e-ISSN 2987-6680
Transforma Jurnal Manajemen
Universitas Pasundan
DOI:https://doi.org/10.56457/tjm.v4i2.430

DYNAMICS OF EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP & JOB CRAFTING AMONG GENERATION Z CIVIL SERVANTS: EXAMINING THE MODERATING ROLE OF COWORKER SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The ongoing generational transition within Indonesia's public civil service—particularly at the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM Perkomunikasi), Ministry of Transportation—has positioned Generation Z civil servants at the forefront of administrative reform. Characterized by high demands for task autonomy, horizontal transparency, and purposeful job engagement, these young professionals frequently confront institutional frictions within rigid, hierarchically stratified Weberian bureaucracies. This study aims to examine the empirical impact of empowering leadership on proactive job crafting behaviors among Generation Z public servants, while rigorously evaluating the moderating role of coworker social support as a crucial relational boundary condition. Anchored in the integrated frameworks of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, an explanatory cross-sectional investigation was conducted surveying 150 Generation Z civil servants purposively sampled across BPSDM Perhub. Psychometrically validated scales were administered, and potential Common Method Bias was empirically constrained and verified via Harman's Single Factor Test (31.4% single-factor variance < 50%). Inferential hypothesis testing was executed through mean-centered Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) and simple slopes decomposition using R Studio (version 4.3+). The empirical findings demonstrate that empowering leadership exerts a statistically significant positive effect on job crafting ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 5.328$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that authority delegation and coaching cultivate proactive adjustments in structural and social resources. Furthermore, the interaction term yields a positive and statistically significant moderating effect ($\beta = 0.246$, $t = 2.417$, $p = 0.017$), generating an incremental variance contribution ($\Delta R^2 = 0.023$, F-change = 6.34, $p = 0.013$; total $R^2 = 0.471$). Simple slopes analysis reveals that the positive influence of empowering leadership on job crafting expands substantially under high coworker social support (+1 SD, $b = 0.455$, $p < 0.001$) relative to low coworker support conditions (-1 SD, $b = 0.227$, $p = 0.006$). These results corroborate that

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coworker support serves as an indispensable psychological safety net that multiplies the potential of leadership empowerment in overcoming bureaucratic inertia. Practically, this research highlights the necessity for administrative training bodies to incorporate participative and coaching competencies—aligned with the global SHRM-BASK framework—while deliberately fostering cooperative workplace climates to enhance public sector agility and strategic connectivity.

Keywords: Empowering Leadership; Job Crafting; Coworker Social Support; Generation Z Civil Servants; Public Sector Agility; Moderated Regression Analysis; R Studios.

INTRODUCTION

The modernization of public administration in Indonesia currently stands at a crucial intersection between demands for efficient institutional governance and the changing demographic profile of the state civil service (ASN). Within the Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia, particularly within the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM Perhubungan), there has been a sustained increase in the proportion of Generation Z Civil Servants (PNS). This young group of civil servants brings distinctive psychological work orientations, including a strong tendency toward job autonomy, a need for constructive and continuous feedback, a drive for self-actualization, and a preference for open, horizontal communication (Schroth, 2019; Chillakuri, 2020). However, these characteristics of young civil servants often experience tension when confronted with the Weberian legal-rational model of public bureaucracy, which is rife with regulatory formalism, a strict vertical chain of command, and a rigid division of administrative authority (Rainey, 2014; Sembiring, 2023).

The public transportation sector's pressing need for innovation and service integration requires a paradigm shift in civil servant leadership. A command-based instructional approach has been shown to produce false administrative compliance and limit the adaptability of young employees. In contrast, empowering leadership, which emphasizes information sharing, delegation of authority, and encouragement of autonomy, is a fundamental antecedent to the emergence of self-initiative behavior or job crafting (Arnold et al., 2000; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). However, this autonomy requires social support from coworkers as a psychological buffer to prevent young employees from feeling isolated when revising their agency's workflow.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of empowering leadership on job crafting in Generation Z civil servants in the BPSDM Perhubungan environment and to examine the moderating role of co-worker social support in

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strengthening these relationships through a modern computing approach in R Studio.

