on the job crafting variable was not strong enough to influence or cause any variation to the scores on occupational stress. The results obtained in this study do not conform to the literature presented by Bakker et al. (2005). Hence, it can be assumed that the JD-R scale is better suited to predicting scores on job crafting amongst employees in Durban but is not a strong enough indicator of the variations in stress amongst the sample (N=196).

6.4. Reliability of the study

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated to measure the levels of internal consistency (reliability) of the research instruments. Following the guidelines set out by Pallant (2013), all three measuring instruments utilized in this research study displayed high levels of internal consistency obtained with Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.816 and above. Hence, the scales used in this study can be considered as reliable measures of job crafting and occupational stress for school educators working in Durban, in the South African context.

The JCQ rating scale on the job crafting variable produced a high level of reliability with a Cronbach alpha of 0.82. This was somewhat lower than Slemp and Vella-Brodrick's (2013) findings, who obtained an internal consistency value of 0.91. Hence, this scale used in this context was of reasonably high reliability. The JD-R model on the job crafting variable revealed a high level of internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.83. This scale exceeded the findings by Tims, Derks, and Bakker (2010), who established internal

consistency values ranging from 0.75-0.82 for the twenty-one items of the Job Demands-Resources model, hence the scale was deemed as more appropriate to this sample.

The PMI scale on occupational stress yielded a reliability score of 0.93. This is well above the findings by Williams and Cooper (1996), their study established internal consistency values ranging from 0.64 - 0.89 for all the items of the Pressure Management Indicator. However, for this study, the PMI yielded a much higher value and was deemed more appropriate to this sample.

6.5. What efforts do educators make to try and cope with the amounts of stress they experience in the workplace?

Although this was not a central element of this study, it is of key interest to note that most of the employees in this sample did make some attempt to manage the levels of stress they experience in the workplace. An open-ended question was included at the end of the research instrument that asked educators about the attempts they make to cope with the stress they experience in the workplace. According to Lyon (2000), coping may be defined as efforts utilized by individuals to mediate or manage the perceived threat or stressful situation. Most individuals listed their hobbies such as reading, meditation, baking, going to the gym, spending time with the family, or only going for long relaxing walks as a way to ‘de-stress’ themselves and relax. These activities can be seen as emotion-focused coping strategies employed by school educators as a technique to reduce the effects of stressful feelings to regulate their emotions (Fouché, 2017).

6.6. Summary of chapter

This chapter discussed the main research findings obtained from the analysis of the research data by linking the results obtained to the specific conceptual definitions and theoretical framework established at the beginning of this dissertation. Each research hypothesis was stated, and afterward, a discussion of the variable and statistical analysis conducted was presented and conceptualized using the theoretical frameworks outlined at the beginning of this dissertation. The next chapter seeks to present the concluding remarks about the study, the practical implications of the study, and the recommendations for future research in the field of job crafting and occupational stress.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION, PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

7.1. Introduction to the chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the contextual implications of the findings, offer conclusions and closing remarks about the study making specific reference to how the results obtained confirms the research hypotheses, aims, and objectives while also referring to the strengths and limitations of the study, the practical implications, and recommendations for future research. The chapter ends with proposed strategies to help encounter, manage, and alleviate incidences of occupational stress in the workplace before they become a problem.

7.2. Conclusions

This dissertation highlighted the notion that high-quality educators remain a primary necessity and significant challenge for many educational institutions around the world while highlighting the fact that many educators working in Durban, South Africa, face a unique variety of factors not currently encountered by employees in other professions. Educators often deal with conflicting roles such as spouse/partner, parent, counselor, supervisor, and disciplinarian and are required to carry out these roles daily. The demands placed on them often out-weigh their abilities to fulfill these demands, resulting in increased levels of stress experienced in the workplace. This study highlights job crafting as a practical technique that enables employees to experience increased job satisfaction and create meaningful situations in the workplace for both private and public school educators. There is a potential for the use of job crafting in the workplace as an intervention to help decrease the incidence of

occupational stress experienced by employees. Job crafting refers to a skill used by employees to take aspects of their work situation and work environment and customize them to gain increased meaning, satisfaction, and fulfillment in their work. This study has shown that many school educators do engage in job crafting, and if this behavior is fostered within the structure of their job, it could assist in improving the levels of job satisfaction, autonomy, meaning, and work identity of these individuals.

