



# **The Effect of Leadership Behaviour on Employee Job**

## **Crafting in Chinese Organizations**

*- an exploratory research based on regulatory focus theory*

A Doctoral Thesis presented by

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to

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organisations, **aiming to** form a management conceptual model precisely to summarise the leadership behaviour related concepts that can effectively improve and reduce employee job crafting to reveal the employee reaction-related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively improves and reduces employee job crafting; and to find out the context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively improves and reduces employee job crafting. With the regulatory focus theory perspective, the **grounded theory research strategy** is used, and it is informed by 26 in-depth interviews with full NVivo utilisation.

**The final conceptual model-2L** (2-line) model of the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting-suggests the following key findings: first, leadership promotion focused behaviours improve employee job crafting, leadership prevention focused behaviours reduce employee job crafting; second, via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting; finally, work complexity, organisational transformational atmosphere and employee trait regulatory focus contextualise the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting.

Therefore, this research **makes a contribution to the literature** in the following four aspects: first, this study raises the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour"; second, this study explores the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting from promotion and prevention views based on regulatory focus theory; third, this study presents the mediation factors of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting; finally, this study integrates contextual factors in the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting.

And the use of grounded theory in this study **makes contributions in terms of methodology**. In job crafting research, there are two research genres: one is the "work meaning" genre, focusing on the pursuit of personal value, job meaning, and job well-being, and the other is the "person-job fit" genre, focusing on the match between people and the work environment. The innovative use of grounded theory contributes, in terms of methodology, to both genres in the following aspects: to begin with, the use of qualitative methods like grounded theory creatively proceeds new theoretical-model development, which shows scarcity in research on both genres; in addition, the two-line-perspective use of grounded theory based on Regulatory focus theory provided systematic perspective for grounded theory application. This study also **contributes to management practice** by guiding Chinese organisations on how to improve employee job crafting for job meaning and the improvement of job satisfaction.

## DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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## STATEMENT 1

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## **PARTIAL RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS DURING DOCTOR STUDY**

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4. Mechanisms Underlying Effects of Leader's Behaviour on Employee's-A Regulatory Focus Perspective (*Pending Publication*)

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
3D×2L	Three-dimensional × two-line
EJC	Employee job crafting
ETRF-	Employee trait regulatory focus prevention
ETRF+	Employee trait regulatory focus promotion
ETRF	Employee trait regulatory focus
ETRF-	Employee trait regulatory focus prevention
ETRF+	Employee trait regulatory focus promotion
EWRF	Employee work regulatory focus
EWRF-	Employee work regulatory focus prevention
EWRF+	Employee work regulatory focus promotion
EWRF-	Employee work regulatory focus reduction
EWRF+	Employee work regulatory focus improvement
JC-	Job crafting reduction
JC+	Job crafting improvement
LB	Leadership behaviour
LF	Leadership feedback
LF-	Leadership prevention focused feedback
LF+	Leadership promotion focused feedback
LFB-	Leadership prevention focused behaviour
LFB+	Leadership promotion focused behaviour
LLF	Leadership linguistic framing
LLF-	Leadership prevention focused linguistic framing
LLF+	Leadership promotion focused linguistic framing
LRFB	Leadership regulatory focused behaviour
LRM	Leadership role modelling
LRM-	Leadership prevention focused role modelling
LRM+	Leadership promotion focused role modelling
OA	Organizational atmosphere

OC	Organizational context
OCA	Organizational cultural atmosphere
OTA	Organizational transformation atmosphere
TRF	Trait regulatory focus
RF-	Prevention focus
RF+	Promotion focus
RFT	Regulatory focus theory
SRF	Situation regulatory focus
TRF	Trait regulatory focus
TRF-	Trait regulatory focus prevention
TRF+	Trait regulatory focus promotion
WCH	Work characteristic
WCO	Work complexity

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and context

Currently, organizations and employees must use "crafting" to cope with the changing scientific and technological international environment (Ying et al., 2018). China's economy is in an important time of transformation, in which both traditional and emerging industries have put forward higher requirements for employee knowledge and skills (Ren et al., 2022, Dan et al., 2022). Job crafting focuses on the balance between organizational development and the individual (Petrou et al., 2018, Buonocore et al., 2020). As a proactive process of adjustment and change, job crafting emphasizes that employees can proactively choose how they perceive and act in response to top-down, scheduled job design (Berg et al., 2010a).

Job crafting contributes to the sustainable and healthy development of China's economy and society, and it is also related to the pursuit of value in the socialist market economy (Qiao et al., 2017, Ying et al., 2018). From the societal perspective, if China is to adapt to innovation-driven development, it must further improve labour quality; improve job crafting; promote the development of a large contingent of knowledge-based, technologically savvy, and innovative workers; and enhance the vitality of the socialist market economy (Hendriks et al., 2020). From the individual perspective, people's growing need for a better life and the people-centred concept of development in the new era require that organizations consider workers' job efficiency, satisfaction, and happiness while pursuing greater performance and striving to build harmonious labour relations (Zheng, 2020).

However, employee job crafting, as a typical initiative, is always inhibited in Chinese organizations (Yunshuo et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). The insufficiency of employee initiative is not only a special problem for a certain enterprise but also a problem of social reality that restricts the

development of Chinese enterprises across the whole country (Yunshuo et al., 2019). For example, a global survey on the abilities of primary and secondary school students showed that Chinese students exhibit extremely low levels of creativity and imagination (Ma et al., 2022, Wong, 2022). The same can be observed from government departments' handling of some group events (Zhang et al., 2022). In recent years, mass incidents have occurred frequently throughout China, but the relevant government departments have handled them in such an unsatisfactory manner that their solutions are not proactive, but instead require continuous supervision from superiors. This, too, is a manifestation of the lack of initiative of Chinese workers (Ying et al., 2018).

But why is this the case? The suppression of students' creativity, a kind of initiative, results from the prevention-focused style of education that is prevalent in China. Traditional exam-oriented education instills students with guidance on "what should you do" (Lei et al., 2010). As for the government's passive handling of public incidents, the regulatory tendency of an "accountability system" policy (Lei et al., 2010) emphasizes the responsibilities and obligations that the relevant departments should assume and the punishment for negligence (Wang et al., 2021). This constructs a prevention-focused context, which is bound to discourage initiative and ultimately affect the handling of events (Mingke and Kexin, 2021).

Why is employee job crafting, as a typical proactive activity, always reduced in Chinese organizations? The author believes that this is also related to the regulatory context of the workplace, considering the general lack of initiative among Chinese enterprise employees (Lei et al., 2010; Zheng, 2020). Although China's economy has made rapid development since the reform and opening-up, the social background of "stability prevails" and the traditional culture of the Golden Mean has meant that organizational leaders have shown more concern for stability, responsibility, and obligations in their work and dare not break the rules too casually (Weijin, 2021, Zheng, 2020). Such

leadership behaviours will inevitably negatively impact the personalities of members of the organization, and this will be very detrimental to organizational innovation and sustainable development.

The “Golden Mean” refers to the moral standards of being impartial in dealing with people and things and striving for balance and compromise (Qiao et al., 2017). The traditional Chinese cultural system of values does not advocate relying on individual power to control the environment (Zizhen et al., 2020). Instead, the Golden Mean emphasizes that responsibility and obligation under role norms are the important core of individual action. People's behavioural patterns must neither be biased towards group control of the individual nor be biased towards individual freedom of action (Qiao et al., 2017). This requires people to take a holistic approach to both the self and the group by integrating their internal needs and external environment to maintain balance and harmony between the self and the group (Shuyan, 2023). The Golden Mean's value orientation influences the way Chinese people perceive and act on information. It is the essence of the traditional Chinese cultural system of values, which is deeply integrated into China's national character and social psychology and thus regulates the Chinese people's work behaviour (Zhiqiang, 2021). The Golden Mean encompasses both the perception of the self and the group as well as the value orientation of "harmony" (Yang, Zhongfang, 2009). Two ancient philosophical maxims provide examples: "People can't be born without a group" (Xunzi, *Fortune of the State*) and "Those who can survive in a group are destroyed if they don't; those who survive in a good group are destroyed if they don't" (Qiao et al., 2017).

Indeed, in real enterprises, leadership behaviour plays a key role in employee job crafting. The leaders set goals, allocate resources, establish rules, and guide the work atmosphere (Rickleby and Stackhouse, 2022, Arici and Uysal, 2022). No matter what company they work for and at what level,

leaders can impact their subordinates' job crafting and even the whole department's innovation (Lei et al., 2010). The employee job crafting in their positions is often obscured by the leader's casual behaviours and operations (Grant and Parker, 2009). If researchers don't clarify the essential laws of the effect of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting from the mechanism and theoretical sources, it is impossible to take a fundamental intervention (Zheng, 2020)

Moreover, the stability/problem-oriented prevention nature and shortage of change/goal-oriented promotion nature shown in the leadership behaviour, that leaders tend to exhibit in the context of the Chinese Golden Mean, strangles employee job crafting. Under the social background of "accountability" and the traditional culture of the Golden Mean, which has long emphasized "stability over everything" in Chinese society, leaders show their pursuit of stability, concern about responsibilities and obligations in their work, and they dare not break the rules easily (Wang et al., 2021, Mingke and Kexin, 2021, Weijin, 2021, Zheng, 2020). For those enterprises in urgent need of innovation, leaders seldom try various ways to improve employee job crafting, such as encouraging reasonable suggestions, establishing innovation awards, and setting models in the enterprise. Instead, they tend to, in work, convey the following signals: this work or task should be completed by employees, and what the leader requires is the performance of responsibilities and risk avoidance (Lei et al., 2010).

Some practical problems should be addressed: What is the nature of the relationship between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting in Chinese organisations? In the context unique to China, why is employee job crafting, as important proactivity to enhance employee potential, job meaning and job satisfaction, often obscured by the casual behaviours and operations of the leader? To improve employee job crafting, what can leaders do? What personality traits can organisations choose as many employees as possible to



improve their work development level? What kind of organizational contexts can leaders consciously guide and build to improve employee job crafting?".

That is,

- (1) *What kind of behaviours leaders may show as much as possible to effectively impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting?*
- (2) *When facing these kinds of leadership behaviours, what are the employee reactions which then lead to the impact (improvement/ reduction) of employee job crafting?*
- (3) *Under what environmental context these leadership behaviours which impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting is more effective?*

Does the impacting (improving/reducing) relationship between these typical leadership behaviours and employee job crafting vary depending on different employee personalities?

## **1.2 Research rationale**

The critical debate in the research field has been identified: "What is the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organisations?" Specifically,

- (1) *What kind of leadership behaviour can effectively impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting?*
- (2) *Via improving what kind of employee reactions does the leadership behaviour effectively impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting?*
- (3) *Under what kind of organisation-level and individual-level context factors does the leadership behaviour effectively impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting?*

First, leadership behaviour is regarded as an important explanatory factor of organisational employee job crafting. Leadership plays a crucial role in determining employee job crafting (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Berdicchia

and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014, Berg et al., 2010b, Martin et al., 2013, Zheng, 2020). Leaders can influence employees through role modelling, goal definition, reward and encouragement, resource allocation and many other ways (Zheng, 2020; Parker and Bindl, 2016; Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Chi and Pan, 2012; Leana et al., 2009). In addition, leaders themselves are also responsible for conveying organisational norms and values, shaping organisational interaction mode, environment and atmosphere perceived by members (Rickley and Stackhouse, 2022; Arici and Uysal, 2022). As one of the essential manifestations of organisational behaviour, employee job crafting is bound to be deeply affected by leadership behaviour (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

Second, regulatory focus theory is an essential perspective for the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) pointed out that people have two basic self-regulation systems. One is promotion focus, which refers to the positive regulation of reward acquisition behaviour to make people focus on positive goals; the other is prevention focus, which refers to the positive regulation of the avoidance of punishment to make people focus on opposing goals (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Higgins and Pinelli, 2020, Scholer et al., 2019, Zheng, 2020). At the same time, the regulatory focus is not only an individual trait but also an individual state variable guided by real context (Scholer et al., 2019; Lei et al., 2010; Zheng, 2020). Researchers increasingly interpret the impact of leadership on employees as a process related to employee self-regulatory focus (Aycan and Shelia, 2019; Benjamin and Flynn, 2006). They believe that leadership's effect on employees is implemented by evoking employees' different situation focus. Explaining individual job crafting from

a regulatory focus theory perspective has two advantages over other perspectives. First, compared with the previous perspective used in job crafting with only one side of positivity/improvement, regulatory focus theory provides a two-sided perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction perspective (Scholer et al., 2019). Second, regulatory focus theory provides a perspective integrating trait and situation regulatory focus to interpret individual job crafting. It is believed that the trait regulatory focus and the situation regulatory focus jointly explain employee job crafting (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021; Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Zheng, 2020).

Finally, the "context-involved" strategy is adopted to assess the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. There are two reasons as follows. First, "context" is the core content of leadership research (Oc, 2018; Lei et al., 2012). Leadership research focuses on the interaction between leaders and the led in a specific context (Oc, 2018). That is to say, leadership mainly involves three aspects: leaders, the led and the context. So, the context itself is the core content of leadership research (Sharma, 2018). Second, leadership research requires in-depth context exploration (Oc, 2018, Lei et al., 2012). For example, leadership research is affected by the macro-level context outside the organisation, such as the country, region, and industry (Lei et al., 2012). Any leader and leadership phenomenon cannot eliminate the influence of the above context (Oc, 2018; Lei et al., 2012). Therefore, leadership research must go deep into the context (Oc, 2018; Lei et al., 2012). Therefore, it is proper to adopt the "context-involved" strategy when discussing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting.

### **1.3 Research aim and objectives**

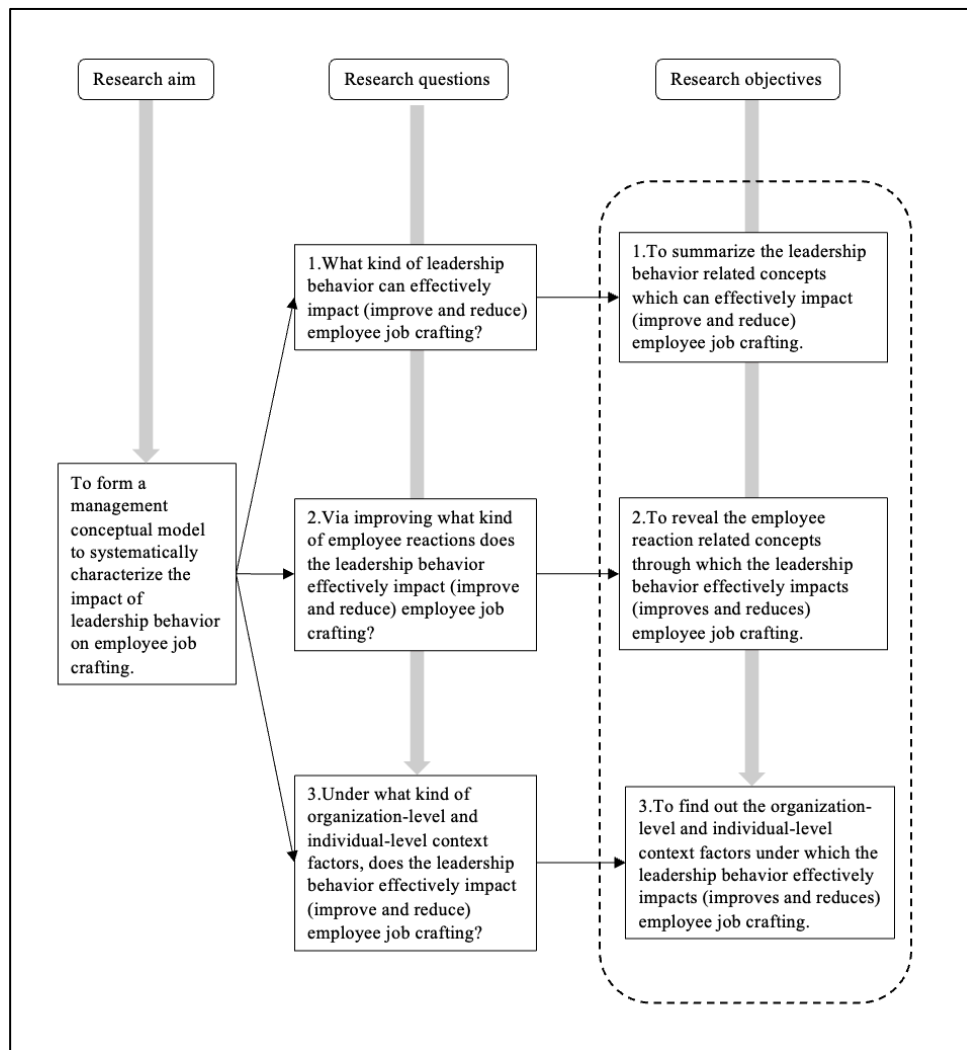
Based on the above statement, the author has developed the aim of this project. This study aims *"To form a management conceptual model to*

*systematically characterise the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting."*

In support of the aim mentioned, here are the research objectives:

- (1) To summarise the leadership behaviour-related concepts that can effectively impact (improve/ reduce) employee job crafting.*
- (2) To reveal the employee reaction-related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively impacts (improves/ reduces) employee job crafting.*
- (3) To find out the organisation-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively impacts (improves/ reduces) employee job crafting.*

**Figure 1–1 Linking research aim with the research questions and objectives**



Main sources: Developed from Bandura, 2021; Gan, 2018; Bavik et al., 2017; Yan et al., 2021; Parker and Bindl, 2016; Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Yufan and Lei, 2015

## 1.4 Operational definition of critical terms

**Regulatory focus** refers to the specific ways or tendencies that individuals exhibit in the self-regulation process of achieving goals (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). Self-regulation refers to the behaviour of individuals, such as self-change and self-control, in achieving established goals (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) suggests that any goal can be achieved through different strategic means. Based on human self-actualisation and security needs, ideal self and authentic self, regulatory focus theory distinguishes between promotion focus and

prevention focus, which deeply reveals the two types of self-regulation motivation patterns that humans exhibit due to different needs and self-states (Chaoping and Shiyong, 2019)

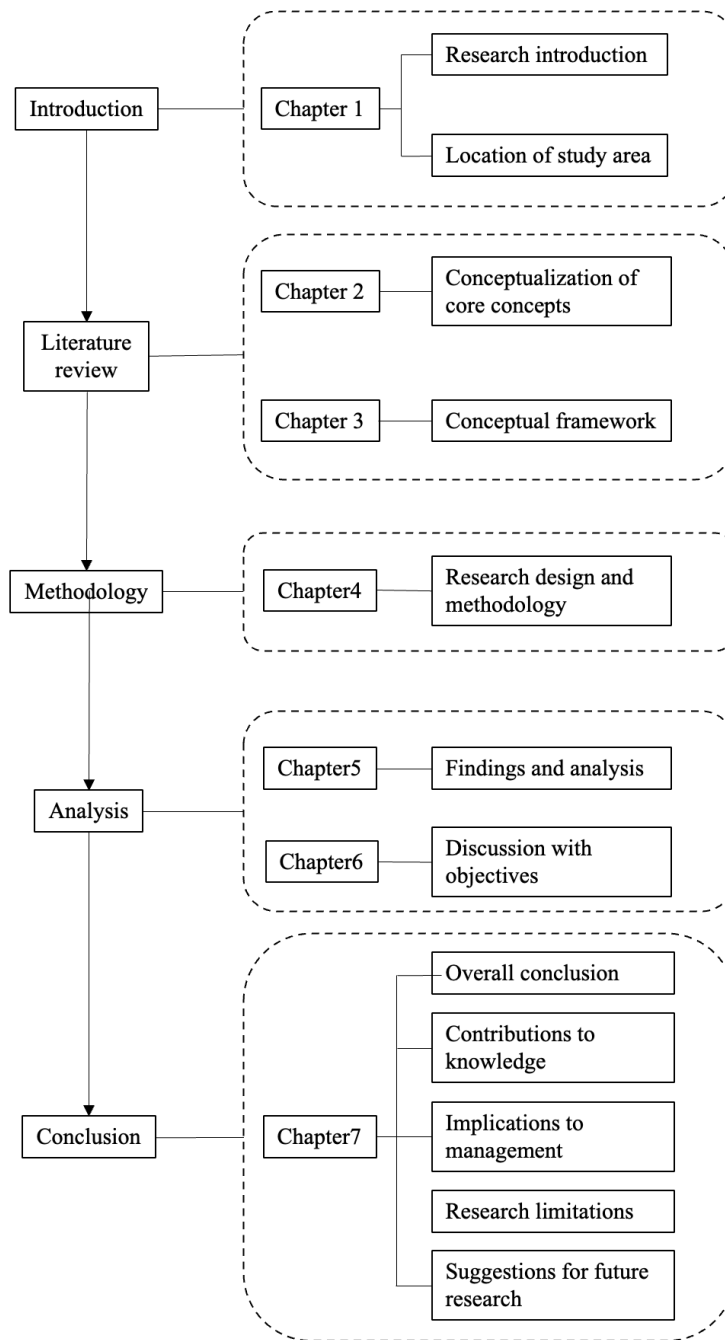
**Leadership behaviour** refers to the behaviour influencing the employee in the management process (Lei et al., 2012). This study takes the perspective of regulatory focus theory and systematically characterises leadership behaviour from the aspects of "role modelling" – "linguistic framework" – "feedback". (1) **Role modelling** refers to an embodiment of organisational norms, which employees will value and then imitate. The theory of social cognition emphasises the impact of role modelling on individuals (Bandura, 2021). (2) **Linguistic framing** refers to using different language descriptions to arrange work or tasks, which may trigger employees' different responses and change the overall understanding of the tasks. Based on the "framework effect" theory, leadership can influence the attitudes and behaviours of employees through the "framework effect" (Lecheler and De Vreese, 2019; Snow et al., 2018). (3) **Feedback** is a unique form of communication process. In leadership feedback, the source is the leader, the recipient is the employee, and the message includes the leadership evaluation of task completion (Ajjawi et al., 2021). Leadership feedback is increasingly recognised as an essential factor influencing employee motivation, behaviour, and performance (Zheng, 2020; Lei et al., 2010).

**Job crafting.** This study mainly follows Petrou et al. (2012b) definition of job crafting as seeking challenges, reducing demands, and seeking resources. This aligns with Tims and Bakker's (2010) conceptualisation as 'the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and resources with their abilities and needs' (Luu et al., 2021).

## 1.5 Flow of chapters

This thesis comprises seven chapters. **Chapter 1** introduces the research, followed by **Chapters 2** and **3**, which discuss the main areas of relevant literature and theoretical underpinnings. Then, **Chapter 4** presents the research philosophy, methods and data analysis techniques. These are then followed by the 'data' chapter - **Chapter 5**, where key results are presented with the relevant evidence found in the primary data. In **Chapter 6**, the discussion of the findings has been presented in a serial order, guided by research objectives. The final chapter (**Chapter 7**) combines the conclusion and implications of this study for knowledge, practice, and future research.

**Figure 1–2 Research structure**



Source: Author's conception,2023



## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Purpose and aims

Chapter 1 introduces the research with its essential characteristics and the main results. This literature review chapter provides an overview of the relevant key concepts and literature related to the topic. It is an integral part of the research process, starting with identifying the problem and continuing until a conclusion is drawn (Kumar, 2009). Thus, it is the foundation for a theoretical framework and critical evaluation of earlier studies. Therefore, this chapter has five aims.

1. To introduce leadership, leadership style and leadership behaviour,
2. To critically evaluate current literature within leadership field related to the impact of leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing, and leadership feedback
3. To introduce job crafting with its general concept, benefits, drawbacks, intervention strategies, antecedents,
4. To critically evaluate current literature within the job crafting field related to the impact of leadership on job crafting and job crafting in China, and
5. To highlight the research gap and critical insights from this review that are relevant in investigating the research objective.

### 2.2 Brief introduction of the core concepts

This thesis is based on leadership behaviour and job crafting. **Leadership behaviour** refers to the behaviour influencing the employee in the management process (Lei et al., 2012). This study takes the perspective of regulatory focus theory and systematically characterises leadership behaviour from the aspects of "role modelling", – "linguistic framework," – "feedback".

This study mainly follows Petrou et al. (2012b) definition of **job crafting** as seeking challenges, reducing demands, and seeking resources. This definition aligns with Tims and Bakker's (2010) conceptualisation as 'the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and resources with their abilities and needs' (Luu et al., 2021). These definitions are discussed below in 2.3 and 2.5.

## 2.3 Conceptualisation of leadership behaviour

### 2.3.1 *Leadership*

Leadership continues to be a topic of interest in the management literature even though there is, as yet no universal definition of leadership (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010, Northouse, 2021, Jago, 1982, Zheng, 2020). Generally, leadership is the act of directing and controlling the activities of a group of people who are willing to be led by another (Uslu, 2019). To many, leaders are not born but made (Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010). To be a good leader, one must now focus on skills and ability rather than personal qualities and behavioural characteristics (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016). A good leader is made through the process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Anderson et al., 2022, Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010)

**Leadership is defined** by various scholars from different perspectives, such as the competency/trait perspective, behavioural perspective, contingency perspective, transformational perspective, etc. (Mansaray, 2019, Khan et al., 2015). Leadership is defined by Webster's dictionary as guiding, conducting, proceeding, or being foremost among a group of people. It is the process of developing ideas and a vision, living by values that support those ideas and vision, influencing people or groups to embrace leader's behaviours, and making decisions about human and other resources to achieve organizational goals (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010)

Northouse (2021) described leadership as a process by which an individual impacts a group of other individuals to achieve a common goal and the success of the organization. This definition is in line with that of Jago (1982), who saw leadership as the process of influencing people and providing them with an environment conducive to achieving team or organizational objectives. Leadership is all about listening to people, supporting and encouraging them, and involving them in the decision-making and problem-solving processes (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016). These defining statements on leadership substantially share common characteristics (Uslu, 2019). First, leadership is a process. Second, it is a way of influencing. Third, it exists in a group context. Fourth, it aims to reach a defined goal.