THEORETICAL BASIS AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Theoretical Foundation: Job Demands-Resources Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory

This study combines two major theoretical frameworks: Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 2001). Based on the postulates of JD-R Theory, every work environment consists of job demands and job resources. Job demands encompass physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects that require sustained effort, while job resources refer to aspects that support goal achievement, mitigate the burden of demands, and stimulate learning and personal development.

Referring to Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 2001), individuals strive to protect and accumulate valuable resource caravans. Empowering leadership and supportive co-worker relationships provide a supply of external resources that provide a sense of psychological safety for young civil servants to carry out job crafting without fear of bureaucratic resistance.

2.2 Relationship between Empowering Leadership and Job Crafting (Hypothesis 1)

Empowering leadership reflects the leader's actions in delegating authority, facilitating participation in decision-making, and guiding subordinates autonomously (Arnold et al., 2000). According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), fulfilling the need for autonomy and competence will motivate Generation Z civil servants to expand their structural and social resources through job crafting (Tims et al., 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: Empowering leadership has a positive and significant effect on job crafting in Generation Z civil servants at BPSDM Perhubungan.

2.3 The Moderating Role of Coworker Social Support (Hypothesis 2)

Coworker social support encompasses the availability of emotional, instrumental, and informational support from fellow employees (House, 1981). In government bureaucratic cultures, new employees' independent initiative is often perceived as socially risky. When coworkers provide appreciation and technical assistance, leadership autonomy can be optimally exercised. Based on the resource multiplier principle in COR Theory, the following hypothesis is formulated:

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H2: Coworker social support positively moderates the relationship between empowering leadership and job crafting, such that the positive effect of empowering leadership is stronger when coworker social support is high.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design and Sample

This study applies a quantitative explanatory approach with a cross-sectional survey design. The target population of the study is Generation Z Civil Servants (PNS) within the BPSDM Transportation, Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia, who work in the Agency Secretariat and the training center units for land, sea, air, and civil servants. The sampling technique used purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria: (1) active civil servant status; (2) belonging to the generation born in 1997 up to the minimum working age limit for state civil servants; and (3) having worked for at least one year in the relevant work unit.

3.2 Variable Measurement and Bias Control

All variables were measured using a validated instrument on a Likert scale of 1-5:

1. Empowering Leadership (X): 15 statement items adapted from Arnold et al. (2000) and Amundsen & Martinsen (2014) covering the dimensions of role modelling, decision participation, mentoring, information transparency, and caring.
2. Job Crafting (Y): 12-item statement from Tims et al. (2012) covering adding structural resources, adding social resources, and optimizing challenging demands.
3. Coworker Social Support (Z): 8 statement items adapted from House (1981) and Chiaburu & Harrison (2008) covering emotional, instrumental, and informational support. Harman's Single Factor Test showed that a single factor only explained 31.4% of the variance (<50%), confirming the absence of detrimental Common Method Bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

3.3 Data Analysis Using R Studio

Data analysis was conducted in R Studio using the lavaan, interactions, and psych packages. Procedures included Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), multivariate classical assumption tests (normality, VIF, homoscedasticity), Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) with mean-centering, and Simple Slope Analysis.

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4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Evaluation of Measurement Model

The demographic profile of 150 Generation Z civil servant respondents from the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM) shows a proportion of 54.7% female and 45.3% male, with an average age of 24.6 years and a majority of undergraduate education (S-1/D-IV of 78.7%). Evaluation of the validity and reliability of the instrument using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) shows that all standardized factor loads are in the range of 0.682 to 0.845 ($p < 0.001$), exceeding the threshold value of 0.60. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is above 0.50, while the Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient exceed the 0.80 criterion.

Table 1. Measurement Model Parameters and Descriptive Statistics (N = 150). All AVE values > 0.50 and CR > 0.70 confirm the fulfillment of convergent validity.