The objective of this study was to determine whether there were any differences in the scores on job crafting behavior and levels of occupational stress experienced in the workplace by two groups of school educators, namely, public school educators ($n=110$) and private school educators ($n=86$). Based on a review of the literature and the work environments these two groups encounter daily (as discussed in Chapter One and Two), it was assumed that the two samples would not differ in terms of their job crafting behavior and levels of occupational stress, as described in Hypothesis 1a and 1b. Likewise, the findings of this study revealed that there was no significant difference in the scores on job crafting behavior of the sample of public school educators and the sample of private school educators. Similarly, there was no significant difference in the score on levels of occupational stress experienced in the workplace by the sample of public school educators and the sample of private school educators. Therefore, it is suggested that educators working in a private school setting and educators working in a public-school setting are somewhat similar in terms of utilizing opportunities for job crafting and experience similar factors of their work environments as potential sources of stress. This is mainly as a result of the specific nature of an educator's job. For example, an educator's occupation primarily involves the transference of knowledge

(irrespective of the type of school they teach in) where they are required to gain and teach new skills daily, hence, both samples valued/rated job crafting in the same way (there were no significant differences among the two samples) (Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016). As previously mentioned, there is a myriad of factors that contribute to how an individual may perceive and manage varying situations in the workplace. However, this did not reveal any significant differences in the job crafting behavior and levels of stress experienced in the workplace for the two samples.

Additionally, the differences in the PMI, JD-R, and JCQ scores based on the age of the participant were compared among the samples. The ANOVA analysis revealed no differences among the four age groups on the PMI score for the public school sample of school educators. Hence, Hypothesis 1c can be accepted for this sample. However, Post-hoc analysis using the Tukeys HSD test revealed that the 20-30 age group was significantly different from the 51-and-over age group for the private school sample. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was rejected for this sample. Therefore, the conclusion reached is that young individuals in the profession experience greater difficulty concerning their ability to incorporate the coping strategies needed to effectively reduce the occupational stress imposed on them by the job compared to their older colleagues (Antoniou et al. 2006). Considering the work environment of private schools (as compared to public schools), it is argued that there is more competition amongst employees concerning educational status and progression, whereas public schools generally have a more collaborative orientation (as discussed in the previous chapter) (Muijs & Rumyantseva, 2014). Hence, younger employees feel more pressure to accrue to a higher position in their organization and would receive less support and encouragement from

colleagues, resulting in increased levels of stress (Dobrow Riza et al., 2015; Muijs & Rummyantseva, 2014).

Taking into consideration the various underlying factors inherent in the work environments that these individuals occupy and the challenges they face at work, the ANOVA analysis did not reveal any significant differences in the JD-R score or JCQ score on the age of the participants for both samples of employees. Hence, Hypothesis 1c was accepted for both samples on the JD-R and JCQ scores. Therefore, it can be concluded that younger employees are more enthusiastic and ambitious in their views of work tasks, relations with co-workers, and their career progression because they are at the beginning of their careers. Similarly, older educators are more settled in their careers (versus younger employees) and are satisfied with their jobs as they have developed the necessary skills needed to overcome difficult work-related challenges (Crossman & Harris, 2006).

Many of the participants in this study would agree with the notion that a lack of suitable resources and conducive work conditions affect their effectiveness in the classroom, often leading to increases in the levels of occupational stress they experience as a result. This was reflected in the research results and analysis of the data obtained. The research results revealed that there was a significantly small, negative correlation between the age of an employee and the PMI score for the private school sample. Hence, Hypothesis 2a was rejected for the private school sample. As the age of school educators in the private school sample increased, they reported decreased levels of occupational stress. Hence, younger employees reported higher levels of stress than their older colleagues. Therefore, it can be concluded that young educators at the beginning of their careers will invest all of their energy to achieving

their initial objectives while having to cope with various stressful and intense demands from their work environment (Dobrow Riza et al., 2015). This harms their satisfaction at work and leads to increased effort and levels of stress experienced regarding their job. As a consequence, younger educators experience increased difficulty in activating the necessary coping strategies to reduce occupational stress levels imposed by challenges occurring in the job (Antoniou et al., 2006). In contrast, it can be argued that as employees age and mature within the organization, their expectations alter, and they become better at coping with the levels of stress they experience as they have developed strategies to cope with work-related issues (Crossman & Harris, 2006).

Lastly, this dissertation aimed to determine whether the JD-R score would make the most substantial contribution to the unique variance in total stress (PMI score). Although various authors propose that the JD-R model can be suitably applied in any occupational setting regardless of the demands and resources involved, the results obtained in this study revealed that the JD-R score did not make a significant contribution to the unique variance in the PMI score. This could be due to the fact that there were no significant differences in the sample of public and private school educators, as described in the previous sections.