Given the above terminological clarification of leadership, coming from the above selection of scholars, **it is necessary to contrast the concepts of leadership and management, or of leaders and managers** (Ronald, 2014). Thinking about the differences between leaders and managers can help to differentiate between leadership and management (Ronald, 2014). The former only exists if he or she has followers, whereas the latter need not necessarily have followers, e.g., an account manager (Ronald, 2014). Furthermore, the literature occasionally regards managers with disrespect as bureaucratic administrators, while the leader is elevated to an innovative visionary (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010, Ronald, 2014). Managers act formally, while leaders may also rule informally and indirectly (Uslu, 2019, Ronald, 2014). Judging leadership as “good” and management as “bad” is not an antiquated perspective but one that is still considered acceptable and regularly appears in scientific circles (Uzohue et al., 2016, Ronald, 2014). Viner et al. (2020) argued that management is getting things done through the effort of others, i.e., employees, while value-creating leadership is getting extraordinary things done with the willing help of others (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010, Ronald, 2014).

Management stands for order, regularity, and continuity, but leadership enables change and provides inspiring, motivating visions to move forward (Uslu, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016, Lei et al., 2010, Ronald, 2014). Whether leadership is just one task of a manager or is the functional dimension of management, or whether the two fields have to be regarded as totally different is still a matter of debate (Ellis, 2021). The author agrees with Northouse (2021) who argued that there is no exclusive differentiation between leadership and management, as leaders perform managers' tasks and vice versa. If there is a decisive key difference between the two, then the answer will not come from debates about ideal definitions (Northouse, 2021).

**Notable scholars discuss principles of leadership.** Still, it is crucial to evaluate by using leadership traits as they help determine leaders' strengths and weaknesses. This study itemises the basic principles of leadership: (1) Know self and seek self-improvement - To know self, leaders must evaluate self by using leadership traits to determine their strengths and weaknesses (Uzohue et al., 2016; Uslu, 2019). (2) Be technically proficient - Leaders must know their jobs and have a solid familiarity with their employees' tasks. Before leaders can lead, they must be able to do their job and know it well (Fallesen et al., 2011; Uslu, 2019). (3) Seek responsibility and take responsibility for their actions - Search for ways to guide their organisation to new heights when things go wrong (Fallesen et al., 2011; Uzohue et al., 2016). (4) Set the example - Be a good role model for their employees. They must hear what they are expected to do and see leaders doing it. Leaders should always lead by example (Fallesen et al., 2011; Uslu, 2019). (5) Know their people and look out for their well-being. Always consider the needs of employees and the importance of caring for their welfare (Uzohue et al., 2016). (6) Keep their workers informed - Know how to communicate with their workers and other key people (Fallesen et al., 2011; Uzohue et al., 2016). (7) Develop a sense of responsibility among their employees- Help to develop

good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities (Fallesen et al., 2011). (8) Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished. Communication is the key to this responsibility. A leader must be able to communicate effectively (Uzohue et al., 2016)

### **2.3.2 Leadership style**

Leadership styles are the approaches used to motivate followers (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015). It is helpful to thoroughly understand the different leadership styles as it will increase one's knowledge to lead effectively. **Leadership style refers to** the methods a leader adopts in a particular situation to achieve group goals and objectives ( Lei et al., 2010). The term is used to describe how a person exercises leadership in treating people and tasks. Several factors can help to determine which type of leadership style is most effective (Khan et al., 2015; Mansaray, 2019)

Sabnett and Ross (2007) submit that leadership styles are essential for the effectiveness of services and that directors should possess leadership skills to lead and manage their departments appropriately. Leadership styles should be selected to fit organisations, situations, groups, and individuals (Sabnett and Ross, 2007). Effective leadership is crucial to the proper operation and survival of an organisation, especially the health science libraries in Nigeria (Sabnett and Ross, 2007)

Uzohue et al. (2016) mention that initial theories about management and leadership style predominantly concentrated on how leadership in organisations applied authority. According to research done at the University of Michigan, Likert (1961) discovered **four different styles of leadership:** autocratic, paternalistic, participative, and laissez-faire. Likert's (1961) research proposes that consultative and participative leadership styles are more operational. However, he never thinks of a situation in which

management should have a role, such as directing its employees to do their work following the owner's order and design.

Furthermore, Ali et al. (2004) state that Stephen Covey records in his book "principle-centred leadership", which issues a leader typically concentrates on. He points out that leadership pay more attention to people than to things and also focuses on the 'long-term rather than the short-term goals; on values and principles rather than activities; on mission, purpose and direction rather than on methods, techniques and speed'. In addition, Noor-Mahomed (2016) observes that leadership has become a popular area of research as it has been discovered that leadership has over two dozen different styles, as already stated in the literature. Thus, each style differs entirely from the other and has dissimilar submission fields, including health, commerce, the public sector, and others. Importantly, Ali et al. (2004), in similar approaches, have stated the most conspicuous leadership styles, especially in business organisations, such as authoritarian leadership or autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, servant leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, strategic leadership, and bureaucratic leadership. Some of the more common styles include autocratic, bureaucratic, leadership and laissez-faire (Sandybayev, 2019, Mansaray, 2019)

First, the autocratic leadership style is often considered the classical approach (Mansaray, 2019). It is one in which the manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015). The manager does not consult employees, nor are they allowed to give any input (Mansaray, 2019; Uzohue et al., 2016). Employees are expected to obey orders without receiving any explanations (Mansaray, 2019, Uzohue et al., 2016). The motivation environment is produced by creating a structured set of rewards and punishments (Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Second, participative leadership, or democratic leadership, is generally

the most effective leadership style (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Third, the laissez-faire leadership style is also known as the "hands-off" style (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015). It is one in which the manager provides little or no direction and gives employees as much freedom as possible (Uzohue et al., 2016). All authority or power is given to the employees, who must determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems independently (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Fourth, researchers found that children under delegated leadership, or laissez-faire leadership, were the least productive of all three groups (Mansaray, 2019). The children in this group also made more demands on the leader, showed little cooperation, and could not work independently (Khan et al., 2015). Fifth, delegation leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015). This style can be effective when group members are highly qualified in a specific area (Uzohue et al., 2016). Finally, bureaucratic leadership is where the manager manages "by the book. Everything must be done according to procedure or policy. If the book doesn't cover it, the manager refers to the next level above him or her. This manager is more of a police officer than a leader (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016)

Different situations require different types of degrees of support and guidance from the leader (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Uzohue et al. (2016) emphasise the need for a manager to find his leadership style. In the past several decades, management experts have revolutionised how they define leadership and their attitudes toward it (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). They have gone from a very classical autocratic approach to a creative, participative one

(Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016). Somewhere along the line, it was determined that not everything old was bad, and nothing new was good (Uzohue et al., 2016). Instead, different styles are needed for various situations, and each leader needs to know when to exhibit a particular approach (Khan et al., 2015). Table 2-1 is the **summary of the leadership characteristics, applicable/not applicable context, advantages, and disadvantages of common leadership styles** (Mansaray, 2019; Khan et al., 2015; Uzohue et al., 2016)



**Table 2-1 Summary of the leadership characteristics, applicable/not applicable context, advantages, and disadvantages of common leadership styles**

Autocratic style of leadership/ authoritarian style of leadership	Leader's characteristics	Rely on threats and punishment to influence employees; do not trust employees; do not allow for employee input; autocratic leadership is not bad; sometimes it is the most effective style to use; new, untrained employees who do not know which tasks to perform or which procedures to follow; effective supervision can be provided only through detailed orders and instructions; employees do not respond to any other leadership style; there are high-volume production needs on a daily basis; there is limited time in which to make a decision; a manager's power is challenged by an employee; the area was poorly managed; work needs to be coordinated with another department or organization.
	Applicable/not applicable context	Should not be used when: employees become tense, fearful, or resentful; employees expect to have their opinions heard; employees begin depending on their manager to make all their decisions; there is low employee morale, high turnover and absenteeism.
Democratic style of leadership/ participative /democratic style of leadership	Advantages	Good control; overview; unimpaired programme; youth protection laws; no long discussions; group members know what they must do; rules give security; discipline.
	Disadvantages	Defiance; no development of freedom of choice; listlessness; less own initiative (fears, hatred toward other members); no trust; less or no self-confidence; hierarchy is promoted; group interests are suppressed; groups are not relaxed; rivalry amongst the group members; ability to criticize is suppressed; the independence of the group is weakened by the authority of the leader; talents are not recognized and therefore not promoted; fear turns into aggression, therefore violence.
Democratic style of leadership/ participative /democratic style of leadership	Leader's characteristics	Develops plans to help employees evaluate their own performance; allows employees to establish goals; encourages employees to grow on the job and be promoted; recognizes and encourages achievement; like the other styles, the democratic style is not always appropriate; it is most successful when used with highly skilled or experienced employees or when implementing operational changes or resolving individual or group problems.
	Applicable/not applicable context	Should not be used when: there is not enough time to get everyone's input; it's easier and more cost-effective for the manager to make the decision; the business can't afford mistakes; the manager feels threatened by this type of leadership; employee safety is a critical concern
	Advantages	Self-sufficient; compromises are agreed; motivating; varied ideas; has the confidence of the group members; strengthens public interests; prohibitions are understood; an understanding of most problems; the possibility to grow

		creatively is given; freedom of opinion; equal rights; makes integration of outsiders possible.
	Disadvantages	Time consuming for the leader; difficult for the leader; very dependent upon age; no optimal solutions; lots of discussions can become boring.
Laissez-faire style of leadership/ delegative (laissez-faire) leadership	Applicable/not applicable context	An effective style to use when: employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated; employees have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own; outside experts, such as staff specialists or consultants are being used; employees are trustworthy and experienced. This style should not be used when: it makes employees feel insecure at the unavailability of a manager; the manager cannot provide regular feedback to let employees know how well they are doing; managers are unable to thank employees for their good work; the manager doesn't understand his or her responsibilities and is hoping the employees can cover for him or her.
	Advantages	Freedom to choose; no burden on the team members; sometimes independent; the group leader hardly requires any preparation time; there is a lot of freedom; own social structures
	Disadvantages	The group attempts to overstep the limit; unsatisfied minorities; tolerance between the group members is destroyed; misuse of rules; team members are no longer taken seriously; no responsibility; weaker members are held back; resignation; no initiative; the group does not stick together; high danger of injury to supervision laws.
Bureaucratic style of leadership	Applicable/not applicable context	Effective when: employees are performing routine tasks over and over; employees need to understand certain standards or procedures; employees are working with dangerous or delicate equipment that requires a definite set of procedures to operate. Safety or security training is being conducted; employees are performing tasks that require handling cash. Ineffective when:; work habits form that is hard to break, especially if they are no longer useful; employees lose their interest in their jobs and in their fellow workers; employees do only what is expected of them and no more.

Main sources: Developed from Mansaray (2019), Uzohue et al. (2016), Khan et al. (2015)

### 2.3.3 *Leadership behaviour*

**Leadership behaviour** refers to what the leader can do to influence the leader during the leadership process (Lei et al., 2012). After considering the viewpoints of existing scholars on the daily behaviour of leaders, in this section, the author will analyse three related research on leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing, and leadership feedback (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Lei et al., 2012, Lei et al., 2010, Yufan and Lei, 2015)

Specifically, it is summarised based on the following ideas: First, the relevant qualitative research conclusions of this study show that the core categories of leadership behaviour impacting the daily behaviour of employee job crafting are role modelling, linguistic framing, and leadership feedback. Second, in the previous study on job crafting, the researcher investigates leadership behaviour, focusing on one or some specific dimensions, such as transactional leadership behaviour (Chi and Pan, 2012). However, they do not systematically and comprehensively clarify what kind of leadership behaviour can be and how it affects employee job crafting, which is not convenient for guiding the management practice of leaders (Chi and Pan, 2012). Finally, leadership behaviour in the three areas of role modelling, linguistic framing and leadership feedback can directly affect employees, and they will more clearly reflect the behaviour of leaders in impacting job crafting (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Lei et al., 2012, Lei et al., 2010, Yufan and Lei, 2015)

Therefore, the following study will sort out and summarise the three related research studies on role modelling, linguistic framing, and leadership feedback, hoping to provide a solid foundation and corresponding enlightenment for the further development of this research.

**Leadership role modelling.** Social cognitive theory (Bandura and Walters, 1977; Bandura, 1986) emphasises the impact of role modelling on

individuals and holds that individuals learn by observing role models and choose behaviours that they think are beneficial and suitable to imitate. For subordinates, leaders occupy a higher position and have greater power. Their role modelling will be regarded as the embodiment of organisational norms and will be valued and imitated by subordinates more (Bandura, 2021). Based on the perspective of regulatory focus theory, some scholars also point out that different role modelling of leaders contain different regulatory focus orientations, which realise the impact on initiative activities by arousing the regulatory focus of subordinates (Yan et al., 2021, Zheng, 2020, Kakkar, 2019, Lai et al., 2018)

**Leadership linguistic framing.** The concept of framing, as used in the study of social movements, is derived primarily from the work of Goffman (1974). Framing denotes "schemata of interpretation" that enable individuals "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences within their life space and the world at large (Wei and Youmin, 2009a; Levin et al., 1998; Lei et al., 2011). Framing helps render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby organise experience and guide action (Wei and Youmin, 2009a; Levin et al., 1998; Lei et al., 2011). Therefore, leadership linguistic framing refers to how a leader locates, perceives, identifies and labels the task information at work (Lecheler and De Vreese, 2019; Snow et al., 2018; Wei and Youmin, 2009a; Levin et al., 1998; Lei et al., 2011)

**Leadership feedback.** Feedback is a particular form of communication process in an organisation, which is composed of three parts: feedback source, feedback message and feedback recipient, in which feedback information is related to the performance of feedback recipient (Wisniewski et al., 2020, Ilgen et al., 1979, Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, in leadership feedback, the feedback source is the leader, and the feedback recipient is its employees or subordinates. The feedback includes evaluating the number and quality of

tasks completed by employees, whether they meet the preset goals, standards and performance level expected by the organisation and the behaviour, ability, views, and actions of employees at work. Leadership feedback is gradually considered an essential factor affecting employee work motivation, behaviour, and performance (Ajjawi et al., 2021; Sleiman et al., 2020).

## **2.4 Impact of leadership behaviour**

After considering the viewpoints of existing scholars on the daily behaviour of leaders (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Lei et al., 2012; Lei et al., 2010; Yufan and Lei, 2015), in this section, the author analyses the topic-related research on leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing, and leadership feedback (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Bandura, 2021, Levin et al., 1998, Tims and Bakker, 2010)

### **2.4.1 *Impact of leadership role modelling***

Social cognition theory (Bandura and Walters, 1977; Bandura, 1986) emphasises the impact of role modelling on individuals. It believes that individuals learn by observing role models and choose behaviours that they think are beneficial and suitable for imitation (Bandura and Walters, 1977; Bandura, 1986). The leaders hold a higher position for the organisation's members and have more power. Their modelling will manifest the organisation's guidelines, and employees will value and imitate it (Bandura, 2021). Based on this theoretical point of view, some scholars have analysed the impact of leadership role modelling on employee moral behaviour, sales behaviour, work situation regulatory focus, work-family balance and other work attitudes and behavioural output (Bavik et al., 2017; Gan, 2018; Yinghui and Ken, 2016). Although, theoretically, role modelling may be an essential way to inspire individual job crafting (Bandura, 2021), the discussion on the

relationship between role modelling and job crafting, especially in the context of organisation, is very rare.

(1) Direct impact of leadership role modelling on employee

When analysing the direct relationship between leadership role modelling and employee results, existing research mainly focuses on exploring and verifying the impact of leadership role modelling on employee ethical behaviour (Moberg, 2000; Brown et al., 2005; Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas, 2011; Hui, 2011), work situation regulatory focus (Higgins and Silberman, 1998, Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Lockwood et al., 2002) and sales behaviour (Hawes and Rich, 1998). Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas (2011) explore the impact of the role modelling and restraint behaviour of senior leaders on the moral behaviour of employees. They surveyed the employees of bank branches or offices in several five provinces and recovered 436 valid questionnaires. Brockner and Higgins (2001) divide the role modelling of leaders into two types: promotion-focused and prevention-focused, for the first time. They point out that the role modelling of leaders can be achieved by arousing employee work regulatory focus. The more the leader shows a promotion or prevention focused role modelling, the more likely his employees will imitate accordingly. Through the review of previous literature, Hawes and Rich (1998) theoretically explore the relationship between leadership role modelling and employee sales behaviour during sales training. Through many literature reviews, the author summarises three key constructs affecting subordinates during sales training: leadership role modelling, leadership feedback, and subordinates' trust in leaders. The author analyses and defines the above three constructs in terms of content and logic and expounds in detail the relationship between them and subordinates' sales behaviour in theory.

Although scholars have always valued the relationship between leadership role modelling and employee proactive behaviour, relevant

research is relatively lacking (Perry-Smith, 2001; Wu et al., 2008). Research on the relationship between leadership role modelling and employee job crafting is even rarer (Zheng, 2020). Through an experiment, Shalley and Perry-Smith (2001) explore the process of organisational role modelling and performance evaluation on employee creativity in tasks. The experimental results show that when completing a management task, the subjects who were provided with innovative role modelling had a higher level of intrinsic motivation and creative performance than those who did not offer innovative creativity. Wu et al. (2008) clearly define the two concepts of promotion focused role modelling and prevention focused role modelling. If a leader seeks improvement in his work through a proactive approach, shows development momentum in multiple areas, and pays little attention to compliance with the organisation's routine procedures and avoiding mistakes, then the leader shows a facilitating focus role modelling.

On the contrary, if the leader emphasises compliance with organisational procedures and rules in behaviour to avoid criticism from the upper level, even if breaking such rules is reasonable or an inevitable condition for successful work, the leader shows a role modelling of prevention focus. At the same time, the author also developed a scale for leadership regulatory focused role modelling and tested the relationship between leadership regulatory focused role modelling and employee initiative through an empirical study in a Chinese context. The results of data analysis show that leadership promotion focused role modelling has a significant positive correlation with employee initiative. In contrast, the reduction relationship between the leadership prevention focused role modelling and employee initiative has not been verified.

## (2) Impact mechanism of leadership role modelling

There is only a minimal amount of literature in the existing research on the impact mechanism of leadership role modelling (Neubert et al., 2008; XU,

2018; Kwan et al., 2010; Zheng, 2020). They believe that leadership regulatory focused role modelling, guiding employee work situations (Neubert et al., 2008, XU, 2018) and improving skills (Kwan et al., 2010) affect their attitudes and behavioural outcomes. For example, Neubert et al., 2008 used 250 full-time employees as a sample to study the relationship between leadership role modelling, employee work regulatory focus, and employees' job results. The results of the empirical test show that leaders can improve employees' regulatory focus through their role modelling and then influence their subsequent behaviours and results. Through two data collection periods, Kwan et al. (2010) finally used 665 technical employees of Chinese companies as a sample to deeply analyse the relationship between leadership role modelling, employee personal learning, and employee "work-family" feedback. The empirical research concludes that leadership role modelling significantly promotes employee work-related learning and skill improvement. At the same time, employee skill improvement mediates the positive impact of leadership role modelling on employee "work-family" feedback.

When analysing the mechanism of the impact of leadership role modelling on employees, only a minimal amount of research is based on regulatory focus theory, which discusses the effects of leadership role modelling by improving the work situation of employees from the theoretical level (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Wu et al., 2008, Zheng, 2020). For example, Brockner and Higgins (2001), for the first time, divide leadership role modelling into two types: facilitating focus and prevention focus. They point out that leadership role modelling can influence their creative behaviours by arousing the regulatory focus of the employee situation. The research of Wu et al. (2008) theoretically explores the idea that leadership role modelling can influence employee initiative behaviours by improving different regulatory focuses in employees' work situations. Still, it only



empirically tests the positive correlation between leadership role modelling and employee active behaviour. Zheng (2020) constructs a mediated moderation model related to perceived leader regulatory-focused modelling, work complexity, work regulatory focus and employee job crafting.

### (3) Research comment

To sum up, most of the research on the impact of leadership role modelling on employees focuses on the analysis of the effect of leadership role modelling on employee moral behaviour, work situation regulatory focus, sales behaviour and other work attitudes and behaviours (Hui, 2011, Lockwood et al., 2002, Hawes and Rich, 1998). The analysis of the impact mechanism of the above relationship is also lacking (Neubert et al., 2008; XU, 2018; Kwan et al., 2010; Zheng, 2020). A small amount of research mainly explores the mediation role of employee work situation regulatory focus and skill improvement in the impact of leadership role modelling (Neubert et al., 2008; XU, 2018; Kwan et al., 2010; Zheng, 2020)

At the same time, research on the impact mechanism of leadership role modelling on employee job crafting is still lacking. Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) explains the social cognitive perspective for individual proactive behaviour. Work regulatory focus is also regarded as a moderation factor in the impact mechanism of leadership on individual proactivity (Kark et al., 2018). Flexible thinking and willingness to take risks are the premises that individuals can and dare to break the established ways of doing things and presenting and practising novel ideas (Hung et al., 2020; Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019). Promotion-focused individuals exhibit proactive thinking and ideas, broad and abstract interpretation skills, and risk appetite; however, prevention-focused individuals exhibit security tendencies, conventional thinking patterns, and risk aversion preferences (Hung et al., 2020; Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019). Therefore, from the perspective of flexible thinking and willingness to change, work regulatory focus promotion

will improve job crafting, while work regulatory focus prevention will reduce job crafting.

Some experimental studies have discussed and verified the relationship between regulatory focus and job crafting (Xizhou et al., 2020). According to regulatory focus theory, some studies have explored the guidance and shaping of the leader role modelling in the context of work, and the more the leaders demonstrate the promotion or prevention of behavioural role modelling, the more likely the employees will imitate accordingly (Valle et al., 2019, Yuankun and Hongdan, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting from the regulatory focus perspective.

Based on the above considerations and the deficiencies and enlightenment of existing research, the author believes that regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) has important guiding significance when analysing the impact of leadership role modelling on employee job crafting.

#### ***2.4.2 Impact of leadership linguistic framing***

In the current organisational environment of "lack of meaning", it is imperative for leaders to transmit information about management issues or tasks that they have identified to their employees (Wei and Youmin, 2009a). As Levin et al. (1998) noted, objectively equal information will lead to different judgments and decisions (framing effects) due to different framing methods. In other words, when motivating employees, leaders use different language description methods to arrange tasks or tasks, which will trigger various reactions from employees. This language description method is the "leadership linguistic framing" that the author is concerned about, and its differences may change organisation members' overall understanding of work or tasks. In the following, the author will sort out and summarise the related research on leadership linguistic framing.

### (1) Framing effect related research

Leadership linguistic framing is derived from extensively applying the "framing effect" theory in leadership research. Researchers believe that leaders can influence the attitudes and behaviours of employees in the organisation through the "framing effect". Based on previous research, Lei et al. (2011) put forward the concept of leadership linguistic framing. They pointed out that leaders use different language description methods to arrange tasks, which will trigger different employee reactions. This language description method is concerned with the "leadership linguistic framing", whose differences may change the overall orientation of the organisation members' understanding of work or tasks.

The understanding of "framing" (Goffman, 1979) refers to "Schemata of interpretation", which enables individuals to "locate, perceive, recognise and label" what happens in their life space or world Things. Tversky and Kahneman (1981) first applied "framing" to individual decision-making. They proposed the concept of "decision framing", which refers to the idea formed in decision-makers' minds about the actions, results, and contingencies associated with specific choice behaviours. Tversky and Kahneman (1981) found through the "Asian Disease Problem" experiment that the risk preference of decision-makers is affected by the description of the option language. This phenomenon that changes in the way of information description leads to changes in the participants' preference is the "framing effect".

In the past few decades, the research focusing on the "framing effect" in the field of individual judgment and decision-making has been expanded in various fields, such as health or clinical decision-making, perceptual judgment, consumer choice, social dilemma and negotiation behaviour (Levin et al., 1998). Although there are many fields of application, the research focuses on the discussion and analysis of the direct impact of the

information or task-established framing mode on the target object and its contextual moderation effect. The research on the impact mechanism of framing has not received much attention. Existing studies have focused on analysing and verifying the direct impact of framing on the persuasiveness of information (Lee and Aaker, 2004; Semin et al., 2005; Holler et al., 2008; Yi and Baumgartner, 2008), decision-making behaviour (Mittal and Ross Jr, 1998, Guibing et al., 2002, Kuvaas and Kaufmann, 2004, Xuefeng et al., 2007), emotional response(Roney et al., 1995, Xiangyun et al., 2007). and task motivation and performance (Yan et al., 2021) and the moderation role of individual regulatory focus (Semin et al., 2005, Holler et al., 2008, Yi and Baumgartner, 2008, Shah et al., 1998), individual emotions(Mittal and Ross Jr, 1998, Guibing et al., 2002, Kuvaas and Kaufmann, 2004), individual personality (Xuefeng et al., 2007, Roney et al., 1995, Xiangyun et al., 2007) and mission objectives(Lee and Aaker, 2004) in the impact.