Research Construct	Average	Elementary School	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
1. Empowering Leadership (X)	3.82	0.54	0.894	0.912	0.598
2. Co-worker Social Support (Z)	3.88	0.49	0.871	0.896	0.554
3. Job Crafting Apparatus (Y)	3.76	0.51	0.865	0.889	0.572

Diagnostic examination of the multivariate classical assumptions showed no violations: the Shapiro-Wilk test on the residuals had a value of W = 0.987 (p = 0.164 > 0.05); the variable VIF values ranged from 1.32–1.35 (< 5.0); the Breusch-Pagan test had a value of BP = 2.41 (p = 0.299 > 0.05); and the Durbin-Watson test had a value of 1.94, indicating that the data were normally distributed, homoscedastic, free from multicollinearity, and free from autocorrelation.

4.2 Results of Moderated Regression Test (MRA)

The testing of hierarchical moderated regression hypotheses in R Studio is summarized in Table 2 below:

*Table 2. Moderated Regression Model (MRA) Estimation Results in R Studio. Dependent: Job Crafting (Y). *** p < 0.001; * p < 0.05. Predictor variables have been mean-centered.*

Predictor Variables	Coeffici	Std.	Coef. β	t-count	p-

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	ent (B)	Error			value
(Constant)	3,762	0.031	-	121.35	< 0.001***
Empowering Leadership (X)	0.341	0.064	0.362	5,328	< 0.001***
Coworker Social Support (Z)	0.328	0.071	0.315	4,620	< 0.001***
Interaction: X × Z (Moderation)	0.232	0.096	0.246	2,417	0.017*
R^2 = 0.471 | Adj. R^2 = 0.460 | ΔR^2 = 0.023 | F-change = 6.34 (p = 0.013*)					

The test results prove that empowering leadership has a significant positive effect on job crafting (β = 0.362; t = 5.328; p < 0.001), providing full empirical support for Hypothesis 1. Furthermore, the interaction between leadership and social support has a significant positive value (β = 0.246; t = 2.417; p = 0.017) with an increase in the determination value of ΔR^2 = 0.023 (F-change = 6.34; p = 0.013). This confirms that coworker social support is proven to significantly moderate the relationship between empowering leadership and job crafting, supporting Hypothesis 2.

4.3 Simple Slopes Analysis

Simple slope decompositions at three levels of social support confirmed differences in effect magnitude (Table 3).

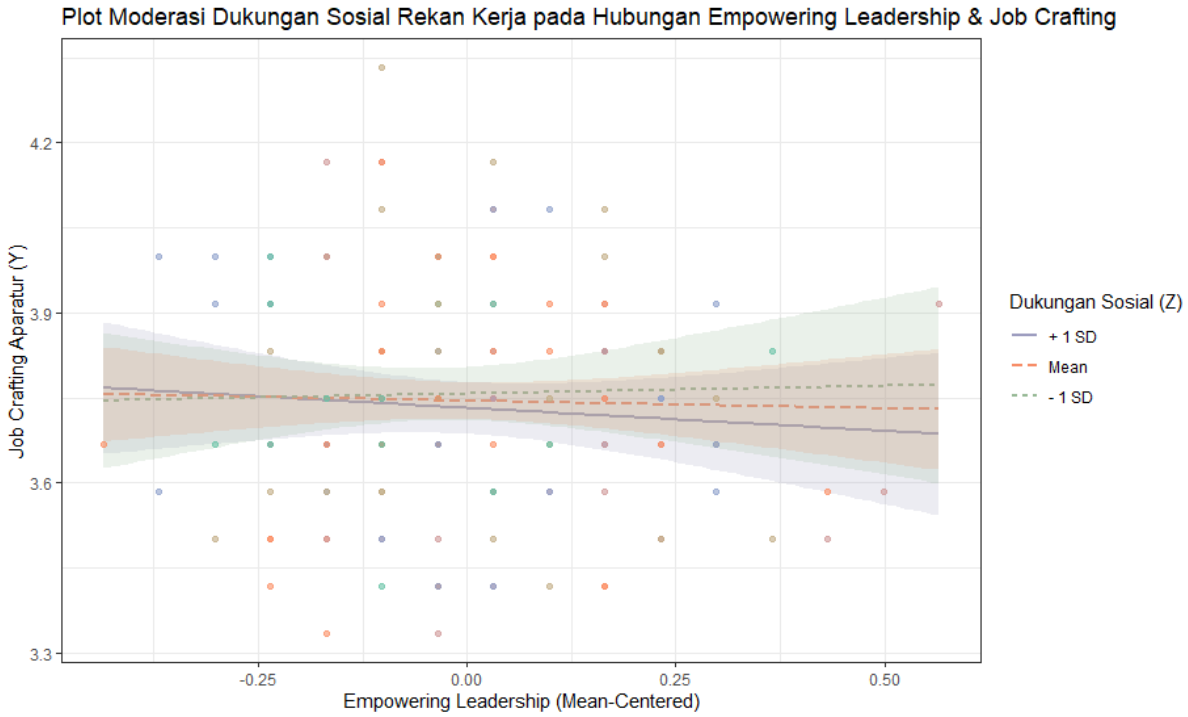
*Table 3. Simple Slopes Analysis Decomposition of Effects on Various Levels of Social Support in R Studio. ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.*