All three scales (the JCQ scale, the JD-R scale, and the PMI scale) used in this study obtained high levels of internal consistency, which shows that the scales can be considered as reliable measures of job crafting and occupational stress for school educators working in Durban, South Africa.

Few known studies have aimed to compare the job crafting behavior of public school educators and private school educators in South Africa. Hence, the results obtained in this

study could not be backed by previous literature. The same can be said for describing the differences in levels of occupational stress among public and private school educators. Therefore, this research dissertation reveals a niche in the body of research conducted on job crafting and occupational stress for future researchers both in the fields of education and psychology. The current study emphasizes that stress is an occupational reality affecting individuals in the South African school setting, regardless of the type of school environment they are employed in and is an area that needs to be addressed by governing bodies and higher management in order to create a productive and efficient workforce. The body of knowledge generated through this study describes how the transition of education in South Africa has placed educators under challenging circumstances, ranging from violence in schools and drug use among learners to insufficient resources and ill-equipped classrooms. This study emphasizes that many educators choose to rise above these challenges by effectively incorporating job crafting techniques in their daily tasks as a means to cope and moderate the effects of stress experienced in the workplace, a notion not often highlighted in studies on job crafting and work stress in South Africa.

7.3. Strengths and limitations of the study

This study aimed to contribute, broaden, and improve the current literature available on job crafting and occupational stress. However, this study did experience the following limitations. Considering that this research study applied a survey research design, the sample size used in this study was quite small, which means that the results obtained in the study cannot be generalized to the entire population under study; also, the response rate was very low. A lower response rate is a typical disadvantage of using a survey research method as it

limits the validity of this study. There was a considerable difference in the sample size of private school educators ($n=86$) versus public school educators ($n=110$); this could have been the primary reason for the results being quite similar. In addition, this study was carried out in a limited time frame as the researcher had to take into account the differing school terms, some terms were shorter than others while educators were under immense pressure during the second and final term of the school year. This meant that they might have allocated less time to answer the questionnaire. Due to the nature of the study, the data collected mainly comprised of self-reported measures. This impacts the integrity of the answers, which places a threat to the validity of the results.

7.4. Practical implications of the study for job crafting and occupational stress

The levels of occupational stress present within any organization or teaching institution has direct effects on the performance of its employees and their satisfaction with their jobs. However, a small amount of stress present within work environments may be beneficial to employees. This phenomenon, known as eustress (Selye, 1956), can promote higher performance amongst employees; some organizations introduce eustress to their work environments for this very reason. Management staff and seniors should ensure that appropriate strategies and activities are developed to control the amount of stress experienced in the workplace for their employees to ensure a happy, productive, and efficient workforce and work environment. Effective management and work organization are the most significant forms of stress prevention. Due to increasing classroom sizes, increased accountability, limited availability of resources in most schools, and instability in educator job security,

schools face numerous potential problems, and this trend may continue for many years to come.

Job crafting has the potential to motivate employees to function at their optimum, thus improving the productivity and profitability of their organizations. Supervisors/heads of departments are unaware that they may influence whether employees engage in job crafting or not as management controls the incentives of the job. However, their leadership position does not give them control over the job crafting opportunities available. Hence, supervisors/heads of department should encourage job crafting behavior as there are numerous favorable outcomes for both the organization and its employees. Encouraging teaching staff to seek greater meaning in their work could potentially lead to higher work engagement, better performance by educators, lower burnout, and retention of educators. On the other hand, employees are advised against making changes to work behaviors that may affect the overall role of the organization or which conflict with the organization's goals and objectives (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

7.5. Recommendations for future research

The focus of this study was to compare the relationship between scores on occupational stress and job crafting among private and public school educators while also describing how job crafting behavior differs amongst private and public school educators. Further research in this field would profit from qualitative techniques to explore the lived experiences, opinions, and world views of professionals in the teaching sector as little is known about this area within the South African context. School administrators need to focus on symptoms of burnout and educator's levels of stress, which can be different for public and

private school systems. This study has been limited to studying job crafting and levels of stress experienced in the workplace amongst educators only, but this study can be applied to various other individuals in other sectors of industry quite easily such as nurses, engineers, cashiers, hairdressers, future trends should focus on studying and comparing this relationship among groups of educators and other professional (nurses, engineers, restaurant chefs, cleaning staff) from various cities and provinces with a more diverse sample to gain better cognizance of the current levels of stress and job crafting behavior for individuals employed elsewhere than Durban.