For example, Lee and Aaker(2004) explore the relationship between the framing mode of information and persuasiveness through a series of laboratory studies. The results of the experimental data analysis show that the framing mode of information (acquisition/loss) and the focus (promotion/prevention) contained in the information influence others together and affect the individual's acceptance of information. Specifically, when the information acquisition framing is combined with the promotion goal, and the loss framing is combined with the prevention goal, it can produce better persuasiveness for the individual. Kuvaas and Kaufmann (2004), taking 125 students from a Norwegian university as the subjects, conducted an experiment to explore the impact of information framing mode, individual emotion, and cognitive needs on individual decision-making. The results show that the individual information framing (gain/loss), individual emotion and cognition needs to affect their attitude and behaviour in decision-making. Suppose the participants' framing pattern matches the individual

emotion type (acquisition framing matches positive emotion, loss framing matches negative emotion). In that case, their memory is better, and their overconfidence is lower. However, this impact is moderated by the individual's cognitive needs and only occurs in subjects with low cognitive needs. Roney et al. (1995) explore the effect of task framing mode and performance feedback framing mode on individual emotions through two experimental studies. In the experiment, the author controls the framing mode of "focusing on positive results" and "focusing on negative results". The conclusions of the experimental analysis show that the framing mode of "positive results focus" is more likely to improve individual emotions related to the "happiness-frustration" dimension.

In contrast, the framing mode of "negative results focus" is more likely to improve the individual's "anxiety-calm" dimension. Shah et al. (1998) explores the impact of task framing mode on individual motivation and performance. The research conclusions show that matching task framing and the individual's regulatory focus type can enhance the individual's task motivation and performance. Specifically, the task promotion focused framing ("gain no gain" information presentation) is more likely to improve the task motivation and performance of the individuals with promotion focus than the prevention focused framing ("loss no loss" information presentation), while the task prevention focused framing is more likely to improve the task motivation and performance of the individuals with prevention focus than the task promotion focused framing.

The framing mode of the task is also gradually recognised as one of the critical factors affecting the level of individual initiative behaviour. Like other related research on framing effects, a small amount of research in this part also focuses on the discussion and analysis of the direct impact of the tasking framing on the individual's active behaviour and the moderation effect of

individual traits in the impact (Friedman et al., 2007, Dew, 2009, Giuca, 2012, Lei et al., 2012).

## (2) Framing effect in leadership research

Nowadays, competition among organisations is becoming increasingly fierce, and the uncertainties and challenges they face are also rising. In such an environment, organisation members generally experience the phenomenon of "loss of meaning" (Gioia et al., 2000), and at this time, they also need guidance from their leaders (Wei and Youmin, 2009a). At this time, leaders must pass on the management problems or tasks identified to the organisation's members. As the framing effect theory (Levin et al., 1998) points out, the objectively same information will lead to different judgments and decisions of individuals due to differences in framing modes. In other words, in communication between leaders and employees, different ways of describing the same problem or task may trigger different employee responses and sometimes even change some members' overall understanding of the event. Therefore, the framing effect theory is helpful for an in-depth analysis of the mechanism of leadership's impact on employees. It helps to clarify the following questions: Does the leader also show different framing forms when describing problems or tasks to the organisation staff? Whether these framing forms will impact employees' subsequent attitudes and behavioural performance? And what is the impact mechanism?

Judging from the literature, scholars have begun applying the "framing effect" theory to leadership research in recent years. They believe leaders can implement meaning management by impacting employees with the "framing effect" and can use information framing techniques to motivate employees to achieve organisational goals. Existing studies have specifically analysed and verified the relationship between leadership linguistic framing and employee attitudes and behaviours (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Lei et al., 2012; Roundy, 2010; Gino and Margolis, 2011), meaning generation (Bean and

Hamilton, 2006, Fiss and Zajac, 2006, Yufan et al., 2009) and leadership effectiveness (Bligh and Hess, 2007, Naidoo and Lord, 2008).

For example, Brockner and Higgins (2001), for the first time, divided the leadership use of language and symbols into two types: promotion focused, and prevention focused and pointed out that leaders can use language and symbols to arouse the work regulatory focus of employees in their work, and then affect their subsequent attitudes and behaviours. The more the leader shows a promotion or prevention linguistic framing, the more employees' corresponding promotion or prevention regulatory focus is improved. Through research conducted in four laboratories, Gino and Margolis (2011) investigated the relationship between individual regulatory focus and organisational moral behaviour. The results show that promotion focus may lead to an increase in the probability of individuals' unethical behaviour in the organisation, and at the same time, it is significantly positively correlated with compensatory moral behaviour; the organisation's moral framing (ambition/obedience) will also impact the individual's ethical behaviour, and the regulatory focus of the individual shows the moderation effect in the impact. Bean and Hamilton (2006) used ethnographic research to investigate a Norwegian state-owned telecommunications group. The impact of leadership linguistic framing on the meaning generation of employees is explored through the study of company downsizing events. The qualitative research analyses leadership linguistic framing from leadership language labelling, conceptual anchoring, and topic expression. The final research conclusion shows that, through the meaning generation of employees about the company's downsizing event, leadership linguistic framing impacts their response and corresponding behaviour. Taking college students from a college in the Midwestern United States as subjects, Naidoo and Lord (2008) conducted an experimental study to discuss the impact mechanism of leadership linguistic framing on the perception of leadership charisma. In the

experiment, leadership linguistic framing in speech was distinguished into two categories: high imagery level and low imagery level. The final research results show that high-imagery-level framing can effectively improve the perception of leadership charisma, and positive emotion plays the mediation role.

In leadership research, the "framing effect" is used to manage meaning through language or rhetoric. The research points are relatively scattered, and the in-depth and systematic discussion of leadership linguistic framing itself and the impact of leadership linguistic framing on employee attitudes and behaviours is relatively insufficient. Therefore, it is undoubtedly necessary to apply the "framing effect" to the dialogue system of interaction between leaders and employees and to deeply explore the impact mechanism of leadership linguistic framing on employees.

### (3) Research comment

By reviewing the research related to leadership linguistic framing, the author finds that the "framing effect" theory-related research has been rich, but the existing research is more focused on the discussion and analysis of the direct impact of leadership linguistic framing on the target object and the contextual moderation effect in it while ignoring the in-depth discussion of the leadership linguistic framing itself and its impact mechanism. The framing of the information or tasks involved is derived from the researcher's assumptions or some classic cases, mainly focusing on relatively simple question framing modes, like "positive/negative" mode and "gain/loss" mode, etc. At the same time, existing studies have analysed the linguistic framing from the perspective of regulatory focus theory, which is reflected in the following two aspects. First, a small amount of research distinguishes the linguistic framing from the perspective of regulatory focus theory. For example, Naidoo and Lord (2008) extend the typical "positive/negative" information framing model and divide the positive framing into gain and no



loss, while the negative framing was subdivided into loss and no gain. Roney et al. (1995) and Shah et al. (1998) have directly controlled the task framing in the experiment as promotion focused and prevention focused. Second, individual trait regulatory focus has been proven to be the contextual moderation variable in the impact of linguistic framing. Existing research also shows that task linguistic framing is an important factor affecting individual proactive behaviour. At the same time, the "framing effect" theory is increasingly being used in leadership research. They believe that leaders can influence the attitudes and behaviours of employees in the organisation through the "framing effect". However, the research points are relatively scattered, and the discussion on leadership linguistic framing itself and the deeper mechanism of its impact on employees is relatively insufficient. Therefore, based on the above discussion, this study believes that it is necessary to apply the framing effect theory and regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) to the research on the impact of leadership linguistic framing on employee job crafting and in-depth explore the effect of leadership linguistic framing on employee by improving employee work regulatory focus, and to clarify the moderation role of employee trait regulatory focus in the impact process.

#### **2.4.3 *Impact of leadership feedback***

Feedback is a particular form of communication process in an organisation (Ajjawi et al., 2021). It comprises three parts: the source, the message, and the recipient. The feedback is related to the performance of the feedback recipient (Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, in leadership feedback, the feedback source is the leader, and the feedback recipients are their employees or employees (Lei et al., 2010). The feedback information includes the number and quality of tasks completed by employees, whether they have reached the pre-set goals, standards, the performance level expected by the

organisation, as well as the evaluation of employee behaviours, abilities, and viewpoints at work (Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Lei et al., 2010). Leadership feedback has gradually been recognised as an essential factor affecting employee work motivation, behaviour and performance, and some studies have analysed and verified the relationship between them (Orpen and King, 1989; Hawes and Rich, 1998; Rathel et al., 2008; Kacmar et al., 1996). At the same time, the relationship between leadership feedback and employee proactive behaviour has also begun to attract scholars' attention (Orpen and King, 1989; Hawes and Rich, 1998; Rathel et al., 2008; Kacmar et al., 1996; Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001, Joo et al., 2012, Junwei, 2003, Lei et al., 2010). This part generally reviews the following two aspects: the direct impact of leadership feedback on employee output and the impact mechanism.

#### (1) Direct impact of leadership feedback on employee

When analysing the direct relationship between leadership feedback and employee behaviour results, existing research has focused on the impact of leadership feedback on employee work attitude (Orpen and King, 1989), sales behaviour (Hawes and Rich, 1998), communication behaviour (Rathel et al., 2008) and the impact of evaluation behaviour (Kacmar et al., 1996). For example, Orpen and King (1989) discuss the effects of leadership feedback (positive/negative), trustworthiness and professionalism on employee responses and effort intentions. The result shows that leadership feedback is significantly related to the reaction to the leader and the intention to exert effort in the employee's tasks. Through many literature reviews, Hawes and Rich (1998) summarise three key constructs affecting employees during sales training: leadership feedback, role modelling, and employee trust in the leader. The authors analyse and define the above three constructs from the content and logic, and at the same time, theoretically elaborate on the relationship between them and the sales behaviour of their employees. Rathel et al. (2008)

explore the impact of leadership performance feedback on the classroom behaviour of preservice teachers. The results show that leadership exact performance feedback will promote teachers' communication behaviour. Kacmar et al. (1996) deeply explore the impact of leadership feedback style (positive/negative) and impression management strategy on employee attitudes and behavioural responses. The results show that, compared with negative feedback from the leader, positive feedback can improve positive evaluation of the leader, positive response to performance evaluation, and positive evaluation of leadership feedback intentions. At the same time, some studies have explored and verified the direct relationship between leadership feedback and employee proactive behaviour (Orpen and King, 1989; Hawes and Rich, 1998; Rathel et al., 2008; Kacmar et al., 1996; Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001, Joo et al., 2012).

## (2) Impact mechanism of leadership feedback

Existing studies have also discussed the impact mechanism of leadership feedback. It is believed that leadership feedback can improve employees' sense of self-efficacy (Harackiewicz and Larson, 1986; Shea and Howell, 1999), emotional response (Belschak and Hartog, 2010), regulatory focus (Yufan and Lei, 2015; Jingyan, 2010), work engagement (Xupei et al., 2012) and leadership-member relationship (Yufan and Lei, 2015) and then further impact employee behaviour and performance. For example, Shea and Howell (1999) explore the impact of leadership feedback style (internal/external/no feedback) and behaviour style (transformational/transactional) on employee task performance. The study results show that leadership feedback style impacts employee performance by improving self-efficacy. Belschak and Hartog (2010) explore the relationship between leadership feedback, employee emotional responses, and employee behaviour outside the role. The research results show that leadership feedback valence, feedback pathways and their interaction terms are significantly related to employee out-of-role

behaviours, such as counterproductive behaviour, turnover intention, civic behaviour, and emotional commitment. Employee emotional reactions play a mediation role. The conclusions of Jingyan's (2010) empirical research show that employee regulatory focus promotion positively predicts innovation behaviour, organisational citizenship behaviour and task performance, while prevention regulatory focus positively predicts task performance and willingness to respond. Positive feedback promotes employee innovative behaviour, organisational citizenship behaviour, and task performance by improving employee regulatory focus promotion. Negative feedback promotes employee task performance and feedback response willingness by improving employee regulatory focus prevention. Hui et al. (2011) analyse the mechanism of leadership feedback on employee organisational citizenship behaviour. The results show that leadership feedback is significantly positively correlated with the dimensions of help behaviour and admonition behaviour in employee organisational citizenship behaviour; leadership feedback promotes helping behaviours by enhancing employee work engagement and reducing job burnout; by enhancing employee work engagement, they can also effectively improve their admonition behaviours. Jing and Xingshan (2011) study the impact mechanism of leadership feedback on employees' organisational citizenship behaviour. The conclusion of regression analysis shows that constructive feedback is significantly positively correlated with employee organisational citizenship behaviour, and the leader-member exchange plays a mediation role.

When analysing the impact mechanism of leadership feedback on employee proactive behaviour, only a tiny amount of research has conducted relevant discussions on the theoretical level (Junwei, 2003; Lei et al., 2010).

### (3) Research comment

To sum up, most of the research on the impact of leadership feedback on employees focuses on analysing the effects of leadership feedback on

employee work attitude, certain specific behaviours, and job performance. (Orpen and King, 1989; Hawes and Rich, 1998; Rathel et al., 2008; Kacmar et al., 1996). The analysis of the impact mechanism is also rich, mainly discussing the mediation effects of employee self-efficacy, emotional response, regulatory focus, work engagement, and leadership member relationships etc (Harackiewicz and Larson, 1986; Shea and Howell, 1999; Belschak and Hartog, 2010, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Xupei et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015). Although the impact of leadership feedback on employee proactive behaviour has begun to attract scholars' attention, some studies have discussed and verified the direct relationship between them. Still, there is a lack of in-depth discussion on the impact mechanism (Orpen and King, 1989; Hawes and Rich, 1998; Rathel et al., 2008; Kacmar et al., 1996; Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001; Joo et al., 2012, Junwei, 2003, Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, conducting an in-depth analysis of research questions such as what kind of leadership feedback can effectively improve or reduce employee job crafting and how this feedback impacts the workplace is necessary.

Meanwhile, through the literature review, the author also finds that regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) has begun to be applied to the related research on leadership feedback and the moderation effect of employee trait regulatory focus on the relationship between leadership feedback and employee motivation and performance has been verified (Yufan and Lei, 2015, Jingyan, 2010, Zheng, 2020). This shows that employees' differences in trait regulatory focus will affect their perception of leadership feedback and subsequent behavioural responses (Yufan and Lei, 2015; Jingyan, 2010; Zheng, 2020). At the same time, the mediation role of work situation regulatory focus in the relationship between leadership feedback and employee motivation and performance has been verified (Yufan and Lei, 2015; Jingyan, 2010; Zheng, 2020). This shows that, from the regulatory focus perspective, it is also feasible to analyse the impact mechanism of

leadership feedback on employee job crafting (Yufan and Lei, 2015; Jingyan, 2010; Zheng, 2020; Scholer et al., 2019; Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Crowe and Higgins, 2001). Based on the above considerations and the deficiencies and enlightenment of existing research, the author believes that regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) has important guiding significance when analysing the impact of leadership feedback on employee job crafting (Yufan and Lei, 2015, Jingyan, 2010, Zheng, 2020, Scholer et al., 2019, Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Crowe and Higgins, 2001)

## **2.5 Conceptualisation of job crafting**

Job design describes how jobs, tasks, and roles are structured, enacted, and modified, as well as the impact of these structures, enactments and modifications on individual, group, and organisational outcomes (Grant and Parker, 2009).

Job redesign is seen as the process through which something is changed in the job, the tasks, or the condition of the individual worker (Tims and Bakker, 2010). Traditional job redesign approaches are usually top-down (Oldham and Hackman, 2010a), i.e., the organisation redesigned the work's structure and content to enhance favourable attitudinal and behavioural work outcomes such as work engagement, well-being, and performance.

However, most of these approaches have proved inadequate to serve the changing nature of current jobs; therefore, the 'one-size-fits-all' approach is no longer sufficient (Aust et al., 2009). This has led to new, individualised, bottom-up job redesign approaches, such as job crafting, that recognise the role of individual employees as proactive agents who form their jobs and change their job characteristics (Fried et al., 2007; Grant and Parker, 2009).

### 2.5.1 *Job crafting definitions*

**This study** mainly follows Petrou et al. (2012b) definition of job crafting as seeking challenges, reducing demands, and seeking resources. This definition is in line with Tims and Bakker's (2010) conceptualisation as 'the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and job resources with their abilities and needs' (Luu et al., 2021). Moreover, it is concluded that job crafting has four characteristics: non-material return (Slomp and Vella-Brodrick, 2014), initiative (Berg et al., 2010b, Ghitulescu, 2007, Grant and Ashford, 2008), internal resource accumulation (Harju et al., 2016), and external dynamic adaptability (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Berg et al., 2010b). Table 2 -2 compares the conceptualisations of job crafting by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) and the JD-R perspective concerning the definition, the purpose and motivation, the target, and the types of job crafting (Chmiel et al., 2017). The main difference between the two conceptualisations is that the JD-R perspective focuses on the behavioural component and excludes the cognitive dimension of job crafting, which results in differences in the targets and types of crafting that are distinguished (Chmiel et al., 2017)

**Table 2-2 Comparison of two perspectives on job crafting**

Job-crafting perspectives	Definition	Purpose and motivation	Target	Types
Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001)	The physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work	To assert control To create a positive self-Image To connect to others To increase meaning at work	Task boundaries Relational boundaries Cognitive Boundaries	Task crafting Relation crafting Cognition crafting
JD-R perspective	The changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and job resources with their personal abilities and needs	To improve person-job fit To enhance work engagement To avoid health impairment	Job demands Job resources	Seeking challenges Seeking resources Reducing demands

Source: Adapted from Chmiel et al. (2017)

In 2001, Wrzesniewski and Dutton introduced the term 'job crafting' to refer to the process through which employees 'shape' their jobs and defined it as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work to balance their job demands and job resources with their abilities and needs (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

**Changing physical task boundaries** refers to altering the form, scope, or number of work activities (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Employees choose to do fewer, more, or different tasks than prescribed in their formal job description. In addition, job crafting includes **changing cognitive task boundaries**, which refers to altering how one sees the job (Chen and Tang, 2022). For example, a cleaner in a hospital may view their job either as tidying or as making an essential contribution to an agreeable patient stay. **Changing relational boundaries** involves changes in the quality and the number of interactions with people at work. For example, employees may avoid



colleagues they do not like. By changing any of these elements, individuals themselves change the design of their jobs and the social environment in which they work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001)

According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), job crafting occurs daily. To better capture the 'everyday' changes that employees may pursue, some scholars have proposed conceptualising job crafting as proactive behaviour targeted explicitly at job characteristics, thereby framing its definition in the job demands-resources model (Schoberova, 2015). **Tims and Bakker (2010)** define job crafting as 'the changes employees may make to balance their job demands and resources with their abilities and needs'.

Rather than restricting job crafting to efforts to alter tasks and relations (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001), they expand the conceptualisation of task crafting and relational crafting. Whereas task crafting refers to job demands, i.e., changing one's tasks by increasing challenging demands and decreasing demands that hinder, relational crafting refers to job resources, i.e., changing the available social (e.g., support, feedback) and structural (e.g., autonomy, variety) resources.

In line with this conceptualisation, Petrou et al. (2012b) define job crafting as encompassing (1) seeking challenges, (2) reducing demands, and (3) seeking resources. **Seeking challenges** refers to increasing demands, i.e., looking for new challenging tasks at work, keeping busy during one's working day, or asking for more responsibilities once one has finished with assigned tasks. This is done with the primary aim of maintaining motivation and avoiding boredom and is in line with the proposition of Theorell et al. (1990) that workers in active jobs (with high demands and high autonomy) are likely to seek challenging situations that promote mastery and learning (Sloan and Geldenhuys, 2021). **Reducing demands**, on the other hand, refers to reducing demands that hinder, i.e., the emotionally, mentally, or physically demanding aspects of one's work, to reduce one's workload and to make sure that working

is not at the cost of one's private life (Petrou et al., 2012b). So, reducing demands can be viewed as a health-protecting coping mechanism when demands are excessively high (Petrou et al., 2012b). **Seeking resources** can be viewed as coping with job demands or completing tasks and achieving goals that foster goal attainment and enhance performance (Petrou et al., 2012b). Examples are seeking feedback or asking for support from one's direct supervisor or colleagues and looking for the possibility of learning a new skill on the job (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015).

Note that decreasing resources has not been proposed as a form of job crafting, as it does not seem to be a purposeful human behaviour (Peck, 2021). In a diary study by 95 employees from different organisations, Petrou et al. (2012b) confirm the validity of conceptualising job crafting regarding the three specific behaviours of seeking challenges, reducing demands, and seeking resources. Moreover, they find that job crafting indeed occurs daily, with daily fluctuations in job crafting ranging from 31% (seeking challenges), 34% (seeking resources) and 78% (reducing demands).

### **2.5.2** *Job crafting benefits and drawbacks*

Job crafting presents lots of potential benefits for organisational and positive psychology practitioners. While still relatively young, the approach has been examined empirically. Among the findings, and in addition to more meaningful work as mentioned above, there is evidence for at least five main benefits. First, job crafting **enhances organisational performance**. Crafting one's job is beneficial (Peck, 2021, Frese and Fay, 2001). Proactive crafting is inherently innovative and creative, and at an organisational level, it's conducive to flexibility and adaptability. It can contribute to a firm-level competitive advantage in increasingly dynamic and global business environments. Second, job crafting brings **greater engagement**. Altering how people engage with their jobs can give them a sense of control over what

they do and more fulfilment from the connections they make (Shin and Jung, 2021; Saragih et al., 2020; Lyons, 2008a). Basically, through job crafting, people have more resources, which is intrinsically motivating, and the sources facilitate personal growth and help people accomplish goals (Lesener et al., 2020; Halbesleben, 2010). Third, job crafting **adds more mastery**. When people stretch a healthy number of tasks through task crafting, they encourage mastery experiences, which are conducive to their well-being (Sadiq, 2022; Gorgievski and Hobfoll, 2008). People may also seek feedback and support in job crafting, potentially boosting individual job performance (Sharma and Shekhawat, 2018; Goodman and Svyantek, 1999). Then, job crafting **helps to achieve an 'ideal' career status**. By analysing the tasks and identifying the goals, people can move toward them more effectively through crafting (Dubbelt et al., 2019). When people add or alter functions aligned with their strengths and motives, they experience better person-job fit (Han and Oh, 2020; Oldham and Hackman, 2010b). Finally, Job crafting **makes people happier**. In a study by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013), the degree of job crafting employees get involved with is linked to how well their psychological and subjective well-being needs are satisfied.

There are, of course, some limitations to job crafting. Organisations are systems, so changing how people view and do things can impact the firm and the individual (Chen and Tang, 2022). The drawbacks for organisations include two parts as follows. On one hand, job crafting may lead to **misaligned goals**. Essentially, job crafting aims to benefit the employee. It's neither advantageous nor a pitfall for the company when an employee's goals are inconsistent with their organisation's (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). That alignment is critical in understanding how it plays out in practice, meaning when individual goals and organisational goals are misaligned, people can see the negative impacts of job crafting (Schoberova, 2015). In other words, if someone is employed to carry out a specific task, job crafting

shouldn't be a means of changing up the job beyond recognition. It is a pitfall for the organisation if a chef creates beautiful cuisine that's essentially inedible or unsafe. So, as Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) premise, more meaning in one's role shouldn't jeopardise organisational effectiveness.

On the other hand, job crafting may lead to **unequal access**. Another potential disadvantage is more about how people view their jobs in the first instance (Chen and Tang, 2022). To job craft, people first need to see their jobs as alterable. That is, people may feel certain factors limit how free they are to add tasks or alter relationships, for instance, and these can vary based on their roles. Studies show that senior employees felt they were limited timewise when crafting, and lower-level employees cited insufficient autonomy as an equivalent challenge (Dachner et al., 2021; Martela and Pessi, 2018; Berg et al., 2010a). Some workers whose tasks were closely interdependent also felt similar; how could they change their roles without disrupting others' work? In one respect, this can be seen as a 'perspective' or 'adaptability' problem or suggest more support for the 'proactive personality' argument. However, it also raises another issue. Some jobs may simply be more 'craftable' than others, allowing some of its benefits. If specials aren't taken, others may see this as inequity (Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015).

The drawbacks of job crafting for individuals include the following parts. **On the one hand, job crafting may lead employees to take on too much.** It may be tempting for individuals to take task crafting a little far (Chen and Tang, 2022). Understandably, people risk taking on too much if they add on overly demanding tasks or give themselves excessive tasks while crafting their roles. If employees aren't sufficiently informed about the risks of doing so, job crafting can increase the dangers of overwork stress, exhaustion, burnout, and unhappiness (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Some authors

argue that managers should get more involved in employee job crafting initiatives (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015).

**On the other hand, job crafting may lead to exploitation.** A final argument against the approach suggests that job crafting leaves some workers open to exploitation. This potentially can occur because employees might be going 'above and beyond' the call of duty without being fairly reimbursed by the organisation. For instance, a study of zoo workers by Schou (2022) shows some crafters were paid less than their co-workers. This was despite their investing extra time and effort into their newly crafted jobs to pursue deeper meaning at work.

### **2.5.3** *Job crafting intervention*

Three job crafting intervention strategies are job crafting exercise, job crafting training and job crafting imitation (Berg et al., 2013; Van den Heuvel et al., 2015; Bakker et al., 2016). First, a **job crafting exercise** is a way to help people identify job crafting opportunities to better match their work with their motivations, abilities, and enthusiasm (Berg et al., 2013). Establishing a crafting mentality is the critical prerequisite for performing the job crafting exercise. Job crafters need to be convinced that their work can be changed, which is a flexible set of building blocks (Berg et al., 2013). The exercise manual contains three specific links: build a "before sketch", make an "after diagram", and "role frames", and construct an "action plan" (Berg et al., 2013). Second, Van den Heuvel et al. (2015) design **job crafting training**. Unlike job crafting exercises, job crafting training guides participants to experience job crafting after training. It is based on the concept of job crafting based on the resource-requirement model. Job crafting includes three stages: one day training, four weeks of job crafting experience, and a half-day contemplation meeting (Van den Heuvel et al., 2015). Finally, based on the social cognitive theory of Bandura (2021), Bakker et al. (2016) studied **job crafting imitation**.