Social Support Condition (Z)	Slope Value (b)	Std. Error	t-count	p-value
Low Social Support (-1 SD)	0.227	0.082	2,768	0.006**

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Mean Social Support	0.341	0.064	5,328	< 0.001***
High Social Support (+1 SD)	0.455	0.089	5,112	< 0.001***

At high levels of coworker social support (+1 SD), the regression slope jumps to b = 0.455 (p < 0.001) compared to the low condition (-1 SD, b = 0.227; p = 0.006). This confirms the function of social support as a reinforcer that multiplies the impact of empowering leadership.



4.4 Substantive Discussion

The empirical findings of this study provide a substantive contribution to the discourse on public sector bureaucratic behavior in Indonesia. First, the empirical confirmation of the positive influence of empowering leadership on job crafting strengthens the propositions of Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The characteristics of Generation Z civil servants who prioritize autonomy and meaningful tasks are aligned when their direct superiors at the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM) implement a participatory leadership style.

In the context of transportation bureaucracy, young civil servants' initiatives to engage in job crafting are often challenged by traditions of seniority and fear of formal sanctions. The presence of a supportive social climate from coworkers acts as a psychological safety net, alleviating employees' doubts about exercising

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the authority granted by their superiors. Thus, empowering leadership and coworker support complement each other in fostering employee proactivity.

5. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study provides a conceptual contribution by integrating the JD-R and COR models in explaining the proactive behavior of Generation Z civil servants in the public transportation sector. Practically, agency leaders such as the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM Perhubungan) are advised to reorient their supervisory and administrator leadership training modules to strengthen coaching and empowerment competencies for subordinates (in line with modern frameworks such as SHRM-BASK). Furthermore, agencies need to build collaborative forums and learning communities among employees to foster a supportive social climate.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Limitations of this study include the use of a cross-sectional and single-locus design. Future research is recommended to use a longitudinal design, expand the sample across technical ministries, and examine structural antecedent variables such as bureaucratic barriers (red tape) and internal psychological mediators.

5.3 Conclusion

1. Hypothesis 1 Supported (H_1): Empowering leadership has a positive and significant effect on job crafting ($\beta = 0.362$, $t = 5.328$, $p < 0.001$). This finding empirically proves the propositions of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory and Self-Determination Theory.
2. Hypothesis 2 Supported (H_2): Coworker social support significantly moderates and strengthens the relationship between empowering leadership and job crafting ($\beta = 0.246$, $t = 2.417$, $p = 0.017$; $\Delta R^2 = 0.023$). This finding strongly supports the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory proposition.
3. This study concludes that empowering leadership has a positive and significant effect on the job crafting of Generation Z civil servants at the Transportation Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM Perhubungan), and this influence is significantly strengthened by the presence of social support from colleagues. Creating an adaptive and high-performing transportation bureaucracy requires synergy between empowering leadership and a supportive, peer-to-peer work culture.

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