7.6. Proposed strategies of change

The following short and medium-term solutions should be implemented as strategies needed to help various schools and department leaders improve the work environment for their staff and learners, not only in Durban but across the country to assist with better management of the stress that employees experience. Various organizational strategies should be adopted, such as mindfulness and stress management programs, mentoring programs for educators' and workplace wellness programs, which would assist in improving educator health, reduce absenteeism, help reduce stress and improve the retention rate of school educators in the workplace. Also, learner intervention programs such as social and emotional learning programs for students can help reduce educator burnout and improve educator satisfaction as these programs engage and build life skills in learners by teaching them how to manage and control their emotions effectively and how they deal with their classmates and educators. If these and other interventions are adopted, it may assist in improving the work environment for school educators by giving them valuable skills needed to learn to manage

and reduce the levels of occupational stress they experience. Job crafting is a practice in itself that can help educators better deal with the stress they experience in the workplace. Hence management and administrative staff at schools should work on designing a work environment that would foster job crafting behavior.

7.7. Summary of chapter

This chapter presented concluding remarks (in context) about the research results obtained in this study and its significance to the research aims, objectives, and hypotheses. This chapter also presented the practical implications of the study, the strengths and limitations, and recommendations for future research.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Ethical Approval Letter from HSSREC of UKZN (Protocol reference no:
HSS/0613/018M)

10 July 2018

Ms Nerisha Deveduthras (213504989)
School of Applied Human Sciences – Psychology
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Deveduthras,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0613/018M

Project Title: “We designed the job we loved”: A comparative study focusing on job crafting and levels of stress experienced in the workplace amongst public and private school teachers working in Durban, South Africa

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 05 June 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Shaida Bobat
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Maud Mthembu
Cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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Appendix B: Informed consent, Information sheet, and research instrument

Appendix B: Information sheet, Informed Consent and research survey



School of Applied Human Sciences

Participation in Research Study: A comparative study on job crafting and levels of stress experienced at work among private and public school teachers

Dear participant,

I would appreciate your assistance in this research study focusing on job crafting and levels of stress experienced in the workplace. Job crafting is broadly defined as the ways in which employees utilize opportunities to customize their jobs by actively changing their tasks and interactions with others at work. Peral and Geldenhuys (2016) conducted a study in which they found that teachers have the most stressful jobs with the highest incidence of burnout. The research is conducted by Nerisha Deveduthras, I am currently a Masters student in Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This research project is supervised by Ms Shaida Bobat, who is a lecturer at the University.

If you choose to participate, you are required to complete the following short questionnaire. Please note that all responses will be kept **private and confidential**, you will not be asked to divulge any sensitive information (such as your name, information regarding your salary, employers name etc.). The information obtained from the questionnaires will be used in the research report.

If you have any questions regarding this study please feel free to contact us, contact details are provided below.

Kind regards,

Nerisha Deveduthras

Contact details:

Researcher:

Nerisha Deveduthras
Student (Psychology)
Howard College (UKZN)
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HSSREC Research Office:

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HSSREC Administrator
Westville Campus (UKZN)
Email: Snymanm@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 8350

Informed consent

I, the participant, confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, which will involve no penalty or loss. I understand that my data will be treated confidentially and any publication resulting from this work will report only data that does **not** identify me. I freely agree to participate in this study.

Signature of participant:

_____ SIGNED AT _____ ON _____ (DATE)

Signature of witness:

_____ SIGNED AT _____ ON _____ (DATE)

Section A: Biographical information

Please indicate your age:

20 - 30 31 - 40 41 - 50 51 and over

Gender:

Male Female

What is your current marital status?

Unmarried Married Divorced Widowed Other

Do you have any children?

Yes No

If so, how many children do you have? _____

How would you classify yourself?

White African Colored Indian Other

What is your job title? _____

Please tick the category your school falls under:

Public school Private school

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Diploma Higher Certificate Bachelors degree Postgraduate studies Other

Approximately how long have you been working in this establishment? (to the nearest year)

Do you work overtime?

Yes No

If you do work extra hours, what is your reason?