When people find that role models are similar in age, gender, social status, and problems, they are more likely to produce imitation (Bandura, 2021). Although it only limits the similarity of the selected subjects, it lays the foundation for future research on the imitation mechanism of job crafting in team or organisation scenarios.

Although the systems of these three intervention strategies are relatively sound and the methods are relatively rigorous, the research on how organisations guide and control job crafting behaviour is not systematic and thorough (Chen and Tang, 2022). In terms of **strategy innovation**, people in the future can explore other specific management practice strategies that can trigger job crafting and intervention methods when negative impacts occur. In terms of **strategy deepening**, people, in the future, can address whether job crafting is "contagious". That is, can an organisation make job crafting "popular" in a team or organisation by making a role model? In terms of **strategy implementation**, managers should pay attention to how to design work to "sow seeds" for job crafting of employees, explore better interventions for job crafting issues (such as face-to-face, communication via email or social software) and find out how intervention strategies work in different contexts.

#### **2.5.4** *Contextual predictors of job crafting*

Job crafting represents discretionary behaviour on the part of the employee. Therefore, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) suggest that **job autonomy** is essential in improving this behaviour. Thus, individuals who have jobs with more 'degrees of freedom' concerning how they perform their tasks are more likely to engage in job crafting. Other studies show that demanding aspects of the job, such as **task complexity**, are positively related to job crafting. On a daily level, Petrou et al. (2012b) find that when **work pressure** and autonomy were high, employees showed the highest levels of

seeking resources and the lowest level of reducing demands. They argue that jobs with high autonomy and high work pressure (i.e., active jobs) facilitate learning and development, and therefore, individuals are prone to keep their jobs improving. Consequently, these jobs make employees engage more in seeking resources and less in reducing demands. However, these jobs may already be too demanding for employees to seek more challenges (Demerouti et al., 2015).

In addition, organisational change can trigger job crafting as a strategy to ensure that their job still fits their preferences after the introduction of change and to make meaning of the changed situation. In a qualitative study during a merger, Kira et al. (2012) found that relational crafting (e.g., asking for supervisory support) and task crafting (e.g., prioritising) were used as strategies to deal with the new situation at work. Petrou et al. (2012b) find that changes involving new products were negatively associated with daily seeking challenges, while meeting new clients was positively related to daily seeking resources and seeking challenges. Moreover, employees may be motivated to craft their jobs to proactively prepare for and cope with future job changes and uncertainty. For example, they may expand their tasks and relational environments by increasing the scope of job responsibilities or enhancing the number of communications with people at work to get more information (Demerouti et al., 2015).

### **2.5.5** *Personal predictors of job crafting*

Job crafting has been linked to employees' individual characteristics, the first being a **proactive personality**. Bateman and Crant (1993) define the prototypic proactive personality as relatively unconstrained by contextual forces and affecting environmental change. Proactive personalities identify and act on opportunities; they show initiative, take action, and persevere until they bring about meaningful change. Bakker et al. (2012) find that a proactive

personality (as rated by one's colleagues) is associated with more employees (self-reported) seeking job resources and job challenges. This finding indicates that individuals with a proactive personality are inclined to change their work environment through job crafting.

In addition, daily fluctuations in personal resources, i.e., personal aspects that are generally linked to resilience and refer to individuals' sense of their ability to control and impact their environment successfully (Hobfoll et al., 2003), may also cause daily fluctuations in job crafting behaviour. For example, when employees feel more **efficacious** about their work, they are more likely to change the characteristics of their careers to attain their goals (Tims et al., 2014).

Petrou et al. (2012b) find that **employee regulatory focus**, i.e., how individuals regulate their behaviour to approach pleasure but avoid pain (Scholer et al., 2019), might impact the degree to which they craft their jobs. Employees with a promotion focus, driven by growth and challenges, are found to show more job-crafting behaviour and be more open to changes, irrespective of how the organisation presents these. On the other hand, employees with a prevention focus, driven by obligations and security, crafted their jobs more when the organisational change was communicated inadequately. Thus, insufficient information provided by the organisation regarding the change triggered the employees who are focused on security and obligations to craft their jobs to be able to fulfil their commitments (Brockner and Higgins, 2001)

The study by Petrou et al. (2012b) makes it clear that, in addition to individual or contextual characteristics in isolation, the **person × situation interaction** also impacts job crafting. According to the person-environment (PE)-fit approach (Edwards et al., 1998), stress arises from a mismatch between workers' characteristics and the characteristics of the job or tasks performed at work. An example is a person with a high need for control who



has low job control. Tims and Bakker (2010) argue that **person-job mismatch** mainly triggers job crafting behaviours. Job crafting might result in a better fit between person and job environment and thus reduce stress.

## **2.6 Job crafting in China**

However, not all cultures within which work takes place are the same. Hofstede's cultural dimension provides a framework, depicting members' values and behaviour as affected by their society's culture (Litvin, 2019; Beugelsdijk and Welzel, 2018; Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede (2011) defines culture as the mind's collective programming, which differentiates the members of one type of category or group from others. Although it is often viewed as a collective phenomenon, culture can be identified at the collective and individual levels (Hofstede, 2011). Culture is not limited to ethnic groups but can also be applied to social classes, generations, or genders. In cultural studies, research on organisations has led to changes in the concept. Perhaps the dominant view remains that culture is something deep-rooted. For instance, an employee will acquire much of the organisational culture of the employer s/he joins, which also measures the power of such cultures.

Hofstede's studies are often used to make sense of behavioural variations in people from different countries and cultures (Beugelsdijk and Welzel, 2018). Theories of job crafting originated in the West (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Chen and Tang, 2022). Therefore, clarification of related research in China is necessary.

### **2.6.1 Job crafting in China**

China's economy is in a significant period of transformation and upgrading in terms of development. Traditional and emerging industries have higher requirements for employee knowledge, skills and working methods (Ren et al., 2022; Dan et al., 2022). Therefore, all kinds of organisations and

employees need to "craft" their work to cope with the ever-changing international situation and the rapid development of science and technology (Ying et al., 2018). Job crafting is related to the sustainable and healthy development of China's economy and society and the value pursuit of the socialist market economy (Qiao et al., 2017; Ying et al., 2018). On the one side, to adapt to the concept of innovation-driven development, China needs to further improve the quality of the majority of workers, improve individual job crafting, promote the construction of a large contingent of knowledge-based, technological and innovative workers, and enhance the vitality of the socialist market economy (Hendriks et al., 2020). On the other side, people's growing need for a better life and the people-centred concept of development in the new era require organisations to consider the efficiency, satisfaction and happiness of workers while pursuing performance and striving to build harmonious labour relations (Zheng, 2020)

First, the emerging theory of job crafting and organisational incentive job crafting has received widespread attention because it starts with individual needs and provides new ideas for contemporary organisational management practices (Ying et al., 2018). The core competitiveness of traditional industry organisations comes from core employees, that is, a small number of high-level talents with professional knowledge, innovation capabilities, and management skills (Ren et al., 2022; Dan et al., 2022). Nowadays, under the impact of internet technology and the sharing economy, the development trend of flat and even platform-based organisations pays more attention to providing an environment for each employee to make independent decisions and implement creative ideas (Ying et al., 2018). In today's China, innovation and development have been at the core of leading the overall development of the country (Ren et al., 2022; Dan et al., 2022). Improving the innovative vitality of employees of different occupations, positions, and levels is crucial. The job crafting theory provides researchers

with a good perspective: understanding the characteristics and influencing factors of job crafting behaviour can help organisations create a suitable environment for employee proactive behaviour and guide employees to connect individual needs with achieving organisational innovation performance to achieve a win-win situation for both the organisation and the individual (Chen and Tang, 2022). Existing job crafting research is far from enough to answer the question of how to motivate employees to conduct job crafting and improve personal and organisational innovation performance. For example, the existing research on the impact of organisational environment on individual job crafting and the effect of individual job crafting on other people is still lacking (Solberg and Wong, 2016). There is also insufficient research on team job crafting, cooperative job crafting and other behaviours (Ying et al., 2018).

Second, job crafting greatly benefits China's construction of harmonious labour relations (Ying et al., 2018). Economic development and technological progress can make people's lives more comfortable and convenient. However, many social progress problems and people's overall development are outside the scope of economy and technology. In this sense, the significance of encouraging and supporting every ordinary worker to find a job is of great benefit to China's construction of harmonious labour relations and the improvement of workers' happiness (Ying et al., 2018)

Two scholars, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), attach great importance to helping ordinary employees turn their daily work into a good job that makes them happy. When the theory was created, they put forward several future research suggestions, including exploring individual characteristics, task characteristics and organisational characteristics that may affect job crafting; studying and explaining job crafting from a comprehensive perspective of personal life (including work and spare time); antecedent variables of the individual's motivation for work; other influencing factors at

the personal level (including work orientation, economic conditions and needs, life goals, etc.); job crafting process combined with the time dimension; dynamic mechanism of job crafting; collective job crafting at the team level and negotiating job crafting in interaction with the organisation; putting the three factors of motivation, expertise and passion into the theoretical framework of job crafting (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). However, the response of existing studies to these suggestions is still minimal (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015; Ying et al., 2018)

There is still much room for exploration in the current research on how ordinary workers can find the meaning of work and obtain job happiness through job crafting (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015; Ying et al., 2018). Under the guidance of China's new era development concept, managers face cultural conflicts between foreign employees and local employees, new generation employees and senior employees under the impact of multicultural coexistence and changes in the idea of the times. Different employee groups have different understandings of the meaning of work and life value, which also directly affects the actual effect of the organisational incentive system (Ying et al., 2018). Therefore, local scholars should also pay more attention to the propositions of work meaning schools, and through in-depth research on individual job crafting motives and mechanisms, improve the work quality of workers, promote the overall development of individual workers, help workers enhance their sense of happiness at work, and promote the construction of socialist harmonious labour relations.

Finally, although there are blends of the two primary schools for job crafting, the "work meaning" genre and "person-job fit" genre in the Chinese theory and practice of job crafting, they have not been well integrated, and there is a lot of room for expansion and improvement (Ying et al., 2018). For example, the "work meaning" genre divides job crafting behaviour into task

crafting, relationship crafting, and cognition crafting (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). There is an inevitable overlap in specific behaviours. Cognition crafting may be related to or even mutually related to the other two types of crafting, which is causality, while the "person-job fit" genre divides job crafting behaviour into ways of increasing institutional resources, increasing social resources, increasing challenging requirements, and reducing obstructive requirements, and there are also the shortcomings of focusing on behaviour changes and ignoring psychological cognition (Ying et al., 2018)

The research on localised job crafting has always stayed at the level of theoretical introduction and model verification (Ying et al., 2018). Although some scholars have begun to try to introduce the perspective of Chinese culture (Jinlei, 2020), Chinese job crafting theory dedicated to theoretical construction is generally lacking. In fact, in the Chinese cultural background and the ever-changing creative construction and development practices, local researchers will likely discover different job crafting behaviours and their influencing factors (Ying et al., 2018). Taking root in local management practices in China, researching and locating the motivations, behaviours, and influencing factors and effects of job crafting in the context of Chinese culture are likely to expand or even surpass existing theories (Ying et al., 2018)

Therefore, combining the practical problems of China's reform and opening and economic construction, in-depth research, and exploration of the theoretical framework of job crafting is an effective way for Chinese scholars to contribute to the research on job crafting (Ying et al., 2018). In today's era, more and more Chinese management scholars have realised that work motivation and proactive behaviour are essential to the management research needed for economic and social development (Jinlei, 2020; Zheng,2020). Some research reports put "Research on Work Motivation Based on Pursuit of Meaning" as the first significant research direction in the priority

development field of business administration in the field of organisational behaviour and organisational culture during the "13th Five-Year Plan" period (Jinlei, 2020). The report states: "The purpose of most work in today's Chinese society is mainly the embodiment of economy and self-worth. Few studies examine work from the perspective of ultimate care for people. The key is that previous statistical studies have neglected the meaning of pursuit. The lasting inner motivation must be inseparable from the pursuit of meaning." (Jinlei, 2020, Qiao et al., 2017b). Based on this understanding, job crafting theoretical researchers should pay more attention to the value demands in the founder's theoretical framework, return to the theoretical origin, and deeply explore job crafting behavioural motivation and behavioural characteristics, and the role of job crafting on individual well-being and job meaning (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Ying et al., 2018). This kind of value return will not affect the focus on corporate performance but can better develop the theory and achieve a win-win relationship between the pursuit of personal value and the realisation of organisational goals on a higher level and longer-term mechanism (Ying et al., 2018)

### ***2.6.2 Job crafting and leadership in China***

Regarding the research about the impact of job crafting on leadership in China, related studies also show that the inspection of leadership characteristics is too simple, and the research perspective is fragmented. That is, when analysing the mechanism of leadership effect on employee job crafting, the relevant research is almost all based on the perspective of positive promotion of job crafting. The exploration of the mechanism of harmful prevention of the leadership impact on employee job crafting is slightly insufficient (Hongyu and Zhisong, 201; Qitao,2018; Hongbin and Qitao, 2019)

Hongyu and Zhisong (2018) selected employees of a local company and their direct leaders as the research objects and surveyed 245 pairs of upper and lower-level matching data distributed in 51 teams. They believe the impact of coaching leadership on employee job crafting can be explained by the social exchange theory and the Pygmalion effect theory (1). The social exchange theory emphasises the role of the reciprocity norm (Reciprocity Norm) in social interaction. It holds that when one party provides help or gives resources to the other party, the latter must return the person who helped him (Colquitt et al., 2015). Coaching leaders will help employees understand their deep-seated needs, establish work goals and adopt personalised inspiration and motivation methods based on local conditions to improve their skills and promote their career development. Therefore, when employees feel the coaching leadership style, based on the norms of reciprocity, they will reshape their work to better match their work content with their abilities and preferences, thereby improving work performance and using this to give back to the leadership and organisation (2) Pygmalion effect theory believes that expectations can cause subtle and profound changes in the inner consciousness and emotions of the expected and promote the development of their external behaviour in the desired direction (Hongyu and Zhisong, 2018). Coaching leaders encourage employees to try new things and guide and inspire them to find ways to solve problems on their own. This reflects the expectations of leaders for employee active behaviour; after this role, the expectation of leaders is perceived by employees to please superior leaders. Employees will continue challenging existing work content through certain initiative behaviours, such as job crafting, to try their best to meet the leader's expectations. The results of the cross-layer analysis show that coaching leadership significantly affects employee job crafting; employee perception of goal invariance plays a cross-layer intermediary role between coaching leadership and employee job crafting; risk aversion tendency substantially

moderates the relationship between perception of goal invariance and job crafting, that is, the lower the risk aversion tendency, the more pronounced the negative impact of goal invariance perception on job crafting; coaching leaders indirectly affect employee job crafting through the perception of employee goal invariance, and this indirect relationship is only significant when employees have a low-risk aversion tendency (Hongyu and Zhisong, 2018).

Qitao (2018) explores the impact mechanism of service-oriented leadership on employee job crafting and the moderating effect of employee intuitive style. According to the cognitive motivation theory, they believe that the motivation mechanism that motivates employees to implement job crafting behaviours is manifested in three forms: First, employees will judge whether they have the ability ("ability" motivation); secondly, they also depend on whether they have "right" "Good expectations for the future" make them willing to do so ("reason" motivation); third, emotional motivation believes that positive emotional states will encourage employees to adopt work-crafting behaviours ("emotional" motivation). These three mechanisms draw the motivational map of employee implementation of job crafting: ability belief, willing motivation and emotional drive (Jiawei and Parker, 2013). Service-oriented leadership effectively promotes employee job-crafting behaviour; employee psychological empowerment plays a complete intermediary role; the intuitive style in cognitive style moderates the direct relationship between psychological empowerment and job crafting and the indirect relationship between service-oriented leadership and job crafting (Qitao, 2018). The contextual factors in which employees are located will directly affect their work behaviour. Leadership is one of the most direct and dynamic factors affecting employees in an organisation-level context. The service-oriented leadership proposed by Greenleaf (1998). has been a hot topic in recent years (Gandolfi and Stone, 2018). This leadership style is first



manifested in satisfying the needs of employees first, followed by their own needs (van Dierendonck, 2010). Service-oriented leaders regard supporting and helping employees to grow and succeed as their moral responsibility (Ehrhart, 2004; Simha, 2022). They motivate employees to take job restructuring behaviours by influencing their abilities, reasons, and emotional motivations. First, service-oriented leaders insist on ethics and encourage employees at work. They are good at empowering and listening and use their knowledge and abilities to help employees grow (Walumbwa et al., 2010) so that they have the confidence and ability to reshape their jobs. Second, service-oriented leaders are far-sighted, paint a beautiful vision for employees, and then obtain their approval through persuasion and argumentation (Qitao, 2018), which inspires their autonomy and inner potential and gives them reasons to reshape their work. Finally, service-oriented leaders pay attention to the emotional healing of employees so that employees feel attention and care and always maintain a positive and healthy emotional state, thereby crafting their work.

Hongbin and Qitao (2019) argue that employees in the new era pay more attention to pursuing a professional mission. Based on previous research, a mediation-mediation model was constructed to explore the mediation mechanism and boundary conditions of the service-oriented leadership impact on employee professional mission. Based on the theory of social information processing, the study uses job crafting as an intermediary variable to explain the relationship between service-oriented leadership and employee sense of professional mission, and on this basis, further hypothesises the moderating effect of self-verification effort and self-management failure in the above relationship. The above hypotheses were tested through a three-stage survey of 398 employees in a listed technology company, and the results generally support the theoretical expectations of this study. This will help to understand the relationship between organisational contextual factors,

employees' personal characteristics and behaviour habits and their sense of professional mission, and guide managers to take targeted measures to help employees meet their individual needs at work (Hongbin and Qitao, 2019).

## **2.7 Impact of leadership on job crafting**

The exploration of the relationship between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting has been acknowledged. When exploring it, scholars focused on the exploration of leadership behaviour that improves employee job crafting, as well as the validation of positive relationships of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, the exploration of complex internal impact mechanism is lightly inadequate (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014, Berg et al., 2010b, Martin et al., 2013, Zheng, 2020).

### **2.7.1 *Direct impact of leadership on employee job crafting***

When looking at the direct relationship between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting, the researchers find that when leader shows a promotion focused behaviour (Zheng, 2020, Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b), gives employees a developmental feedback and managerial support (Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009), reduces too strict control (Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001), shows a transformative leadership behaviour (Chiaburu et al., 2014), shows a empowering leadership behaviour (Berg et al., 2010b, Martin et al., 2013), employee tends to be more likely to craft job.

For example, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning (2015a) explore the relationship between leadership regulatory focus and employee job crafting, based on a sample of 98 employees in a high-tech enterprise in China. The

results of the empirical study showed that the leadership promotional regulatory focus was significantly positively correlated with the level of job crafting of employees. Leana et al. (2009) explore the relationship between feedback and job crafting through experimental research, and the results show that positive feedback contributes to the production of individual job crafting.

Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) validate the relationship between constructive evaluation strategies and individual job crafting with an experimental study, and the results showed that managers-supported actions helped employees develop proactive work attitudes and adopt positive behaviours. These behaviours improve learning and innovation among employees, thereby improving employee shaping task boundaries, and empirical studies confirm that managers support and co-operate job crafting showed a significant positive correlation ( $*\beta^*=0.18, *p^*<0.05$ ). Based on a sample of 149 employee of an oil drilling equipment production company in the us, Leana et al. (2009) discusses the relationship between context, personality traits and employee job crafting, and there is a significant positive correlation between employee discretion and job crafting, and the leadership strict control might reduce job crafting.

Petrou et al. (2012a) analyze the impact of leadership intervention, colleague factors and individual traits on employee job crafting through two field studies. The results show that the strict control behaviour of a leader is significantly negatively correlated with the level of job crafting. A recent meta-analysis has found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee proactive behaviour (Chiaburu et al., 2014). Chi and Pan (2012) explore the impact of transformative leaders and transactional leaders on members' job crafting in different teams through an experimental study, and the results showed that transformative leaders would maximize the motivation of members' job crafting. Empowering leadership has been found to increase employee proactive behaviour (Martin et al., 2013). Empowering

leaders enhances the significance of the work, fostering participation in decision-making (Zhang and Bartol, 2010), empowering employee feel that their work is personally important (i.e., meaningful), they have the freedom to choose how to initiate and perform work tasks (i.e., self-determination), they can successfully perform work tasks (i.e., self-efficacy), and they can make a difference in work outcomes (i.e., impact). Therefore, Parker and Bindl (2016) suggest that empowering leadership is a strong predictor of employee proactive behaviour such as job crafting.

These studies mainly explore the direct impact of leadership behaviour that improves employee job crafting, in which the impact mechanism and path are not discussed. In summary, the research on the direct relationship between leadership and employee job crafting has been relatively rich, mainly focusing on leadership behaviour that supports employee initiative behaviours (such as feedback, supportive behaviours, transformational leadership behaviour, transactional leadership behaviour, etc.), and the exploration of leadership traits (such as emotional intelligence, etc.), and the inspection of the improvement relationship between these behaviours and traits and employee job crafting, and less attention is paid to that leadership behaviour that can reduce employee job crafting. At the same time, the existing research is too simplistic when analyzing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting. Although existing studies provide some behaviours or ways for leaders to motivate their employees for job crafting, these studies only examine leadership performance from a single dimension (such as transformational leadership behaviour) and do not look at leadership as a whole or systematically (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Bakker et al., 2016, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014)

### 2.7.2 *The impact mechanism of leadership on job crafting*

When analyzing the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on job crafting, the researchers have already paid attention to the research field, but it still lacks sufficient research exploration. According to the contingency theory of leadership (Santos, 2021, Lartey, 2020), characteristics of the situation may enhance or weaken the impact of leadership. Many researchers claim that the effect of leadership behaviour on job crafting often depends on job characteristics (e.g., job autonomy, job uncertainty and workload) or individual differences of followers (e.g., power distance, proactive personality, and individual temperament) (Ford et al., 2021, Höddinghaus et al., 2021, Parker and Bindl, 2016).

### 2.7.3 *Research comment*

In summary, on the one side, when looking at the direct relationship between leadership and employee job crafting, the research has been relatively rich which **mainly focuses on the inspection of the improvement relationship** between these behaviours and traits and employee job crafting, but less attention is paid to those behaviours that can reduce employee job crafting (Zheng, 2020, Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014). At the same time, the existing research is too simplistic when analyzing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting. Although existing studies provide some behaviours or ways for leaders to motivate their employees for job crafting, these studies only examine leadership performance **from a single dimension** (such as transformational leadership behaviour) and do not look at leadership as a whole or systematically (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Bakker et al., 2016, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski

and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014). On the other side, when analyzing the **impact mechanism** of leadership on job crafting, the researchers have already paid attention to the research field, but **it still lacks sufficient research exploration** (Zheng, 2020, Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Chiaburu et al., 2014)

## 2.8 Research gap

Through reviewing and combing the existing related literature, the author finds that the current research on the relationship between leadership and employee job crafting has attracted more and more attention from scholars. However, research in this field still has some shortcomings, as follows.

First, the analysed leadership behaviour dimension is single-dimensional but not systematical-regarded (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Lei et al., 2012; Yufan and Lei, 2015). Although existing studies provide some behaviours or ways for leaders to motivate their employees for job crafting, these studies only examine leadership performance from a single dimension, such as transformational leadership behaviour, and do not regard leadership as a whole or systematically (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Lei et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015)

Second, the analysing perspective is one side of positivity/improvement but not two of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Petrou et al., 2012a, Chi and Pan, 2012; Chiaburu et al., 2014, Parker and Wu, 2014, Zhang and Bartol, 2010, Martin et al., 2013). When analysing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting, research in this field mainly expounds on the role of leadership on employee job crafting from the positive/improving perspective.

The exploration of the negative/reducing impact of leadership on employee job crafting is slightly insufficient (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Petrou et al., 2012a; Chi and Pan, 2012; Chiaburu et al., 2014; Parker and Wu, 2014, Zhang and Bartol, 2010, Martin et al., 2013)

Finally, discussion of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and not sufficient (Bandura, 2021; Gan, 2018; Bavik et al., 2017; Yan et al., 2021; Joo et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001, Wu et al., 2008, Parker and Bindl, 2016, Leana et al., 2009). Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) has been increasingly widely used in related research in leadership behaviour (role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback). The study shows that leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback (Brockner, 2001) contain different regulatory focus tendencies. These behaviours impact employee behaviour by improving employee work situation regulatory focus (Bandura, 2021; Gan, 2018; Bavik et al., 2017; Yan et al., 2021; Joo et al., 2012; Yufan and Lei, 2015). However, in-depth discussions of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting are rare, such as moderation and mediation (Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001; Wu et al., 2008; Parker and Bindl, 2016; Leana et al., 2009)

Based on the above-mentioned existing research gap, this study believes that when analysing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting, it is necessary to (1) regard leadership behaviour systematically, for example, regard leadership behaviour with three dimensions (such as leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing and leadership feedback) while researching; (2) analyse the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction, with a suitable theory perspective (such as regulatory focus theory); (3) discuss the impact mechanism (such as the moderation and mediation related effects) more sufficiently.

## 2.9 Conclusion

The literature review conducted throughout this chapter provides six relevant insights for this research.

1. Leadership differs from management and leadership style. This study focuses on the following kinds of leadership behaviours: leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing, and leadership feedback.

2. Job crafting involves developing concepts but also shares vital fundamental elements. This study mainly follows Petrou et al. (2012b) 's definition.

3. Limited research exists on leadership's reduction impact and impact mechanism on employee job crafting.

4. Research gap is summarised.

5. According to the research gap, some research directions are raised to focus.

6. The function of literature discussion in the literature review chapter is to provide the author with an overall theoretical grasp, which differs from that in the discussion chapter.

First, leadership behaviour refers to what the leader can do to influence the leader during the leadership process. In this section, the author analyses related research on leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing, and leadership feedback.

Second, although definitions and, therefore, our understanding of job crafting are various, there is some similarity between terms used to describe job crafting (such as the emphasis on seeking resources) (e.g. Petrou et al., 2012b, Tims and Bakker, 2010). This study mainly follows Petrou et al. (2012b) definition of job crafting as seeking challenges, reducing demands, and seeking resources. This aligns with Tims and Bakker's (2010)



conceptualisation as 'the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and resources with their abilities and needs'.

Third, when looking at the direct relationship between leadership and employee job crafting, the research has been relatively affluent, focusing mainly on the inspection of the improvement relationship between these behaviours and traits and employee job crafting. Still, less attention is paid to those behaviours that can reduce employee job crafting. When analysing the impact mechanism of leadership on job crafting, the researchers have already paid attention to the research field, but it still lacks sufficient research exploration.

Fourth, in the research field of the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, the analysed leadership behaviour dimension is single-dimensional but not systematical-regarded (Research gap1). The analysing perspective is one-side of positivity/improvement. Still, there are not two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (Research gap2), and the discussion of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and insufficient (Research gap3).

Fifth, it is necessary to (1) regard leadership behaviour systematically, (2) analyse the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction, with a suitable theory perspective (such as regulatory focus theory), and (3) discuss the impact mechanism (such as the moderation and mediation related effects) more sufficiently.

Sixth, the function of literature discussion in the literature review chapter differs from that in the discussion chapter. Firstly, the existing research discussion runs through the entire process, including all phases, levels, and parts of the research. Secondly, the role of the existing research discussion in the literature review chapter is to provide researchers with an overall theoretical grasp. Finally, the function of the existing research

discussion later in the discussion chapter is to compare existing literature (predecessors' theories), collected data (theories presented in the data) and the researcher's understanding (existing theories) for meaningful conclusions.

This literature review demonstrates the research gaps, and it is possible to suggest the theoretical focus, which will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

## **3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Purpose and aims**

Chapter 2 provides a literature review with an overview of the relevant key concepts and literature related to the topic. This chapter is the continuation of the literature review chapter. It presents the theory and model associated with the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting: job demands-resources model (JD-R model) for job crafting and regulatory focus theory, and it contains the relevant vital concepts framed in these models and theory and discusses regulatory focus theory related literature. In conjunction with the literature review, these models, theories, and ideas facilitate mapping out the concepts embedded in the research topic, research questions, and objectives for effective data collection. Therefore, this chapter has seven aims:

1. To introduce the job demands-resources model (JD-R model) for job crafting,
2. To discuss job crafting dimensions framed in the JD-R model,
3. To introduce regulatory focus theory,
4. To discuss regulatory focus dimensions framed in regulatory focus theory,
5. To critically evaluate current literature within the leadership and job crafting field related to regulatory focus theory,
6. To discuss leadership regulatory focused behaviour dimensions from within the regulatory focus theory literature, and
7. To build the conceptual framework based on the critical insights gained from a review of the concepts, model and theory within the literature.

### **3.2 Job demands-resources model for job crafting**

### *3.2.1 Two major research genres of job crafting: the "work meaning" genre and the "person-job fit" genre*

#### (1) Two major research genres of job crafting

Through an in-depth exploration of the development venation of job crafting theory, it can be found that the theoretical research on job crafting can be divided into two primary schools: the "work meaning" genre and the "person-job fit" genre (Ying et al., 2018). From an operational perspective, these two genres manifest themselves in the definition, classification, and measurement of job crafting (Ying et al., 2018). However, the root causes represent different research perspectives based on value rationality and instrumental rationality (Ying et al., 2018)

It is proposed that human behaviour has two kinds of "rationality"-instrumental rationality and value rationality (Whimster and Lash, 2014, Kalberg, 1980). The former emphasises the calculability and rationality of methods and procedures; the latter emphasises the value of goals. In job crafting research, the two value orientations lead to two research perspectives: the first one is called the "work meaning" genre, focusing on the pursuit of personal value, job meaning, and job well-being, and the second one is called the "person-job fit" genre, focusing on the match between people and the work environment (Ying et al., 2018)

The "work meaning" genre starts from the motivation and behaviour of individual job crafting, focuses on personal experience and subjective feelings, and explores the effect of job crafting on personal identity, happiness, and job meaning (Ying et al., 2018). This genre embodies the human care of pursuing the ultimate meaning. The research idea of this perspective is, on the one side, to explain the motivation of job crafting and its corresponding behaviour and, on the other side analyse the goal and result of the analysis (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Ying et al., 2018)

The "person-job fit" genre starts from seeking a balance between individual needs and organisational requirements and focuses on work structure and job performance. (Ying et al., 2018) This genre emphasises the impact of individual traits and job characteristics on crafting behaviour and the positive effect of job crafting on improving person-job fit. And it reflects the performance-oriented pragmatism purpose. (Ying et al., 2018) The previous work design theory believes that organisations and managers can improve employee work performance by rationally designing employee responsibilities, thereby improving the enterprise's overall performance. (Grant Parker,2009) However, in the knowledge economy and innovation-sharing environment, meeting the management needs of professional and technical personnel, especially employees with high innovation requirements, is increasingly challenging. (Vough and Parker, 2008; Ying et al., 2018) By encouraging and guiding employees to actively improve their work and adapt to organisational changes, job crafting theory improves employee creativity and adaptability and realises the supplement and modification of job design theory. (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015, Ying et al., 2018, Zheng, 2020, Demerouti et al., 2001b)

(2) Advantages, contributions, and shortcomings of the two major research genres of job crafting

The two significant job genres crafting research have advantages, contributions, and shortcomings. The "work meaning" genre is good at analysing personal behaviour, motivation and process. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Ying et al., 2018) Through in-depth observation of job crafting of employees from various professions, this type of research has found various job crafting strategies and insights into the meaning of cognition crafting for personal work meaning and job identity. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Ying et al., 2018) These studies have deepened people's understanding of job crafting theory and developed some theoretical models.

(Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015, Ying et al., 2018) At the same time, because research from this perspective often adopts more qualitative methods, which require relatively more time, energy, and analytical comprehension skills, the number of corresponding research studies is limited.

(Chen and Tang, 2022, Schobe;ova, 2015, Ying et al., 2018)

The "person-job fit" genre is good at extensively verifying various groups of people and influencing factors related to job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Tims et al., 2012; Ying et al., 2018). The main contribution made by this genre is to prove the universality of job crafting in different occupations, ages, genders, and countries and to examine the relevance of influencing factors, including personal characteristics, work engagement, and job performance with job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010, Tims et al., 2012, Ying et al., 2018). The research for this genre mainly adopts quantitative methods based on cross-sectional data, and it is relatively tricky to creatively develop theoretical models deeply (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Tims et al., 2012; Ying et al., 2018)

However, the two genres are not separate and opposed. On the one side, the "person-job fit" genre doesn't include the cognition crafting dimension proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) (i.e., changing the meaning of work) (Ying et al., 2018). This genre holds the idea that cognitive change may be more like coping with the circumstances as they are and not about actively shaping the boundaries of one's work, which is the definition of task crafting as proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) On the other side, the other two dimensions, task crafting and relationship crafting, are in line with the dimensions "person-job fit" genre proposed. These two dimensions are defined by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), who proposed the theoretical origin of the "work meaning" genre. They refer to changing the task and relational boundaries of one's work (Tims and Bakker, 2010). For example, relationship crafting from the "person-job fit" genre can be found in seeking

resources from the "work meaning" genre. Since social support and other relationships can be seen as job resources. The focus of the "person-job fit" genre was on work characteristics and individual differences that may explain why some people are better job crafters than others (Petrou et al., 2012b; Petrou et al., 2018; Chmiel et al., 2017; Tims and Bakker, 2010, Tims et al., 2012, Ying et al., 2018)

Over the years, research on the two primary schools has shown a trend of ebb and flow. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Petrou et al., 2012b, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Tims et al., 2012, Ying et al., 2018) From the theory's inception in 2001 to 2012, the job crafting theory was in the construction and exploration stage. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Petrou et al., 2012b, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Tims et al., 2012, Ying et al., 2018) The founder's theoretical studies and the research of his followers are based on the perspective of "work meaning", mainly narrative interviews and case studies. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Ying et al., 2018) Then, since the emergence of the job crafting scale Developed from Tims et al. (2012), quantitative research has been promoted, and empirical research has gradually shifted to the perspective of "person-job fit", focusing on the role and significance of organisations. (Petrou et al., 2018; Chmiel et al., 2017; Ying et al., 2018) Although the above trend has made job crafting gradually become a new hot spot in the research field of organisational behaviour, related research on employee job crafting motivation and influence is still very limited. (Ying et al., 2018). The progress of the theoretical creation and systematic perfection of job crafting theory has always been slow since its inception. (Ying et al., 2018)

The development venation of management theory, established for more than ten years and continuously used in subsequent research, can already be regarded as an essential theory in this discipline. (Chmiel et al., 2017) In terms

of time, job crafting theory has been accumulated for a relatively long time. However, judging from the original intention of the theory, it still needs further exploration and development. (Ying et al., 2018)

### (3) Classification of job crafting behaviours based on the two major research genres of job crafting

There are many ways to observe job crafting behaviours in the work environment. In this study, various classification methods proposed by researchers are summarised as the following three: (1) "crafting object classification" based on the perspective of organisational psychology and aligned with the perspective of "work meaning" genre, (2) "fit strategy classification" based on the perspective of job requirements and resources and aligned with the perspective of "person-job fit" genre, and other (3) "complementary classification". (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Ying et al., 2018, Niessen et al., 2016, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Tims et al., 2012, Lyons, 2008b, Grant and Parker, 2009, Grant, 2007, Berg et al., 2010a, Dachner et al., 2021, Martela and Pessi, 2018, Berg et al., 2010a)

"Crafting object classification" is the most classic. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Ying et al., 2018; Niessen et al., 2016) According to the viewpoints of the theoretical founders Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) in the job crafting model constructed, this classification method divides job crafting behaviour into three types: task crafting, relationship crafting, and cognition crafting, and each type is further subdivided into three strategies, a total of nine strategies. Among them, the strategy of task crafting includes adding tasks and resetting tasks; the plan of relationship crafting includes building relationships, rebuilding relationships, and adapting relationships; the strategy of cognition crafting includes expanding cognition, focusing on cognition and connecting cognition. (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Ying et al., 2018) Niessen et al. (2016) successively developed a job crafting



behaviour scale based on this classification method, which was applied in subsequent research.

"Fit strategy classification" is widely used. (Petrou et al., 2012b; Petrou et al., 2018; Chmiel et al., 2017; Tims and Bakker, 2010; Tims et al., 2012; Ying et al., 2018) It comes from the theoretical framework proposed by Tims and Bakker (2010), which is the job demands-resources model (JD-R model) for job crafting. This type of classification emphasises the behavioural expression of job crafting and discards the description and measurement of psychological activities of job crafting. The job demands-resources model divides job crafting into four types: increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Tims et al., 2012). Tims et al. (2012) developed a job crafting behaviour scale based on this classification method. In empirical research conducted by quantitative methods, this scale is widely used to test the correlation between job crafting and influencing factors.

"Complementary classification" is a general term for classification methods from perspectives of job crafting other than the first two mainstream classification methods. (Lyons, 2008b; Grant and Parker, 2009; Grant, 2007; Berg et al., 2010a; Dachner et al., 2021; Martela and Pessi, 2018; Berg et al., 2010a; Ying et al., 2018) For example, Lyons (2008b) finds that salespersons' job crafting strategies include developing personal abilities, clarifying task functions, enhancing relationships, maintaining relationships, and making tactical choices. Grant and Parker (2009) find that service industry practitioners craft their relationship with customers by extending job roles, modifying service content to meet customer needs, avoiding unpleasant customers and choosing more meaningful work content (Grant, 2007). Leana et al. (2009) believe that in addition to individual job crafting, there is also cooperative job crafting. Berg et al. (2010a) pointed out that there are leisure

crafting methods in addition to job crafting. Some scholars have proposed classification methods such as expanded job crafting/contracted job crafting and job crafting based on speciality/job crafting based on interest. (Dachner et al., 2021; Martela and Pessi, 2018; Berg et al., 2010a) Among them, crafting of individuals and cooperation and crafting of work and leisure are the more concerned classification methods in the supplementary classification. (Ying et al., 2018)

### ***3.2.2 Job demands-resources model for job crafting "person-job fit" genre***

According to Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) theory, every workplace has distinct traits, which can be encapsulated in the job demands-resources model (JD-R model). As a result, it is more flexible than earlier models of work design, such as the demand-control model and the job characteristics model (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Karasek,1990). The JD-R model, in more detail, is a heuristic model that describes how the following two distinct sets of working circumstances may result in employee effectiveness and well-being (Demerouti, 2007).

The first group of working circumstances relates to job demands, which are aspects of the job that may cause employees to strain if they are beyond their capacity for adaptation (Bakker et al., 2010). Compared to Karasek's (1990) demands, which are primarily quantitative, such as workload and time pressure, the JD-R model uses a broader perspective of job demands (Bakker et al., 2003). Job demands in the JD-R model are more precisely defined as those of a job's physical, social, and emotional requirements through organised physical or mental exertion. These elements are consequently linked to specific physiological and psychological costs. Interaction with emotionally taxing clients is an example (Demerouti et al., 2001a)

The second set of working circumstances relates to how much job resources are provided to specific employees. (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job resources refer to a job's physical, psychological, social, or organisational components that may (1) be useful in accomplishing work objectives, (2) may lessen the demands of the job and the resulting physical and psychological costs, and (3) may promote personal growth and development. And the primary drivers of employee work engagement and, by extension, improved success are job resources. (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009) Job resources may be located at the organisation-support level (e.g., pay, job security, career opportunities), at the interpersonal-interaction level (e.g., supervisor and co-worker support, team climate), at the organisation-work level (e.g., role clarity, participation in decision making) and the individual-task level (e.g., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, performance feedback). (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). They are inherently motivating since job resources satisfy fundamental human needs and promote personal growth and development. (Van den Broeck et al., 2008). Job resources may play a significant role in achieving professional objectives as extrinsic motivators. (Bakker et al., 2010)

Two distinct underlying psychological processes influence the emergence of workplace strain and work motivation inside the JD-R model. (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007) The first is known as the health impairment process, in which poorly planned tasks or ongoing physical and mental demands may exhaust employee resources and may cause energy depletion and health issues. (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007) In this case, burnout mediates the connection between unfavourable outcomes and work demands. (Bakker et al., 2010) Some research supports this process of health impairment. (Bakker et al., 2010; Haque, 2018; Ren et al., 2022) The study demonstrates the relationship between work stress brought on by demanding

jobs with poor physical and mental health, repetitive strain injuries, and absenteeism due to illness (Haque, 2018; Ren et al., 2022).

The second process is the motivational process, which assumes that job resources can motivate and result in high levels of work engagement, low levels of cynicism, and excellent performance. Thus, the link between job resources and beneficial outcomes, such as commitment to the organisation's extra-role behaviour and connectedness with the organisation (and client satisfaction), is mediated by work engagement (i.e., characterised by high levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption). (Bakker et al., 2010).

### **3.2.3 *Job crafting dimensions framed in the JD-R model***

Based on the JD-R model, it's proposed that job crafting consists of the following three conceptually different dimensions. (Bakker et al., 2010; Bakker et al., 2022; Bakker and de Vries, 2021)

#### **(1) Seeking resources**

Seeking resources is the first aspect of job crafting. (Bakker et al., 2010) According to studies on the JD-R model, job resources encourage work engagement, which positively affects organisational outcomes. (Bakker et al., 2022, Crawford et al., 2010) Job resources can also lessen the harmful effects of job demands and, when job demands are high, can encourage high levels of engagement at work. (Bakker and de Vries, 2021). Job crafting may, therefore, have a significant effect on employee engagement. Thus, the author believes that increasing job resources may lead to favourable individual outcomes. (e. g., work engagement, job satisfaction). (Luu et al., 2021)

#### **(2) Seeking challenges**

Seeking challenges and raising the bar for demanding work requirements are the second aspects of job crafting. (Bakker et al., 2010) If the work isn't interesting enough, employees might get bored, take time off or become dissatisfied. (Bakker et al., 2022; Saks, 2022). Therefore, having sufficiently

challenging task requirements is essential for fostering employee motivation at work. When the occupations are challenging, employees are inspired to increase their knowledge and abilities or to complete more complex tasks. (Roczniowska et al., 2022). Demanding work environments offer learning opportunities and may lead to fulfilment and high levels of self-efficacy. (Guerci et al., 2022; Gorgievski and Hobfoll, 2008). Even though demanding jobs can be seen as stressful as well, it was found that these demands were favourably related to work engagement. Creating more challenges at work could be a crucial step toward fostering personal development and employment satisfaction. (Morf and Bakker, 2022; Crawford et al., 2010)

### (3) Reducing demands

Reducing demands and decreasing the level of hindering job demands are the third aspects of job crafting. (Bakker et al., 2010) Employees may take proactive measures to lessen job demands if they believe their workload is too heavy. Burnout and other adverse organisational and health outcomes may result from prolonged exposure to high demands and insufficient employment resources. (Saks, 2022; Roczniowska et al., 2022; Crawford et al., 2010).

To sum up, employees who feel that their levels of job demand and job resources are out of balance may be inspired to use the above three complementary job crafting techniques to reduce this misfit. In other words, when a job does not meet an employee's abilities or needs, they become driven to craft aspects of the job. (Bakker et al., 2010; Bakker et al., 2022; Bakker and de Vries, 2021)

### ***3.2.4 Strengths and weaknesses of the job demands-resources model for job crafting***

The job demands-resources model for job crafting is comprehensive, which has important implications for job design theories and describes job

crafting as a relatively new perspective on active job redesign by the individual. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) It argued that for a long time, employees had been viewed as passive performers of their assigned job tasks. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) Several scholars (i.e., Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Vough and Parker, 2008; Zheng, 2020) have argued that job design theory needs to address the impact of employees on their job design. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) With fitting job crafting in job design theory (Grant Parker,2009), it was an attempt to shed more light on the types of initiative behaviours of individual employees at work. (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Vough and Parker, 2008; Zheng, 2020) Job crafting can be seen as a specific form of proactive behaviour in which the employee initiates change in the level of job demands and job resources. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) Job crafting may be facilitated by job and individual characteristics. It may enable employees to fit their jobs to their personal knowledge, skills, and abilities on the one hand and to their preferences and needs on the other hand. Job crafting may be a good way for employees to improve their motivation and other positive work outcomes. Employees could be encouraged to exert more influence on their job characteristics. (Chen and Tang, 2022)

The job demands-resources model for job crafting essentially underpins this research. Generally, it includes psychological mechanisms and interlinked attributes demonstrated by individuals when job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010), although its basic outline lacks adequate details and a complete understanding of job crafting. (Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015) In particular, this model proposes a regulatory focus highly relevant to crafting behaviour. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) Individuals who are highly focused on promotion are sensitive to positive outcomes and thus approach situations with an expected positive outcome (Higgins,1998). Accordingly, they may be more likely to change aspects of the job to be more satisfied and effective than individuals with a prevention focus. It is assumed that those

employees who strive for advancement and growth may accomplish that by crafting their jobs. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) Thus, this framework essentially underpins this research.

It fails, however, to focus on the impact of leadership in more detail. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) That is, the role of the leadership may be a bit too simplistic in this model. (Tims and Bakker, 2010) First, this model just assumes that employees engage in job crafting without the awareness of their leaders. This might be accurate in some circumstances, including when gaining more social support from co-workers, but not constantly. In some cases, the leaders may be required to assist the workers by giving them time to complete a course, for example. (Chen and Tang, 2022; Tims and Bakker, 2010) Additionally, the leader has a crucial function in providing the employees with feedback on their behaviour at work, which may encourage job-crafting behaviours. (Zheng, 2020) Managers can also increase their sense of self-efficacy by giving employees the chance to demonstrate their competence and success at work (Bandura, 2001). Therefore, there is a need for more research on leadership's influence over job crafting. (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015; Tims and Bakker, 2010)

### **3.3 Regulatory focus theory**

#### **3.3.1 *Regulatory focus theory***

Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) explains the individual's characteristics of seeking benefits and avoiding harm. It describes the essential differences in people's behaviours due to the difference in regulatory focus. Self-regulation refers to a process in which people seek to combine their self (including their behaviour and self-concept) with appropriate goals or standards (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). People have two basic self-regulation systems. One is promotion, which refers to the positive adjustment of the reward-seeking behaviour to make people focus on

the positive goal; the other is prevention, which refers to the positive adjustment of the punishment avoidance behaviour to make people focus on the negative goal. Individuals with a promotion focus are shown as pursuing an "ideal self" and caring about hopes and desires; individuals with a prevention focus are shown as sticking to the "obligatory self" and caring about duties, obligations and responsibilities (Scholer et al., 2019)

Higgins (1997). believes that people's promotion focus stems from the following three factors: strong ideals, "acquisition, no-acquisition" contextual composition and the activation of growth needs, while prevention focus comes from the opposite three aspects: strong obligation, "loss, no-loss" contextual composition and the activation of safety needs. Individuals with different regulatory focuses may have different perceptions, decision-making, and emotional performance, including behaviour and performance results (specific comparisons shown in Table 3-1. Those individuals with a dominant promotion focus are more concerned about their achievements and desires. They may also be more sensitive to acquisitions and lack rewards.

Meanwhile, they will adopt promotion-oriented goal-realization strategies, be more creative in problem-solving, and behave more positively in the face of risks. Also, their emotional span expressed is "happy-frustration". On the contrary, individuals with a prevention focus are more concerned about responsibilities and obligations. Also, they may be more sensitive to the occurrence and lack of punishment, and they will adopt prevention goal realization strategies. Similarly, their emotional span may be "calm-anxiety". (Scholer et al., 2019; Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Crowe and Higgins, 1997; Friedman and Förster, 2001; Zheng, 2020).

People's promotion focus and prevention focus corresponds to the two relative basics of individual motivation: change motivation and stability motivation (Scholer et al., 2019; Zheng, 2020). The above motivation could be essential for people's survival and have a wide range of performance in



daily work and life (Zheng, 2020). Accordingly, what the promotion focus pursues is development and change, exploring creative advantages and novel behaviours; on the contrary, the prevention focus pursues ensuring personal safety and security, maintaining routines, and maintaining the status quo (Kluger et al., 2004; Van - Dijk and Kluger, 2004)

**Table 3-1 Comparison of two regulatory focuses: promotion and prevention**

Regulatory focus type	Promotion	Prevention
Behavioral regulatory focus	Acquisition of reward	Avoidance of punishment
Sensitive tendency	Sensitive to positive results	Sensitive to negative outcomes
Target implementation strategy	Promotional type	Prevention type
Self-seeking	Pursue ideal self, care for hopes and desires	Pursuit of obligatory self, care for duties, obligations and responsibilities
Motivation difference	Change motivation	Stability motivation

Main sources: Developed from Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Higgins, 1997; Scholer et al., 2019; Zheng, 2020

Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). has been widely used in organizational management, and scholars believe that regulatory focus can effectively explain some organizational behaviour. Many researchers explored the relationship between regulatory focus and an organization's commitment (Roundy, 2010; Jing and Xiaojing, 2009, Markovits et al., 2008, Johnson et al., 2010), work performance (Wallace and Chen, 2006, Wallace et al., 2009, Johnson et al., 2011), organization citizenship (Wallace et al., 2009, Dewett and Denisi, 2007), job crafting (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Zheng, 2020), etc.

The idea that regulatory focus can effectively relate to job crafting has been supported indirectly or directly in many studies. Researchers generally believe that the promotion focus improves the level of employee job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010), while the prevention focus reduces (Inzlicht et al.,

2021; Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Zheng, 2020). In summary, regulatory focus theory is used (Brockner and Higgins,2001). has been increasingly widely used in organizational management research, and scholars often use regulatory focus theory to explain employee work attitudes and behaviours (Miele et al., 2020; Higgins and Pinelli, 2020).

### **3.3.2 *Strengths and weaknesses of regulatory focus theory***

In general, regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001). enriches and develops classic psychological theories (such as achievement motivation theory, decision-making theory, etc.) and provides a new theoretical perspective for scholars to conduct in-depth research on motivation theory (Scholer et al., 2019). It provides an essential theoretical reference for in-depth analysis of the individual's motivation to pursue goals and preferences for strategic behaviour choices (Higgins, 2012).

While Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001) has been widely used, it has also been criticized. First, critics believe this theory does not sufficiently explain why individuals have different strategic tendencies (promotion/prevention) when facing the same goals. For example, why do some individuals attach great importance to income while others do not? (Lei et al., 2010). In this sense, the theory only analyses how individuals seek benefits and avoid harm (Lei Scholer et al., 2019). Therefore, some scholars have proposed that sensitivity theory should be combined with Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001). to understand human motivation better (Taylor, 1998)

Secondly, critics believe that the focus on promotion and prevention may exist simultaneously during the same event, and the balance between them will also change due to changes in individuals and the environment (Chaoping and Shiyong,2019). In addition, the promotion and prevention focus is not stable, and the situation, environment and other factors that affect the

regulatory focus will also affect the regulatory focus in unpredictable ways. Based on the above two aspects, critics believe that regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001). is prone to be mixed and unclear when explaining the motivation or behaviour of individuals (Chaoping and Shiyong,2019; Scholer et al., 2019)

Third, although the theory discusses the impact of time change on individual strategic behaviour, it does not consider whether the choice of individual strategic behaviour will change with time under the same event (Chaoping and Shiyong,2019). Critics pointed out many examples of transforming strategic behaviours within individuals (Scholer et al., 2019). For instance, after teachers' criticism in childhood, most people tend to show dissatisfaction, but they know that the teacher is right in their hearts. The teacher's criticism can help avoid making the same mistakes (prevention orientation). However, with time and personal growth, people may think that the teacher's teaching that year may help achieve tremendous success (promotion orientation). However, the theory has not explained this point (Chaoping and Shiyong,2019; Scholer et al., 2019)

### ***3.3.3 Regulatory focus dimensions framed in regulatory focus theory***

Regulatory focus is not only manifested as an individual characteristic but also can be guided by the immediate situation. Studies have shown that feedback and "task contingency" can temporarily guide the individual's promotion or prevention focus and then affect the individual's continuous motivation in the task (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021). Also, the guardian's manipulation of the situation in the communication with the child can guide the child's regulatory focus. They also believe that the communication between the teacher and the student, as well as the leader and employees, is consistent with this. Therefore, regulatory focus is not only an individual trait

variable related to personality preference but also a state variable of the individual.

Some recent studies directly divided the individual regulatory focus into trait and situation regulatory focus (Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Kark and Van Dijk, 2019). Separately, **trait regulatory focus** refers to the mode of regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in the process of his growth, which manifests as a stable individual trait (Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Kark and Van Dijk, 2019). Situation **regulatory focus** refers to the individual regulatory focus that is improved by the change of the immediate situation, which manifests as a transient and changing individual state (Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Go; Tfredson and Reina, 2020; Kark and Van Dijk, 2019). For individuals in organizational practice, their regulatory focus tendencies also manifest in the above two aspects. First, the fundamental mode of behaviour and perception formed is an internalized and stable self-regulatory tendency, that is, **trait regulatory focus**; the second is the regulatory mode of working activities at work. This mode of regulating the focus of work status may be impacted by specific organization-level contexts (such as leadership), that is, **situation/work regulatory focus** (Ewe et al., 2018; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Zheng, 2020). Trait regulatory focus and work regulatory focus both have promotion and prevention dimensions ((1) **Work regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

(2) **Work regulatory focus prevention** refers to employee prevention regulatory focus point aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and avoidance of negative results.

**(3) Trait regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

**(4) Trait regulatory focus prevention** refers to the point of employee prevention regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth, emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and the avoidance of negative results.

Figure 3–1) (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021; Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Zheng, 2020). The initial conceptual framework (Figure 3–4). derived from literature involves work regulatory focus while the developed framework/model (Figure 6–1)

formed after data treatment integrates trait regulatory focus complementarily. Detailly, the conceptualization of trait regulatory focus and work regulatory focus paralleled with (1) **Work regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

**(2) Work regulatory focus prevention** refers to employee prevention regulatory focus point aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and avoidance of negative results.

**(3) Trait regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

**(4) Trait regulatory focus prevention** refers to the point of employee prevention regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth,

emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and the avoidance of negative results.

Figure 3–1 is shown as follows: (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021; Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020)

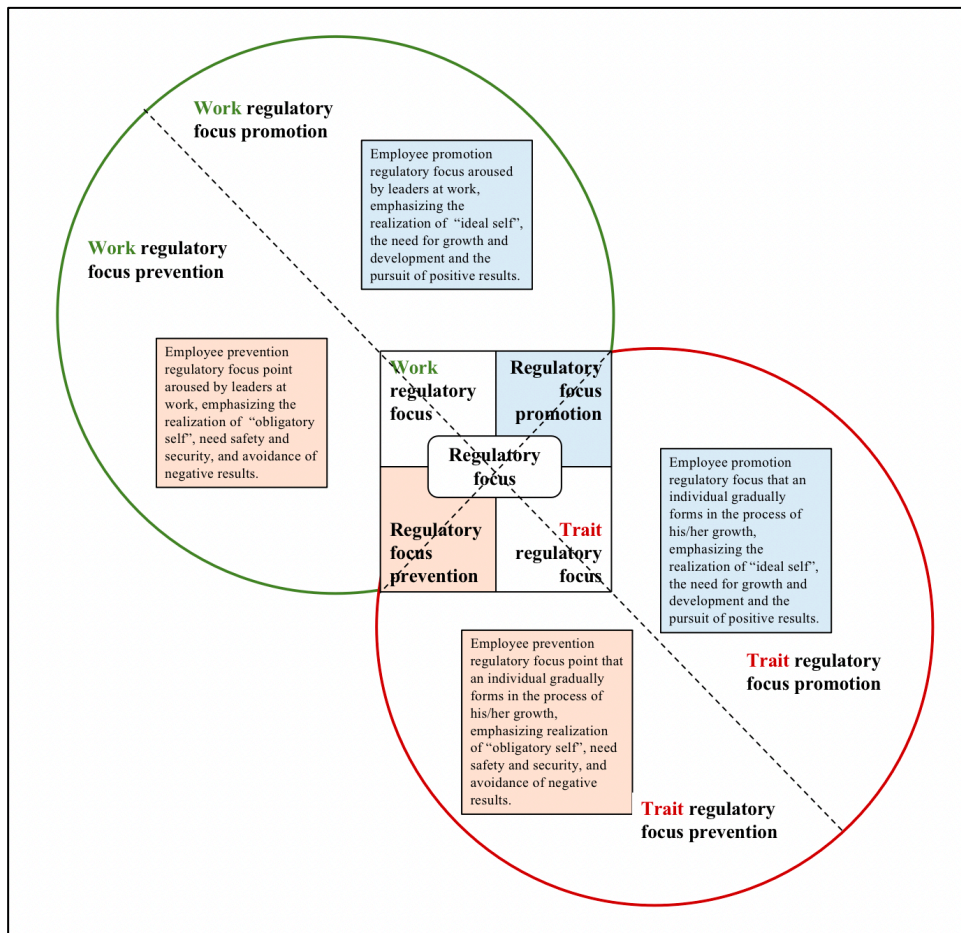
**(1) Work regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

**(2) Work regulatory focus prevention** refers to employee prevention regulatory focus point aroused by leaders at work, emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and avoidance of negative results.

**(3) Trait regulatory focus promotion** refers to employee promotion regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth, emphasizing the realization of the "ideal self", the need for growth and development and the pursuit of positive results.

**(4) Trait regulatory focus prevention** refers to the point of employee prevention regulatory focus that an individual gradually forms in their growth, emphasizing the realization of the "obligatory self", the need for safety and security, and the avoidance of negative results.

**Figure 3–1 Dimensions of regulatory focus (promotion/prevention × trait/work)**



Main sources: Developed from Michaelsen and Esch, 2021; Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Zheng, 2020

### 3.3.4 *Combine regulatory focus theory and research topic*

(1) Application of regulatory focus theory in organizational behaviour research

Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). has been widely used in organizational management, and scholars believe that regulatory focus can effectively explain some organizational behaviour. Many researchers explored the relationship between regulatory focus and organization's commitment (Roundy, 2010, Jing and Xiaojing, 2009, Markovits et al., 2008, Johnson et al., 2010), work performance (Wallace and Chen, 2006, Wallace et al., 2009, Johnson et al., 2011), organization citizenship (Wallace et al., 2009, Dewett and Denisi, 2007), job crafting

(Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Zheng, 2020, Shang et al., 2023), etc.

## (2) Application of regulatory focus theory in job crafting

The idea that regulatory focus can be effectively related to job crafting has been supported indirectly or directly in many studies (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Zheng, 2020; Shang et al., 2023). Researchers generally believe that the promotion focus improves the level of employee job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010), while the prevention focus reduces (Inzlicht et al., 2021; Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Zheng, 2020; Shang et al., 2023). For example, Tims and Bakker (2010) argue that regulatory focus is highly relevant for crafting behaviour. Individuals who are highly focused on promotion are sensitive to positive outcomes and thus approach situations with an expected positive outcome (Higgins, 1998). Accordingly, they may be more likely to change aspects of the job to be more satisfied and effective than individuals with a prevention focus. It is assumed that those employees who strive for advancement and growth may accomplish that by crafting their jobs (Tims and Bakker, 2010).

## (3) Application of regulatory focus theory in leadership research

Researchers increasingly interpret the impact of leadership on employees as a process related to employee self-regulatory focus (Aycan and Shelia, 2019; Benjamin and Flynn, 2006). They believe leadership effect on employees is implemented by evoking employee different situation focus. Leaders can influence their subsequent work attitudes and behavioural outcomes by arousing different situation regulatory focus in their employee work (Zheng, 2020; Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Hetland et al., 2018; Kark et al., 201; Neubert et al., 2008). The research conclusions of related literature indicate that leaders' promotional role modelling, servant leadership, linguistic framing, feedback and benevolent behaviour can lead to employee promotional work-related outputs by improving the promotional regulatory



focus of the employee work, while leaders' prevention focused role modelling, active structures, linguistic framing, feedback, and authoritarian behaviour can lead to employee prevention focused work-related outputs by improving the prevention focus of the employee work (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Hetland et al., 2018, Kark et al. 2018, Neubert et al. 2008, Wu et al., 2008, XU, 2018, Chou, 2012).

For example, Brockner and Higgins (2001). points out that some daily behaviours, such as leadership role modelling, the use of language and symbols, and feedback, can effectively affect the work regulatory focus of employees, thereby affecting their subsequent attitudes and behaviours. And the corresponding promotion or prevention focus of employees is also improved.

Hetland et al. (2018). collected data from 107 employees from Norwegian knowledge-based organizations. Participants responded to a general questionnaire and five daily diary questionnaires. The results show that followers' day-level perception of their transformational leadership behaviour was positively related to their day-level job crafting in the form of increasing structural and social resources. Moreover, daily transformational leadership was particularly beneficial for job crafting when followers scored high (vs. low) on the trait promotion focus. It is concluded that transformational leaders can encourage their followers' use of job crafting and that employee promotion focus facilitates this effect.

Kark et al. (2018) present a theoretical model that examines transformational and transactional leadership styles and the promotion and prevention of situational self-regulatory focus (SRF). The model suggests that while transformational leadership promotes creativity, at least partially by enhancing followers' situational promotion SRF, transactional leadership style (transactional active). It is aligned with followers' prevention situational SRF, associated with leaders' hindering followers' creativity. Findings from

two studies, an experimental study and a field study, support this model, showing that the relationship between different types of leadership and creativity is more complex than previously regarded.

Neubert et al. (2008). used 250 full-time employees as an example to study the relationship between leadership behaviour, employees' work regulatory focus, and employees' work results. The empirical test results show that leadership behaviour can improve employee regulatory focus and, in turn, affects their subsequent behaviours and results. Specifically, servant leadership role modelling promotes helping and creative behaviours by improving the focus on employee work promotion. Active-structure leadership role modelling guarantees the completion of the performance within the role and the avoidance of deviant behaviours by guiding employee work prevention focus.

#### (4) Research comment

In summary, regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001). has been increasingly widely applied in leadership research and plays a significant role (Zheng, 2020; Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Hetland et al., 2018; Kark et al., 201; Neubert et al., 2008). However, researchers have mainly elaborated from a fragmented perspective on how leaders implement influence by improving the employee work regulatory focus. Few studies explore the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus on the impact of leadership on employee job crafting from a systematic and holistic perspective (Kark et al., 2018; Lei et al., 2012; Zheng, 2020)

### ***3.3.5 Leadership regulatory focused behaviour dimensions***

In chapter two, the author implies that when analyzing the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, it's proper to focus on the three dimensions: leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing,

and leadership feedback (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Lei et al., 2012, Lei et al., 2010, Yufan and Lei, 2015)

Meanwhile, there is a discussion of integrating regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001) and the above three dimensions of leadership behaviour. On the one hand, the integration is rational for three reasons. First, leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback contain different regulatory focus tendencies, and the leadership behaviour mentioned can be distinguished from the regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001) perspective (Lei et al., 2010). Second, leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback implement their influence by improving employee work/situation regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). Finally, employee trait regulatory focus is considered to be one of the essential contextual regulatory variables in the impact of leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021; Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021; Gottfredson and Reina, 2020; Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020)

On the other side, when analyzing the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, the discussion of the integration of regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001) and the above three dimensions of leadership behaviour shows insufficiency. First, the debate about integrating regulatory focus theory and the above three dimensions of leadership behaviour shows insufficient job crafting research (Chen and Tang, 2022; Schoberova, 2015). Second, the discussion of integrating regulatory focus theory and the above three dimensions of leadership behaviour mainly focuses on one side of regulatory focus (promotion focus and prevention focus). A systematic and overall analysis integrating both the two sides of regulatory focus (promotion focus and prevention focus) shows insufficiency (Zheng, 2020)

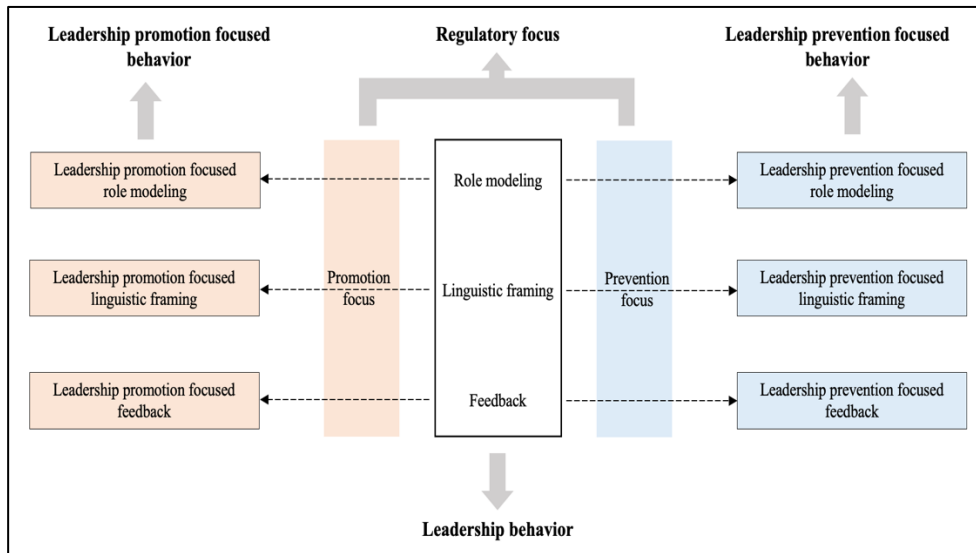
Thus, the author identifies leadership behaviour integrating regulatory focus in previous studies where leadership regulatory focused behaviour guides employees to regulate their different situations with a regulatory focus, thereby affecting their cognitive strategies, emotional experience, and decision-making behaviour (Peng et al., 2021, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Kark et al., 2018). For example, Yufan and Lei (2015b) construct an overall concept for leadership regulatory focused behaviour and examine and discuss the validity and importance of the idea.

The author introduces leadership regulatory focused behaviour as the concept integrating Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) and the three dimensions of leadership behaviour (leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback) into the research on the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. Detailly, the conceptualization of leadership regulatory focused behaviour paralleled with Figure 3–2 is shown as follows: (Peng et al., 2021; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Kark et al., 2018)

**(1) Promotion focused leadership behaviour** refers to the promotion-focused behaviour transmitted by leaders when interacting with employees. It sends a message to employees: this work or task is what leaders want you to accomplish well, and leaders expect idealized goals and better results. It is realized by leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback.

**(2) Prevention focused leadership behaviour** is defined as the prevention- focused behaviour transmitted by the leader when interacting with employees, which transmits such a message to employees: this work or task should be completed by you, and what the leader requires is the performance of responsibilities and risk avoidance. It is also realized by leadership prevention focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback.

**Figure 3–2 Dimensions of leadership regulatory focused behaviour**



Main sources: Developed from Yufan and Lei, 2015; Peng et al., 2021; Kark et al., 2018

### 3.4 Conceptual framework

Although many scholars have widely acknowledged job crafting as one of the most viable ways of uplifting employee job meaning and job satisfaction (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Zheng, 2020, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Ying et al., 2018) as well as the mechanism of coping with the changing international situation and the rapid development of science and technology in China (Ying et al., 2018), the mechanisms for ensuring employee job crafting, an important initiative, are frequently overlooked by leaders at work (Ying et al., 2018, Grant and Parker, 2009, Zheng, 2020), and yet **leadership behaviour plays a significant, often pivotal role in the impact on employ job crafting** (Zheng, 2020, Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Wang et al., 2020, Leana et al., 2009, Berdicchia and Masino, 2019, Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). In this light, Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning (2015a) explore the relationship between leadership regulatory focus and employee job crafting. Zheng (2020) constructs a mediated moderation model related to perceived leader regulatory-focused modelling, work complexity, work regulatory focus and employee job crafting.

**Inductively seeking to understand what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively impact employee job crafting has revealed that leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting and leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting** (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Bandura, 2021, Levin et al., 1998, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Zheng, 2020). On the one side, three kinds of leadership behaviours (behavioural role modelling, language and symbols, and feedback) are considered (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Bandura, 2021; Levin et al., 1998; Tims and Bakker, 2010). This aligns with the view that leadership behavioural role modelling, language and symbols, and feedback impact employee regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) and that regulatory focus impacts job crafting (Tims and Bakker, 2010). Individuals who strive for advancement and growth and are high in promotion focus may accomplish that by crafting their jobs (Tims and Bakker, 2010).

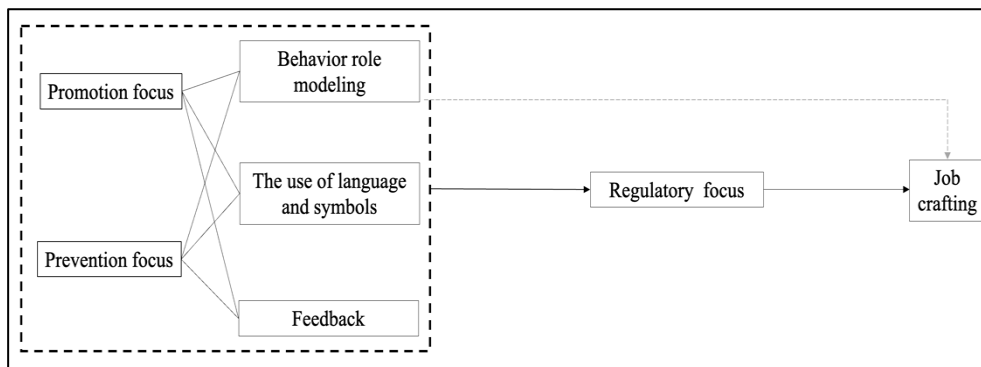
Conversely, two sides of regulatory focus tendencies (regulatory focus promotion and regulatory focus prevention) for leadership behaviour are considered (Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Tims and Bakker, 2010; Zheng, 2020). Brockner and Higgins, for the first time, divided the leader role modelling into two types: promoting focus and prevention focus (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). Based on this, many scholars clearly define the concepts of promotion-focused behaviour (Xiangfen et al., 2016; Zheng, 2020; Lei et al., 2010). Leaders conducting promotion focused leadership behaviour send such a message to employees: this work or task is what leaders want you to accomplish well, and leaders expect idealized goals and better results (Peng et al., 2021; Yufan and Lei, 2015; Kark et al., 2018), to effectively improve and encourage employee work enthusiasm, enhances their flexible thinking and adventurous attitude, and then promote employee job crafting (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Cui and Wiggins, 2017, Simmons and Ren, 2009, Friedman et al., 2007, Joo et al., 2012, Lei et al., 2010, Bandura, 2021, Levin

et al., 1998, Tims and Bakker, 2010). Comparably, leaders conducting prevention focused leadership behaviour transmit such a message to employees: this work or task should be completed by you, and what the leader requires is the performance of responsibilities and risk avoidance (Peng et al., 2021, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Kark et al., 2018), so that employees are more conservative to reduce job crafting level (Brockner and Higgins,2001, Cui and Wiggins, 2017, Simmons and Ren, 2009, Friedman et al., 2007, Joo et al., 2012, Lei et al., 2010, Bandura, 2021, Levin et al., 1998, Tims and Bakker, 2010).

**Inductively seeking to understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively impact employee job crafting has revealed that via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, and via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.** Regulatory focus theory provides an explanation perspective (Brockner and Higgins,2001). Accordingly, some studies have explored the guidance and shaping of leadership behaviour in the context of work, and the more the leaders conduct the promotion or prevention focused behaviour, the more likely the subordinates' work regulatory focus is improved (Brockner and Higgins,2001, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010). An employee with a work promotion focus has flexible thinking and a willingness to take risks, which are the premise that individuals can and dare to break the established ways of doing things and presenting and practising novel ideas(Hung et al.,2020; Zheng, 2020).Promotion-focused individuals exhibit proactive thinking and ideas, broad and abstract interpretation skills, and risk appetite; however, prevention-focused individuals exhibit security tendencies, conventional thinking patterns, and risk aversion preferences(Hung et al.,2020; Zheng, 2020). Therefore, from the perspective

of flexible thinking and willingness to change, the work regulatory focus promotion will promote the job crafting level. In contrast, the work regulatory focus prevention will inhibit job crafting level (Zheng, 2020). Xizhou et al. (2020) have discussed and verified the relationship between regulatory focus and job crafting.

**Figure 3–3 Framework of the impact of leadership behaviour on employ job crafting emerging from the literature**



Main sources: Developed from Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Bandura, 2021; Levin et al., 1998; Tims and Bakker, 2010

**The framework of the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting emerging from literature** is shown in Inductively seeking to understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively impact employee job crafting has revealed that via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, and via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. Regulatory focus theory provides an explanation perspective (Brockner and Higgins,2001). Accordingly, some studies have explored the guidance and shaping of leadership behaviour in the context of work, and the more the leaders conduct the promotion or prevention focused behaviour, the more likely the subordinates' work regulatory focus is improved (Brockner and Higgins,2001, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010). An employee with a work



promotion focus has flexible thinking and a willingness to take risks, which are the premise that individuals can and dare to break the established ways of doing things and presenting and practising novel ideas (Hung et al., 2020; Zheng, 2020). Promotion-focused individuals exhibit proactive thinking and ideas, broad and abstract interpretation skills, and risk appetite; however, prevention-focused individuals exhibit security tendencies, conventional thinking patterns, and risk aversion preferences (Hung et al., 2020; Zheng, 2020). Therefore, from the perspective of flexible thinking and willingness to change, the work regulatory focus promotion will promote the job crafting level. In contrast, the work regulatory focus prevention will inhibit job crafting level (Zheng, 2020). Xizhou et al. (2020) have discussed and verified the relationship between regulatory focus and job crafting.

Figure 3–3. Based on this framework, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, leadership regulatory focused behaviour (behavioural role modelling, language and symbols, and feedback) impacts employee job crafting. Leadership regulatory focused behaviour improves employee work regulatory focus, impacting job crafting.

Based on an extensive review of literature, frameworks and concepts related to the impact of leadership behaviour on job crafting, this study realizes that many studies have paid attention to understanding the link between leadership behaviour and employ job crafting (Inductively seeking **to understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively impact employee job crafting has revealed that via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, and via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.** Regulatory focus theory provides an explanation perspective (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). Accordingly, some studies have explored the guidance and

shaping of leadership behaviour in the context of work, and the more the leaders conduct the promotion or prevention focused behaviour, the more likely the subordinates' work regulatory focus is improved (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010). An employee with a work promotion focus has flexible thinking and a willingness to take risks, which are the premise that individuals can and dare to break the established ways of doing things and presenting and practising novel ideas (Hung et al., 2020; Zheng, 2020). Promotion-focused individuals exhibit proactive thinking and ideas, broad and abstract interpretation skills, and risk appetite; however, prevention-focused individuals exhibit security tendencies, conventional thinking patterns, and risk aversion preferences (Hung et al., 2020; Zheng, 2020). Therefore, from the perspective of flexible thinking and willingness to change, the work regulatory focus promotion will promote the job crafting level. In contrast, the work regulatory focus prevention will inhibit job crafting level (Zheng, 2020). Xizhou et al. (2020) have discussed and verified the relationship between regulatory focus and job crafting.