Through choice Expected to To get the job done

Section B: Job crafting

The following rating scale has been adapted from the Job Crafting Questionnaire by Slemp & Vella-Brodrick (2013). Please choose a response by **circling** the extent to which you engage in the following behaviors using the following scale: 1 = Hardly Ever, to 6 = Very Often. (Note: 'Very Often' means as often as possible in your workplace)

1. Introduce new approaches to improve your work

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

2. Change the scope or types of tasks that you complete at work

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

3. Introduce new work tasks that you think better suit your skills or interests

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

4. Choose to take on additional tasks at work

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

5. Give preference to work tasks that suit your skills or interests

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

6. Think about how your job gives your life purpose

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

7. Remind yourself about the significance your work has for the success of the organisation

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

8. Remind yourself of the importance of your work for the broader community

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

9. Think about the ways in which your work positively impacts your life

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

10. Reflect on the role your job has for your overall well-being

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

11. Make an effort to get to know people well at work

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

12. Organise or attend work related social functions

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

13. Organise special events in the workplace (e.g., celebrating a co-worker's birthday)

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

14. Choose to mentor new employees (officially or unofficially)

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

15. Make friends with people at work who have similar skills or interests

1 (Hardly Ever) 2 3 4 5 6 (Very Often)

The following items were taken from the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker (2010) and frames how employees might change their levels of job demands and job resources to suit their own abilities and preferences. Please read each item carefully and select (*tick*) the response item that best represents how often you engage each activity.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Infrequently	Sometimes	Frequently	Very frequently

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I try to develop my capabilities					
2. I work overtime when asked					
3. I try to learn new things at work					
4. I use the skills I learn at work for personal tasks					
5. I decide on my own how I do things					

	1	2	3	4	5
6. I make sure that my work is mentally less intense					
7. I try not to let other people influence how I feel about my job					
8. I try to manage my work to ensure that it does not negatively impact my life and health					
9. I make an effort not to get annoyed by trivial things at work					
10. I try to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense					
11. I try to maintain a balance between my work life and home life					
12. I ask my colleagues for advice					
13. I motivate myself to work hard					
14. I take pride in what I do					
15. I receive support from my family/ friends					
16. I remind myself of the positive aspects of my job					
17. I regularly take on extra tasks even though I do not receive extra salary for them					
18. I often attempt to improve the overall work and teaching environment at my school					
19. If there are new developments in teaching, I ensure that I apply them in my classroom					
20. I try to make my work more challenging by setting goals for myself					

Please describe any other activities that you engage in to try and increase your job satisfaction:

Section C: Stress in the workplace

Almost anything can be a source of pressure and people perceive things differently. The following items are taken from the Pressure Management Indicator by Williams and Cooper (1996) and measures aspects of your work context and work environment as sources of stress in the workplace. Please rate them according to the degree of pressure you perceive they have placed on you.

<u>1</u> Definitely NOT a source	<u>2</u> Generally NOT a source	<u>3</u> Generally IS a source	<u>4</u> Definitely IS a source
-------------------------------------	------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

	1	2	3	4
1. Lack of preparation time				
2. Taking my work home				
3. Inadequate guidance and support from superiors				
4. Lack of consultation and communication				
5. Not being able to “switch off” at home				
6. Keeping up with new techniques, ideas, technology or innovations in teaching				
7. Lack of promotion opportunities				
8. Lack of on-the-job progress				
9. My attitudes and opinions remain unheard				
10. Lack of social support by people at work				
11. Having to spend long hours on my feet in the classroom				
12. Conflicting demands in the role I play				
13. Demands my work makes on my relationship with my spouse/ partner/ children				
14. Dealing with ambiguous or ‘delicate’ situations				
15. Lack of practical and emotional support from others outside work				
16. Having to continually monitor learners’ behavior				
17. Discipline problems in the classroom				
18. Authority rejected by students or staff				
19. Teaching poorly motivated learners				
20. Feeling unable to cope				

Whilst there are variations in the ways individuals react to sources of pressure, generally speaking **we all make some attempt at coping** with these difficulties - consciously or subconsciously.

Is there anything that you enjoy doing in your free time? If so, please describe the activities you engage in to reduce and cope with the stress you experience at work (such as your hobbies, interests, pastimes etc., anything that helps you to relax).

In conclusion, would you like to make any recommendations to other individuals in the teaching profession to help them reduce and cope with the stress they experience at work?



Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C: Permission letters from gatekeepers

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

02 May 2019

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

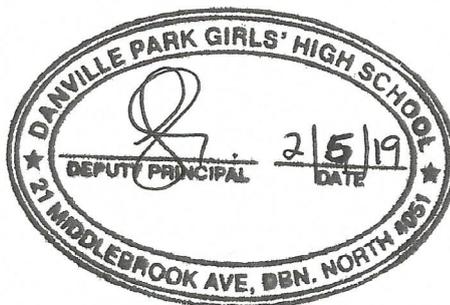
Dear Sir/Madam,

I have received a request from a student, Miss Nerisha Deveduthras, to conduct research on the levels of stress experienced in the workplace and job crafting among the staff members employed at this school. According to the request this will involve the administration of questionnaires (online) to all the employees. The fieldwork is to be conducted by Nerisha, a postgraduate student in the Discipline of Psychology, School of Applied Human Sciences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I understand that all information will be collected with informed consent from the participating individuals and that they may refuse participation with no negative consequences.

I hereby grant permission for the student to conduct the fieldwork provided this is done during staff breaks or after work hours.

Thank you.





The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

16 April 2019

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

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Thank you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop that crosses itself, positioned above a horizontal line.

**DURBAN NORTH
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

16 APR 2019

22 SUNFIELD PLACE
DURBAN NORTH, 4051
TEL: 031 564 5510
FAX: 031 563 5577

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

16 April 2019

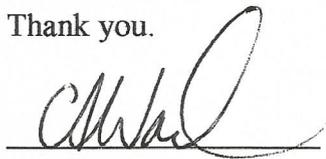
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Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Deveduthras', written over a horizontal line.

Crawford College

La Lucia

P.O. BOX 186

UMHLANGA 4320

TEL: 031 562 0050

FAX: 031 562 0056

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

11 March 2019

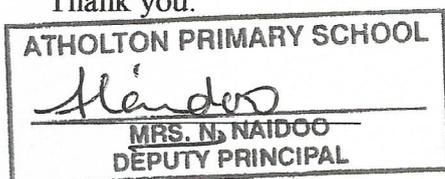
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11/03/2019

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

02 April 2019

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KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 **GREENBURY
SECONDARY SCHOOL**
P.O. Box 207
Mount Edgecombe, 4300
Tel No : 031 539 1810
Fax No : 031 502 7817
Email : admin@greenburysecondary.co.za

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

02 April 2019

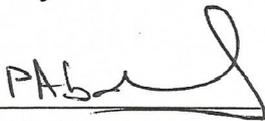
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KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GREENHEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL
P.O. BOX 196
MOUNT EDGECOMBE 4300
TELEFAX : 031 539 1950

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

02 April 2019

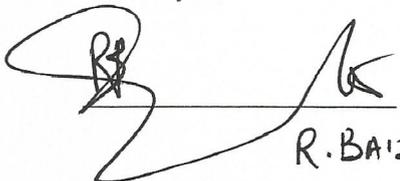
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Thank you.


R. BAIJNATH

MOUNT EDGECOMBE
PRIVATE SCHOOL
P.O BOX 654
MT. EDGECOMBE. 4300
PH: 031 539 7296/8
FAX: 031 539 7297

CRAWFORD NORTH COAST
P O BOX 1116
BALLITO
4420
TEL (032) 943 2041
FAX (032) 943 3078

The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Howard College Campus

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The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Howard College Campus

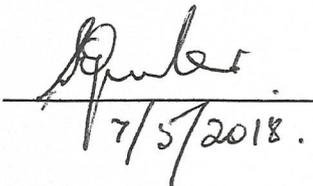
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Thank you


7/5/2018.

KWAZULU NATAL DEPT. OF EDUCATION SEATIDES COMBINED SCHOOL P.O. BOX 124, DESAINAGER 4405 TEL: 032-943 3082 FAX: 032-943 3626
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The Ethics Committee (Humanities and Social Sciences)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

03 August 2018

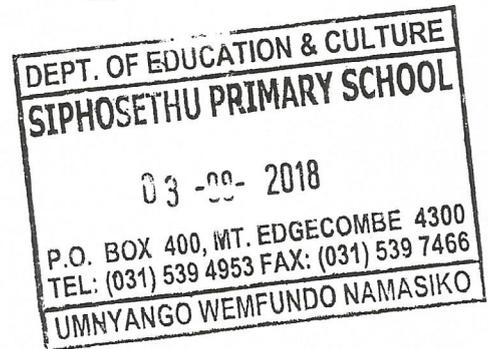
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KZN DEPT. OF EDUCATION
VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL
2 HIGH ST., TONGAAT, 4400
P.O. BOX 132, TONGAAT, 4400
TEL/FAX: 032 944 1670
EMAIL: victoriaprimar@telkomsa.net

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