Figure 3–3). Nevertheless, **the literature has revealed that the impact of leadership behaviour on employ job crafting remains gaps:** (1) The analyzed leadership behaviour dimension is single-dimension but not systematical-regarded in the impact of leadership behaviour on employ job crafting (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Lei et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015). Although existing studies provide some behaviours or ways for leaders to motivate their employees for job crafting, these studies only examine leadership performance from a single dimension, such as transformational leadership behaviour, and do not regard leadership as a whole or systematically (Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Lei et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015). (2) The analyzing perspective is one side of positivity/improvement but not two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (Brennkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Petrou et al., 2012a; Chi and

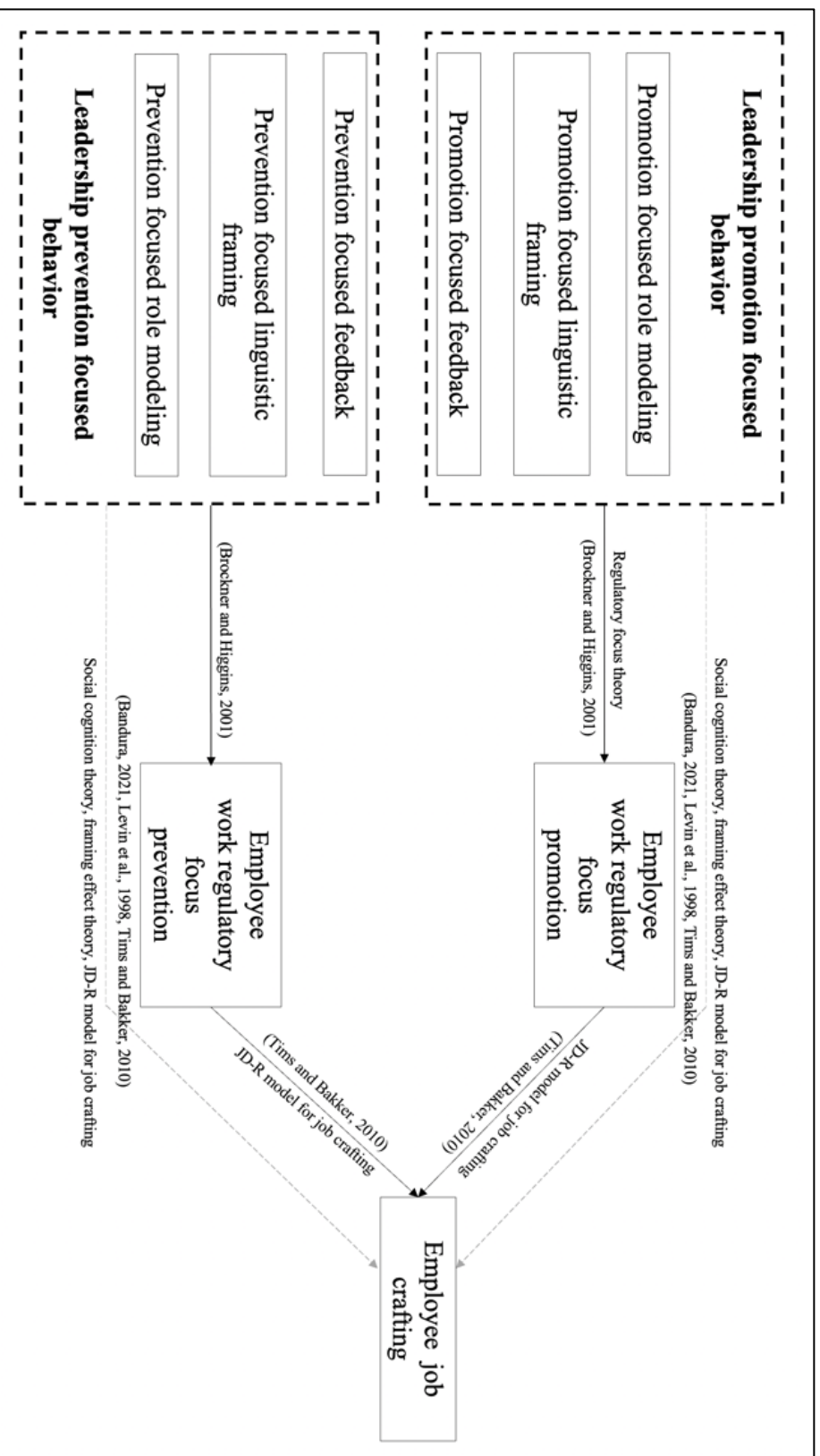
Pan, 2012, Chiaburu et al., 2014, Parker and Wu, 2014, Zhang and Bartol, 2010, Martin et al., 2013). When analyzing the impact of leadership on employee job crafting, research in this field mainly expounds on the role of leadership on employee job crafting from the positive/improving perspective. The exploration of the negative/reducing impact of leadership on employee job crafting is slightly insufficient (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b; Petrou et al., 2012a; Chi and Pan, 2012; Chiaburu et al., 2014; Parker and Wu, 2014, Zhang and Bartol, 2010, Martin et al., 2013). (3) The discussion of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and not sufficient (Bandura, 2021; Gan, 2018; Bavik et al., 2017, Yan et al., 2021, Joo et al., 2012, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001, Wu et al., 2008, Parker and Bindl, 2016, Leana et al., 2009). Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) has been increasingly widely used in related research in leadership behaviour (role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback). The study shows that leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback (Brockner, 2001) contain different regulatory focus tendencies. These behaviours impact employee behaviour by improving employee work situation regulatory focus (Bandura, 2021; Gan, 2018; Bavik et al., 2017; Yan et al., 2021; Joo et al., 2012; Yufan and Lei, 2015). However, in-depth discussions of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting are rare, such as moderation and mediation (Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001; Wu et al., 2008; Parker and Bindl, 2016; Leana et al., 2009)

Thus, the author proposes the conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) aiming to **fill the gaps in the literature by** (1) regarding leadership behaviour, systematically, with three dimensions: leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing and leadership feedback; (2) analyzing the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction,

based on regulatory focus theory; and (3) discussing the impact mechanism more sufficiently.

This conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) **proposes that** (a) leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting. That is, leadership promotion focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback improves employee job crafting; leadership prevention focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback reduces employee job crafting (b) via improving employee work regulatory focus, leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting. That is, via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting; via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.

Figure 3–4 Conceptual framework



Main sources: Developed from Brockner and Higgins, 2001; Bandura, 2021; Levin et al., 1998; Tims and Bakker, 2010; Kanze et al., 2018; Zheng, 2020

With an integrated and systematic perspective, this designed framework guided the researcher in **answering the specific questions** designed to understand: (a) What kind of leadership behaviour can effectively impact employee job crafting? That is, what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively improve employee job crafting? What kind of leadership behaviour can effectively reduce employee job crafting? (b) Via improving what kind of employee reactions does the leadership behaviour effectively impact employee job crafting? That is, via improving what kind of employee reactions does the leadership behaviour effectively improve employee job crafting? Via improving what kind of employee reactions does the leadership behaviour effectively reduce employee job crafting?

### 3.5 Conclusion

In providing a detailed discussion of the topic related theory and model, this chapter highlights eight key points:

1. Two major research genres of job crafting: "work meaning" genre and "person-job fit" genre exist. This study focuses on job demands-resources model for job crafting "person-job fit" genre.

2. Framed in JD-R model, job crafting dimensions contain: seeking resources, seeking challenges and reducing demands.

3. Regulatory focus theory is a robust, well developed theory with the explanatory power to investigate the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations from a two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction analyzing perspective.

4. Framed in regulatory focus theory, regulatory focus dimensions contain: work regulatory focus promotion, work regulatory focus prevention, trait regulatory focus promotion and trait regulatory focus prevention.

5. While in general regulatory focus theory literature is well developed, researchers have mostly elaborated from a fragmented perspective on the

mechanism by which leaders implement influence by improving the employee work regulatory focus; and empirical research is limited on the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership on employee job crafting.

6. Framed in regulatory focus theory, leadership regulatory focused behaviour dimensions contain: promotion focused leadership behaviour and prevention focused leadership behaviour.

7. The conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) is built.

8. The function of literature-based discussion of the model and theory here in conceptual framework chapter is to provide the author with a holistic theoretical grasp.

First, through in-depth exploration of the development venation of job crafting theory, it can be found that the theoretical research on job crafting can be divided into two major schools: "work meaning" genre and "person-job fit" genre. The "person-job fit" genre starts from seeking a balance between individual needs and organizational requirements and focuses on work structure and job performance.

Second, based on the JD-R model, it's proposed that job crafting consists of the following three conceptually different dimensions.: seeking resources, seeking challenges and reducing demands.

Third, regulatory focus theory explains the individual's characteristics of seeking benefits and avoiding harms and describes the important differences in people's behaviours due to the difference in regulatory focus. People have two basic self-regulation systems, one is promotion, which refers to the positive adjustment of the reward seeking behaviour to make people focus on the positive goal; the other is the prevention, which refers to the positive adjustment of the punishment avoidance behaviour to make people focus on the negative goal.

Forth, some recent study directly divided the individual regulatory focus into trait regulatory focus and situation regulatory focus. For individuals in organizational practice, their regulatory focus tendencies are also manifested in the above two aspects. First, the basic mode of behaviour and perception that has been formed is an internalized and stable self-regulatory tendency, that is, trait regulatory focus; the second is the regulatory mode of working activities at work. This mode of regulating the focus of work status may be impacted by specific organization-level contexts (such as leadership), that is, situation/work regulatory focus. Thus, framed in regulatory focus theory, regulatory focus dimensions contain work regulatory focus promotion, work regulatory focus prevention, trait regulatory focus promotion and trait regulatory focus prevention.

Fifth, regulatory focus theory has been increasingly widely applied in the field of leadership research and plays a very important role. However, researchers have mostly elaborated from a fragmented perspective on the mechanism by which leaders implement influence by improving the employee work regulatory focus. And there are few studies that explore the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership on employee job crafting from a systematic and holistic perspective.

Sixth, framed in regulatory focus theory, leadership regulatory focused behaviour dimensions contain: promotion focused leadership behaviour and prevention focused leadership behaviour. Promotion focused leadership behaviour refers to the promotion- focused behaviour transmitted by leaders when interacting with employees. It sends a message to employees: this work or task is what leaders want you to accomplish well, and leaders expect idealized goals and better results. It is realized by leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback. While prevention focused leadership behaviour is defined as the prevention- focused behaviour



transmitted by the leader when interacting with employees, which transmits such a message to employees: this work or task should be completed by you, and what the leader requires is the performance of responsibilities and risk avoidance. It is also realized by leadership prevention focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback.

Seventh, the conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) is built. Based on an extensive review of literature, frameworks and concepts, the author proposes the conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) aiming to fill the gaps in the literature by (1) regarding leadership behaviour, systematically, with three dimensions: leadership role modelling, leadership linguistic framing and leadership feedback; (2) analyzing the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction, based on regulatory focus theory; and (3) discussing the impact mechanism more sufficiently. And this proposed conceptual framework (Figure 3–4) proposes that: (a) leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting. That is, leadership promotion focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback improve employee job crafting; leadership prevention focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback reduce employee job crafting (b) via improving employee work regulatory focus, leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting. That is, via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting; via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.

Eighth, although the literature review in this study is partially presented before the results, it does not mean that the research is completely theoretically driven. The function of the literature review in the grounded theory method presented here in this chapter is to provide the author with a

holistic theoretical grasp, so that researchers can maintain the sensitivity of the theory, rather than setting a fixed theoretical framework.

This chapter is the continuation of the literature review chapter. It presents the theory and model related to the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting. The next chapter illustrates the research methodology.

## 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Purpose and aims

The previous chapter illustrates the need for empirical research into the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting from a regulatory focus perspective, thus providing scope for investigating the research objective. This chapter illustrates the research methodology. Therefore, this chapter has seven aims:

1. To discuss the research paradigm,
2. To critically evaluate the research philosophy,
3. To assess the research approach,
4. To discuss research strategy,
5. To assess and develop data collection method,
6. To discuss and provide examples of how the data was analyzed, and
7. To develop issues of research assurance.

### 4.2 Research paradigms

The author explores the research paradigm from ontology, epistemology, and methodology levels. First, at the **ontology** level, these paradigms answer the questions of "authenticity": what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it? For example, if a "real" world is assumed, then what can be known about it is "how things are" and "how things work." Then only those questions that relate to matters of "real" existence and "real" action are admissible; other questions, such as those concerning matters of aesthetic or moral significance, fall outside the realm of legitimate scientific inquiry (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Second, at the **epistemology** level, these paradigms inquire about the questions: what is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-

be knower and what can be known? The answer that can be given to this question is constrained by the answer already given to the ontological question; that is, not just any relationship can now be postulated. So if, for example, "real" reality is assumed, then the posture of the knower must be one of objective detachment or value freedom to be able to discover how things are" and " how things work." (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Finally, at the **methodology** level, the problem that these paradigms need to solve is: how can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known? Again, the answer that can be given to this question is constrained by answers already given to the first two questions; that is, not just any methodology is appropriate. For example, a "real" reality pursued by an "objective" inquirer mandates control of possible confounding factors, whether the methods are qualitative (say, observational) or quantitative (say, analysis of covariance) (Conversely, selection of a manipulative methodology-the experiment, say-implies the ability to be objective and a real-world to be objective about.). The methodological question cannot be reduced to a question of methods; methods must be fitted to a predetermined methodology (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Guba and Lincoln, 1994)

## **4.3 Research philosophy**

### **4.3.1 *Justification of constructivism***

Social science research can explore its theoretical origins and research philosophy, from four aspects: 1) positivism; 2) post-positivism; 3) critical theory and related ideological positions 4) constructivism (Bredo and Feinberg, 1982, Guba and Lincoln, 1994, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Generally speaking, these different kinds of research philosophy mainly discuss some important issues in the three aspects of research paradigms:

ontology, epistemology and methodology, and distinguish from each other as shown in Table 4-1(Guba and Lincoln, 1994, Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

**Table 4-1 Distinguish different kinds of research philosophy from the three aspects of research paradigm**

<b>Positivism</b>
<p><b><i>Ontology: naive realism “real” reality but apprehendable</i></b></p> <p>An apprehendable reality is assumed to exist, driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms. Knowledge of the "way things are" is conventionally summarized in the form of time-and-context-free generalizations, some of which take the form of cause-effect laws. Research can, in principle, converge on the "true" state of affairs. The basic posture of the paradigm is argued to be both reductionist and deterministic.</p>
<p><b><i>Epistemology: dualist/objectivist; findings true</i></b></p> <p>The investigator and the investigated "object" are assumed to be independent entities, and the investigator to be capable of studying the object without influencing it or being influenced by it. When influence in either direction (threats to validity) is recognized, or even suspected, various strategies are followed to reduce or eliminate it. Inquiry takes place as through a one-way mirror. Values and biases are prevented from influencing outcomes, so long as the prescribed procedures are rigorously followed. Replicable findings are, in fact, true.</p>
<p><b><i>Methodology: experimental/ manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative methods</i></b></p> <p>Questions and/or hypotheses are stated in propositional form and subjected to empirical test to verify them; possible confounding conditions must be carefully controlled (manipulated) to prevent outcomes from being improperly influenced.</p>
<b>Postpositivism</b>
<p><b><i>Ontology: critical realism- “real” reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendable</i></b></p> <p>Reality is assumed to exist but to be only imperfectly apprehendable because of basically flawed human intellectual mechanisms and the fundamentally intractable nature of phenomena. The ontology is labeled as critical realism because of the posture of proponents that claims about reality must be subjected to the widest possible critical examination to facilitate apprehending reality as closely as possible (but never perfectly).</p>
<p><b><i>Epistemology: modified dualist/ objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably true</i></b></p> <p>Dualism is largely abandoned as not possible to maintain, but objectivity remains a "regulatory ideal"; special emphasis is placed on external "guardians" of objectivity such as critical traditions (Do the findings "fit" with preexisting knowledge?) and the critical community (such as editors, referees, and professional peers). Replicated findings are probably true (but always subject to falsification).</p>
<p><b><i>Methodology: modified experimental/manipulative; critical pluralism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods</i></b></p>



Emphasis is placed on critical multiplism (a refurbished version of triangulation) as a way of falsifying (rather than verifying) hypotheses. The methodology aims to redress some of the problems noted above (intraparadigm critiques) by doing inquiry in more natural settings, collecting more situational information, and reintroducing discovery as an element in inquiry, and, in the social sciences particularly, soliciting emic viewpoints to assist in determining the meanings and purposes that people ascribe to their actions. All these aims are accomplished largely through the increased utilization of qualitative techniques.

### **Critical theory and related ideological positions**

***Ontology: historical realism- virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time***

A reality is assumed to be apprehendable that was once plastic, but that was, over time, shaped by a congeries of social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors, and then crystallized (reified) into a series of structures that are now (inappropriately) taken as real, that is, natural and immutable. For all practical purposes the structures are real, a virtual or historical reality.

***Epistemology: transactional/ subjectivist; value- mediated findings***

The investigator and the investigated object are assumed to be interactively linked, with the values of the investigator (and of situated "others") inevitably influencing the inquiry. Findings are therefore value mediated. Note that this posture effectively challenges the traditional distinction between ontology and epistemology; what can be known is inextricably intertwined with the interaction between a particular investigator and a particular object or group.

***Methodology: dialogic/dialectical***

The transactional nature of inquiry requires a dialogue between the investigator and the subjects of the inquiry; that dialogue must be dialectical in nature to transform ignorance and misapprehensions (accepting historically mediated structures as immutable) into more informed consciousness (seeing how the structures might be changed and comprehending the actions required to effect change).

### **Constructivism**

***Ontology: relativism-local and specific constructed realities***

Realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions. Constructions are not more or less true, in any absolute sense, but simply more or less informed and/or sophisticated. Constructions are alterable, as are their associated realities. This position should be distinguished from both nominalism and idealism.

***Epistemology: transactional/ subjectivist; created findings***

The investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the "findings" are literally created as the investigation proceeds. The conventional distinction between ontology and epistemology disappears, as in the case of critical theory.

***Methodology: hermeneutical/dialectical***

The variable and personal (intramental) nature of social constructions suggests that individual constructions can be elicited and refined only through interaction between and among investigator and respondents. These varying constructions are interpreted using conventional hermeneutical techniques and are compared and contrasted through a dialectical interchange. The final aim is to

distill a consensus construction that is more informed and sophisticated than any of the predecessor constructions.

Main sources: Developed from Guba and Lincoln, 1994, Fan and Xiangming, 2020

Thus, it is proper to use constructivism as the philosophical inquiry philosophy in this study, the reasons are as follows. First, this study seeks to explore the phenomenon that leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting in Chinese organizations, which may have Chinese local characteristics and may be specifically constructed (**ontology**). Second, the author, based on grounded theory, tries to understand and interpret the fundamental nature of the phenomenon that leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting at the level of subjective experience by playing a controlling and creative role through symbolic interpretation and interaction (Burrell and Morgan 1979) (**epistemology**). Finally, the author uses the grounded theory research strategy to interact with the employees to understand how they perceive and work to shape the nature of the social patterns of which they are a part to realize the construction of core constructs and their relationships related to the research topic: how leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting in Chinese organizations (**methodology**).

This study adopts a grounded theory research strategy. Charmaz (2006) believes that grounded theory has taken quite different forms since its inception: Constructivism grounded theory and objective grounded theory and believes that this is the reason for the differences in positions among grounded theorists. **Constructivism** grounded theory is a part of the hermeneutic tradition, while objectivist grounded theory comes from **positivism**. According to Charmaz's (2006) classification method, Glaser's (1978, 1992) classical grounded theory approach tends more towards the tradition of objectivist grounded theory. Firstly, from the perspective of classical grounded theory's attitude towards data, Glaser (1992) believes that data is independent of the researcher and not influenced by their explanatory

power. The conceptual meaning used by researchers to understand data comes from the data itself, and its meaning lies within the data. Researchers have discovered it. The classical grounded theory, which emphasizes the objectivity of data, is consistent with the objective grounded theory.

However, the motivation of this study is to understand and describe meaningful social actions of local leaders. The result mainly describes how the social significance of the group is generated and maintained. This requires this study to adopt a research orientation mainly based on "hermeneutics". Based on the above considerations, this study adopts the **Constructivism** grounded theory method advocated by Charmaz (2006). Some scholars have pointed out the importance of the Constructivism research tradition in Chinese local management research. For example, Youmin and Wei (2010) pointed out that in the conduct of localized leadership research, the qualitative research on the Constructivism tradition is more likely to touch the complete organizational process and its deep mechanism, so it can better solve the "complexity" and "dynamicity" problems, from the systematic perspective. Wei and Youmin (2009b) pointed out that the research methods of self-presentation and reflection based on the tradition of hermeneutics can well reveal and explain the interactions in specific organization-level contexts, to deepen the understanding of the organization's real dynamics.

#### **4.3.2** *Constructivism*

Constructivists are not realists; they have a relativistic attitude to ontology (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). In the view of constructivists, the so-called "facts" are pluralistic and vary according to factors such as history, geography, situation, and personal experience (Phipps et al., 2012). In epistemology, they believe that understanding is a process of interaction and interaction and must be filtered by the values of both sides. The relationship between the researcher and the objectives is a mutual subject one, and the



research result is a consensus reached by different subjects through interaction (Xiangming, 2000). In terms of methodology, constructivists emphasize dialectical dialogue between researchers and objectives and achieve a generative understanding through mutual interaction (Xiangming, 2000).

To sum up, constructivism sees the reciprocity and communication between people and society and pays attention to the active role of researchers in understanding, making research a process of development and generation (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Although constructivism is very fascinating in theory, it provides researchers with unlimited space and possibilities for research (Xiangming, 2000). In the eyes of the constructivist, everything is flowing, and only at this moment is "real" (Lei et al., 2010, Xiangming, 2000)

## 4.4 Research approach

### 4.4.1 *Justification of inductive research approach*

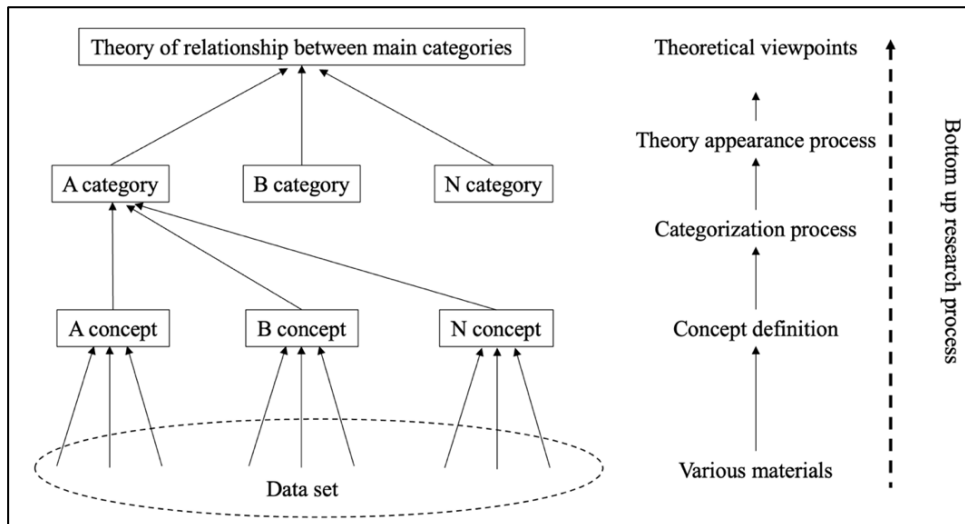
The philosophical foundations of inductive and deductive methodological approaches to research are pivotal in enabling an understanding of the relationship between theory and research (Haque, 2018). For instance, the importance of thinking of the relationship between theory and research in terms of inductive and deductive approaches has been noted by Saunders et al. (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2011). According to Saunders et al. (2009), common approaches used in social science research include **inductive**, **deductive**, and **abductive** approaches. The gathering of empirical 'facts and figures' to develop a theory is treated as inductive, while an attempt to confirm or refute (test) a given theory is often described as deductive. The testing of hypotheses is not the principal aim of the inductive approach (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Abduction is the combination of both, either by starting with an inductive approach and followed by a deductive approach or vice versa, often as an iterative (repeated) cycle (Haque, 2018).

**The inductive approach is more suitable** for this study. Since, this study is not seeking hypothesis or proposition testing; rather, it is seeking to contribute to the existing theory. Thus, inductive logic appears to be the most suitable approach to be followed. **The deductive approach and abductive approach may be less suitable** for this study. First, the deductive approach is less suitable for this study because it is deeply rooted in proposition formulation and testing of theory (Haque, 2018). Second, the abductive approach may be less suitable for this study. Although the combination of this research part with one of the future research directions derived from this research (future research could focus on quantitative test of the theoretical framework established by this research) may conform to the abductive approach. And, in that abductive research, an “inductive-hypothetical-deductive” logic (Haque, 2018) may be used. However, in this study, considering the current research problems and some objective constraints, an inductive research approach may be more suitable.

#### **4.4.2 Inductive research approach**

The outcome of any research is not just influenced by the adopted philosophy and approach to theory but by the adopted underlying methodological choices such as research design and techniques for data gathering (Creswell, 2013). The researcher must therefore be conscious of the fact that the validity, reliability, and replicability of research findings depend upon the type of research design employed. Methodological choices refer to the general guide of how a researcher wants to provide answers to his/her research questions (Creswell, 2013). It should contain clear objectives derived from research questions, specifying the sources from which data collection will be drawn, how the data will be collected and analyzed discuss ethical issues and the constraints the researcher will inevitably encounter, for





Main sources: Developed from Inspired by Corbin (2021), Charmaz and Thornberg (2021) and Anyuan (2015)

## 4.5 Research strategy

### 4.5.1 *Justification of grounded theory*

Researchers divide the research questions into five broad categories: 1) meaning questions; 2) description questions; 3) process questions; 4) oral interaction and dialogue questions; 5) behaviour questions (the behaviour questions are divided into two sides of the "macro" and "micro" layers) (Morse, 1994). Taking these five types of questions as the mainstay, the main strategies in qualitative research are divided into six types (phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, ordinary methodological discourse analysis, participant observation, and qualitative ecology). Table 4-2 shows that for different research questions, researchers often use different research strategies (Fan and Xiangming, 2020).

**Table 4-2 Comparison of main strategies for qualitative research**

Strategy	Paradigm	Method	Other sources
Meaning problem: understanding the nature of life experiences			
Phenomenology	Philosophy (phenomenology)	Recording "talk " recording related anecdotes in personal experiences	Phenomenological literature; philosophical reflection;poetry; art
Description question: describe the values, beliefs,and behaviors of cultural groups			
Ethnography	Anthropology (culture)	Unstructured interviews; participatory observations;field notes	Document;record; photo;map; genealogy;social map
Process questions: understanding the changes in things in the time dimension, research problems can be staged			
Grounded theory	Sociology symbolic interactionism	Interview (recording)	Participatory observation; writing a memo; keeping a diary
Oral interaction and conversational issues			
Ordinary methodology; discourse analysis	Pragmatics	Conversation (recording/video)	Observe
Behavioral questions: Macro			
Participatory observation	Anthropology	Observation	Interview Photography
Microscopic			
Ecology	Zoology	Field notes Observed	Video recording Take notes

Main source: Developed from Fan and Xiangming, 2020

The research question in this study adopts the grounded theory strategy, since it is to explore the impact of leadership on employee job crafting which aims to understand the changes in employee job crafting after being affected by leadership behaviour and can be staged.

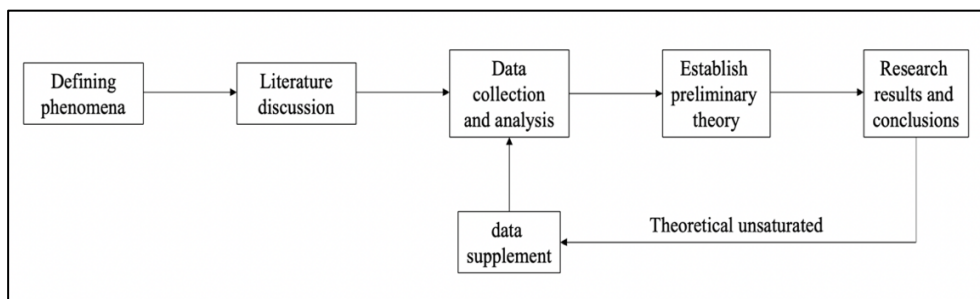
#### **4.5.2 Grounded theory research strategy**

Grounded Theory is a qualitative research design whose main purpose is to build a theory based on empirical data (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019). This is a way to establish substantive theory from the bottom up, that is, to find the core concepts reflecting the essence of the phenomenon of things based on systematic collection of data, and then construct relevant social theories through the connection between these concepts (Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

Qualitative researchers proposed that researchers should first have problem awareness, not apply methods to limit problems and ensure that 'real problems emerge' (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). After finding the proper position in history and social structure, the author can choose the appropriate method (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). They believe that qualitative research allows the use of case methods, theoretical analysis methods and grounded theoretical methods that are not strictly quantitative standards for academic discussion and research. Based on authentic and reliable materials, sufficient research and clear logic, credible theories can also be established (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019)

In China's academic circles, the use of qualitative research methods, especially grounded theory methods, has become more and more common. In terms of basic logical thinking structure, most researchers tend to adopt the following research process shown in Figure 4–3 (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The specific application of the grounded theory and method itself presents relatively personalized characteristics (Yan et al., 2022, Guoqun et al., 2021, Caoyuan et al., 2018). There are differences in the specific operation of grounded theory research methods. Although the graphic form has its personality, it does not go beyond the scope of the substantive content of the method operation of the above research (Anyuan, 2015)

**Figure 4–3 Grounded theory research process model**



Main sources: Developed from Fan and Xiangming (2020), Charmaz and Thornberg (2021) and Anyuan (2015)

### (1) Procedure of Grounded Theory

This study is strictly following the grounded theory process shown in Figure 4–4. The grounded theory research mainly includes the following steps (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021, Charmaz, 2006)

First, research begins. Researchers usually start their research with a certain research interest and a set of general concepts. These concepts give researchers some preliminary ideas and improve them to raise special questions related to their research interests. Combined with the research purpose of this study, the research interest is what the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting is.

Second, collect data. This research mainly adopts in-depth interviews to collect qualitative data. For specific techniques, please refer to the "data collection method" part, which will not be repeated here.

Third, initial code. The so-called initial coding is the process of defining what the data describes. The coding process is the process of dialogue between the researcher and the data. That is, the researchers use their own experience and theoretical sensitivity to gain insight into the deep meaning reflected in the data through constant comparison, combined with the context of the data, and finally express it in the form of code. Researchers should follow the following logic when initial coding data: First, the initial coding should be close to the data, and at the same time, try to use words that can reflect the action to be coded; second, the initial coding should be open; finally, the initial coding should be temporary and comparative. The initial encoding includes three encoding methods: word-by-word encoding, line-by-line encoding (used in this study), and event-by-event encoding.

Fourth, write the initial memo. That is to choose some codes as the most meaningful codes or extract common themes and patterns from some codes as analytical concepts. The researcher developed some tentative categories from the initial code in the early stage of the research. By writing an initial

memo about these codes, the researchers identified which codes can be analyzed as the category, to guide and focus further data collection.

Fifth, write focus codes and advanced memos. Focused coding refers to continuously comparing the data contained in the initial coding, using a large amount of data to filter the code, and finally selecting or reconstructing the code that best reflects and covers the data from the initial coding. By focus coding, researchers have begun to outline the content and form of preliminary analysis, evaluate which focused code can best represent what you see in the data, and make it a conceptual category of the analysis framework in the memo. While elevating a focused code to generics, researchers can start narrative propositions in the advanced memo, that is, define generics, explain the attributes of the generics, explain the conditions for the generation and maintenance of the generics, describe the results, and show how this category relates to other categories.

Sixth, conduct theoretical sampling for further improvement of the concept of generics. The purpose of theoretical sampling is to enrich and perfect categories or theories through data collection, not to randomly sample selected populations, nor to distribute sampling based on representativeness in a specific population. It needs to be pointed out that theoretical sampling is not a one-off but is implemented continuously with the cycle of induction and deduction in grounded theoretical research and terminates with the saturation of genres or theories. Theoretical saturation means that if collecting more data for a theoretical category can no longer reveal its new attributes, nor can it produce further theoretical insights about the theory, it can be said to have reached theoretical saturation.

Seventh, theory code. It is mainly realized by classifying, drawing, and integrating the memo. The researcher has formed the category in the previously written memo and has named it as specific, special, and analytical terms as much as possible, then they can be classified. Researchers can



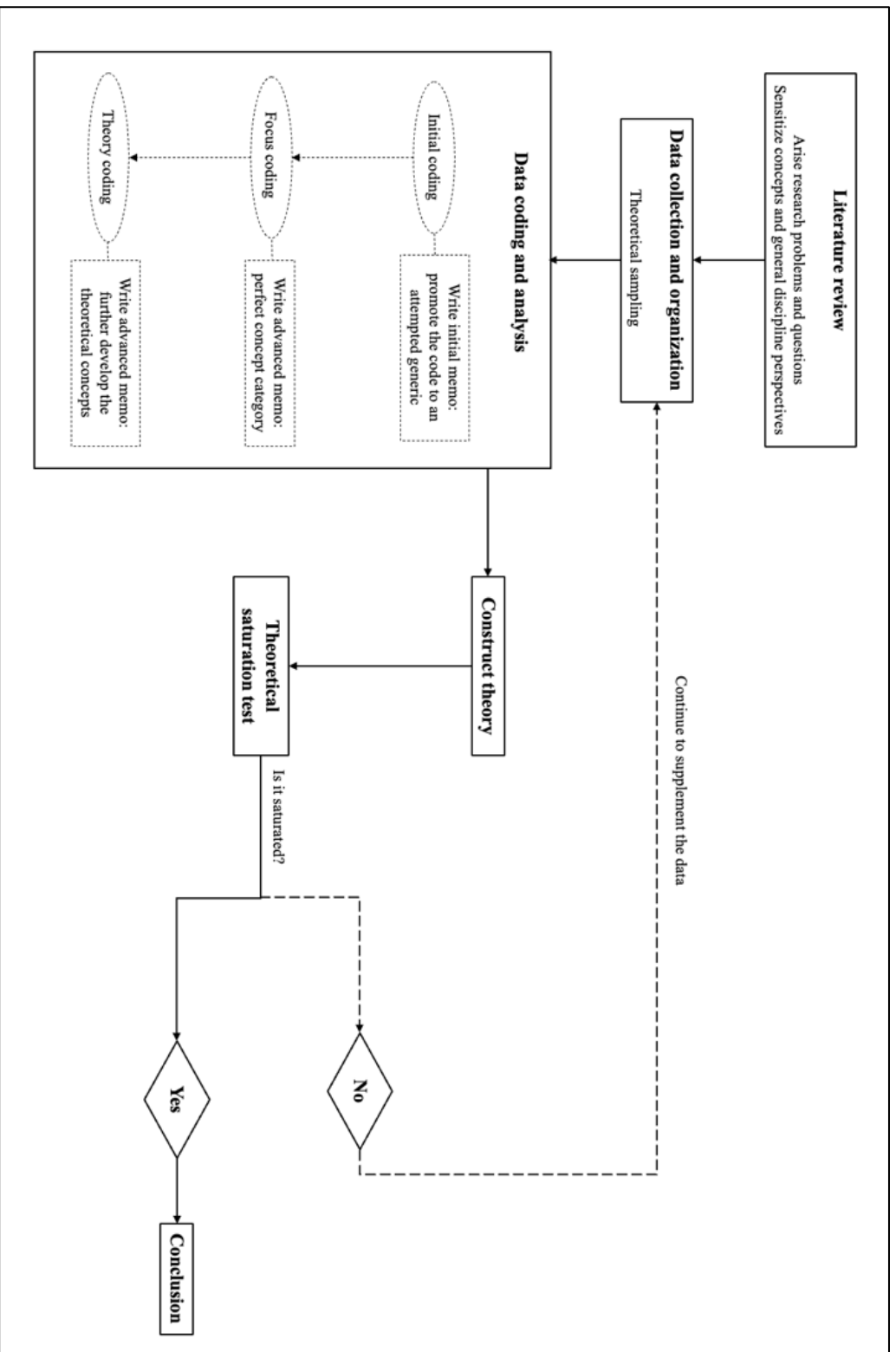
integrate the genus theoretically through classification. If the research conclusion is based on a main category, the researcher must also judge how the memos about this category are best combined. Although process analysis generally has an inherent logical order, analytical categories can have a subtle order that is more meaningful to readers.

Finally, construct theory. The main work of this part is to form the final research conclusion by comparing and combining the grounded theory of construction with existing research and theories. Although the literature review of this research is presented before the research results, it does not mean that the research is completely theoretically driven. Whether it is from the perspective of grounded theoretical research methods or the perspective of constructivist research traditions, the function and role of literature review are fundamentally different from other research methodologies and positivist research traditions. It is more to provide researchers with an overall theory. Grasping allows researchers to maintain theoretical sensitivity and interest, rather than setting a solid theoretical framework for researchers (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

## (2) Principles of grounded theory

The three principles of grounded theory are as follows. First, **keep theoretical sensitivity**. Since the main purpose of the grounded theory is to construct the theory, it emphasizes that the researchers are highly sensitive to the theory (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021). Whether in the research design stage or in collecting data and analyzing data, researchers should pay attention to the triangular interactions of the existing theories, predecessors' theories, and theories presented in the data (Figure 4–5), while paying attention to capturing new clues to construct theories (Corbin, 2021). Second, **keep comparing**. The main analytical idea of grounded theory is to compare, data and data, between theory and theory, and then extract the related generics and their attributes according to the correlation between data and

Figure 4-4 Grounded theory process



Main sources: Developed from Charmaz and Thornberg (2021) and Charmaz (2006).

theory (Glaser and Strauss, 2017a). This comparison must run through the entire process of research, including all phases, levels and parts of the research. Finally, **literature review application** (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019). Although the literature review in this study is partially presented before the results, it does not mean that the research is completely theoretically driven (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The function of the literature review in the grounded theory method presented in the literature review and conceptual framework chapter is to provide the author with a holistic theoretical grasp, so that researchers can maintain the sensitivity of the theory, rather than setting a fixed theoretical framework (Glaser and Strauss, 2017a, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

Emphatically, **the function of literature discussion in the literature review chapter is different from that in the discussion chapter.**

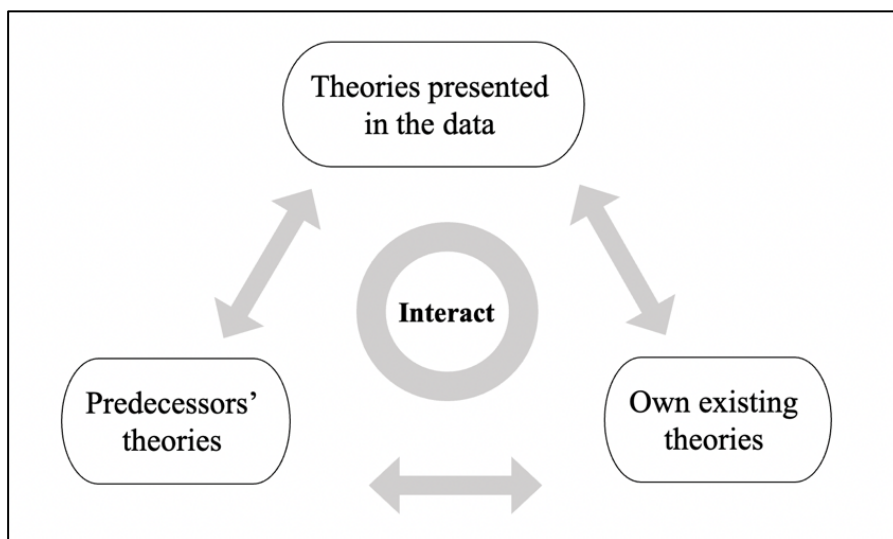
Firstly, existing research discussion runs through the entire process of research, including all phases, levels, and parts of the research (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019). Since the main purpose of the grounded theory is to construct the theory, it emphasizes that the researchers are highly sensitive to the theory (Xiangming, 2000). Whether in the research design stage or in collecting data and analyzing data, researchers should pay attention to the triangular interactions of the existing theories, predecessors' theories, and theories presented in the data, paying attention to capturing new clues to construct theories (Corbin, 2021, Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021).

Secondly, the role of existing research discussion in the literature review chapter is more to provide researchers with an overall theoretical grasp (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Thus, it does not mean that the research is completely theoretical-driven (Xiangming, 2000). Essentially different from other research methodologies and positivist research traditions, the function of literature review before methodology is to provide the researcher with a scope, so that researchers can maintain the sensitivity and

interest of the theory, rather than setting a solid theoretical framework for researchers (Corbin, 2021, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

Finally, the function of existing research discussion in the discussion chapter is to compare existing literature (predecessors' theories), collected data (theories presented in the data) and the researcher's understanding (existing theories) for a meaningful conclusion (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Fundamentally, the main analytical idea of grounded theory is to compare data and data, to compare theory and theory, and then to extract the related generics and their attributes according to the correlation between data and theory (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020).

**Figure 4-5 Theoretical triangle interaction diagram**



Main source: Developed from Corbin (2021).

## **4.6 Data collection method**

### **4.6.1 Sample selection**

In grounded theory, sample selection obeys “theoretical sampling”, which is one kind of "non-probability sampling" (Xiangming, 2000). "Non-probability sampling" refers to the method of sampling according to other non-probability standards (Xiangming, 2000). The most used "non-

probability sampling" method in qualitative research is "purposive sampling", that is, selecting the research objects that can provide the maximum amount of information for the research problem according to the research purpose (Glaser and Strauss, 2017a, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). This method is also known as "theoretical sampling", that is, sampling according to the theoretical guidance of research design (Glaser and Strauss, 2017b, Glaser and Strauss, 2017c). Because qualitative research focuses on obtaining a more in-depth and detailed interpretive understanding of the research objects (especially their internal experience), the number of research objects is generally small. "Non-probability sampling" follows a very different logic from "probability sampling" (Glaser and Strauss, 2017a, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The validity of its research results does not depend on the number of samples, but on whether the sample limit is appropriate, that is, whether the sample can relatively completely and accurately answer the researcher's research questions (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020).

Of the interviews, 26 participated. They come from multiple industries such as finance, manufacturing, education and training, and healthcare. The age of the study subjects is between 23 and 50 years old and their working experience is 2-16 years. Among them, 12 are women, 14 are men; 12 with a graduate degree or above, and 14 with a bachelor's degree. Additionally, the "saturation point", at which the respondent adds nothing new to what previous respondents have said, was attained in the research after reaching 20 participants. The list summary of basic information of respondents is shown in Table 4-3, and the list of detailed information of every respondent's job crafting, work complexity, organizational transformation atmosphere, trait regulatory focus, gender, and industry information is shown in Table 4-4..

**Table 4-3 Summary of basic information of respondents**

Basic information	Content	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	14	52.4%
	Female	12	47.6%
Age	25 years old and below	1	4.8%
	26-30 years old	5	19.0%
	31-35 years old	7	28.6%
	36 years old and above	12	47.6%
Education	College and below	0	0.0%
	Bachelor's degree	14	52.4%
	Master's degree and above	12	47.6%
Work years	5 years and below	9	33.3%
	6-10 years	16	61.9%
	11-15 years	1	4.8%
Industry	Finance	5	20.0%
	Education and training	5	20.0%
	Manufacturing	3	10.0%
	Social work	2	7.7%
	Scientific research and technology services	3	10.0%
	Wholesale and retail	2	7.7%
	Design	3	10.0%
	Healthcare	3	10.0%

**Table 4-4 Information on every respondent's job crafting, work complexity, organizational transformation atmosphere, trait regulatory focus, gender, and industry information**

No.	Respondent	JC	WCO	OTA	TRF	Gender	Industry
1	R1	+	L	H	+	F	Education and training
2	L2	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
3	Z3	+	L	H	+	M	Education and training
4	Z4	+	L	H	+	F	Education and training
5	Y5	-	H	L	-	F	Healthcare
6	L6	-	L	L	-	F	Scientific research and technology services
7	G7	+	H	H	+	F	Education and training
8	W8	+	H	H	+	F	Social work
9	L9	-	L	L	-	F	Finance
10	K10	-	H	L	+	M	Finance
11	Z11	+	H	L	+	F	Finance
12	Y12	-	H	H	-	M	Finance
13	L13	-	H	H	-	M	Wholesale and retail
14	H14	+	H	H	+	M	Design
15	W15	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
16	X16	+	H	H	-	F	Social work
17	J17	+	H	H	+	F	Scientific research and technology services
18	D18	+	H	H	+	M	Wholesale and retail
19	S19	+	H	H	-	M	Design
20	B20	-	H	L	+	M	Healthcare
21	L21	+	H	H	+	M	Finance
22	H22	+	L	H	+	M	Education and training
23	S23	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
24	H24	-	L	L	-	M	Scientific research and technology services
25	S25	-	H	L	+	F	Design
26	L26	+	H	L	+	F	Healthcare

Note: JC+ job crafting improvement; JC- job crafting reduction; WCO work complexity: WCOH higher work complexity, WCOL lower work complexity; OTA organizational transformation atmosphere: OTAH higher organizational transformation atmosphere, OTAL lower organizational transformation atmosphere; TRF Trait regulatory focus: TRF- Trait regulatory focus prevention, TRF+ Trait regulatory focus promotion

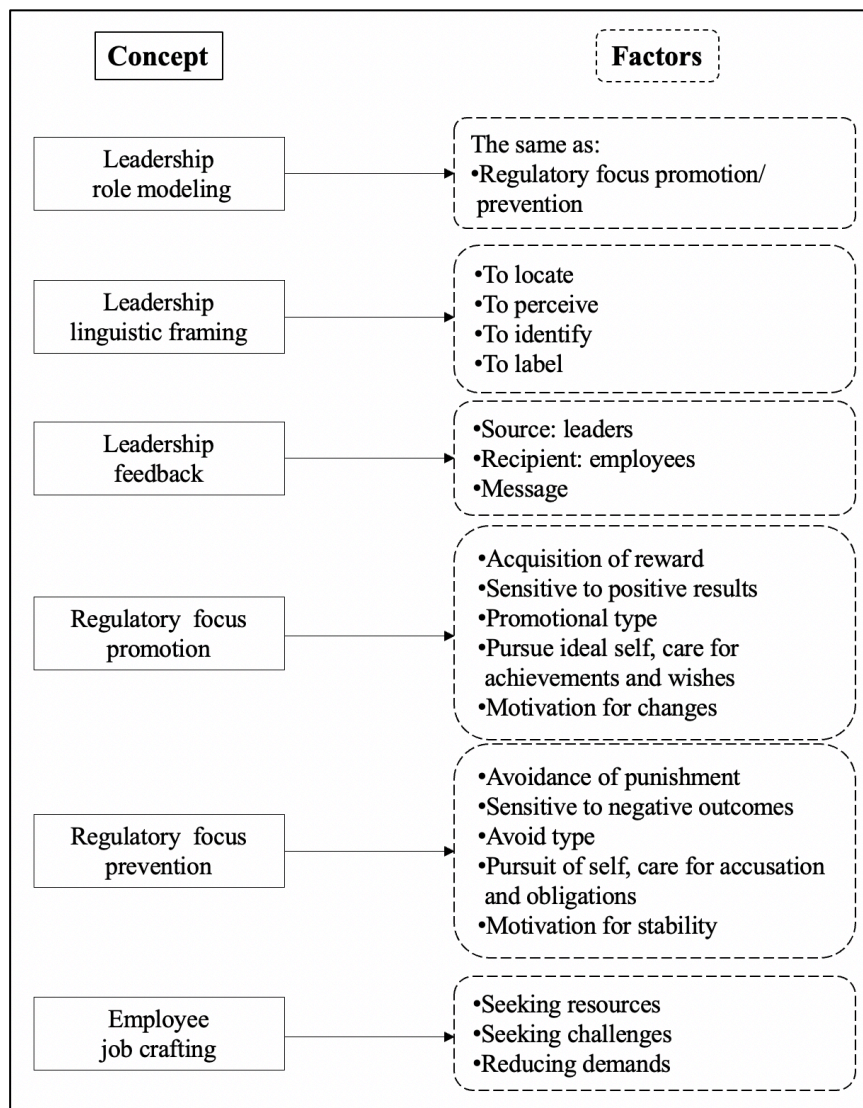
#### **4.6.2 In-depth interview design**

This research collects qualitative data through in-depth interviews, which are mainly semi-structured. Before the interview, several open

questions are prepared. During the interview, the answers of the interviewees are the main ones. The interviewers only put forward guiding questions to obtain information about the interviewees to the greatest extent (Xiangming, 2000). With the gradual deepening of the research, interviews with later research objects are carried out according to specific questions. Open-ended interview questions mainly include: (1) Tell me about your work responsibilities, have you ever tried to make changes to coordinate your work and life? (2) Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't make the changes. How about your manager's impact on your changes? (3) What was your reaction? The above three aspects are the main questions during the interview, so the specific interview questions are not limited to the above three. Based on the operationalisation of the main concepts in Figure 4-6, there will be tracking questions about specific conceptual categories, which are more specific and detailed. The interview questions and the aligned research objectives, interview objectives, area and related concepts are shown in Table 4-5. The interview guide is shown in Appendix 1.



**Figure 4–6 Operationalization of main concepts**



Main sources: Developed from Kanze et al., 2018, Higgins,1997, Zheng, 2020, Jason and SN, 2021, Snow et al., 2018, Lecheler and De Vreese, 2019, Sleiman et al., 2020, Ajjawi et al., 2021, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Petrou et al., 2012, Tims and Bakker, 2010

During the in-depth interview, the interviewer followed the following interview principles: (1) Keep active in the interview and alert to interesting clues; (2) Avoid imposing preconceived concepts; (3) Allow respondents to rethink the phenomenon; (4) Pay attention to guiding the respondents to explain their definitions of terms, situations, and events (Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

**Table 4-5 Interview questions and the aligned research objectives, interview objectives, area and related concepts**

Area	Interview questions		Interview objectives & research objectives	Related concepts
Culture	1	(1) How would you describe the working atmosphere culture as empowerment? / What's the culture like? / Tell me about the culture?	To explore the interviewee's work characteristics generally ( <b>Research objective 3</b> : To know under what kind of <u>organization-level</u> context factors, the leadership behavior effectively improves employee job crafting; and under what kind of organization-level and individual-level context factors, the leadership behavior effectively reduces employee job crafting?).	Moderating variable: Work characteristics
		(2) Is there much freedom of work? What skills do you need in your work? How do you often complete your work?	To understand the respondent's work complexity.	
		(3) Does your work need many revolution or changes? How does your organization support your transformational ideas?	To understand the respondent's organizational transformational atmosphere.	
Responsibilities	2	(1) Tell me about your work responsibilities.	To explore the interviewee's job crafting behavior and work characteristics generally ( <b>Research objective 3</b> : To know under what kind of <u>organization-level</u> context factors, the leadership behavior effectively improves employee job crafting; and under what kind of organization-level and individual-level context factors, the	Dependent variable: Job crafting
Relationships				

		<p>(2) Have you ever tried to make changes in order to coordinate your work and life?</p> <p>Yes: what have you done? Focus on the following aspects.</p> <p>No: what have you done in the following aspects?</p> <p>Things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources), seeking challenges (seeking challenges) and stress and strain relief (reducing demands ).</p> <p>(3) Did you like them? / Were you told to do them? / Did you volunteer? / Or were you always asked to do things?</p> <p>What did you do there?</p>	<p>leadership behavior effectively reduces employee job crafting?).</p> <p>To understand the interviewee's job crafting behavior generally.</p> <p>To gain a more detailed understanding of the interviewee's job crafting behavior from the three aspects: seeking resources, seeking challenges and reducing demands.</p> <p>To understand the interviewee's job crafting behavior generally.</p>	
Communication building	3	(1) Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't (promotion/prevention) make the changes?	<p><b>Research objective1:</b> To explore what kind of leadership behavior can effectively improve employee job crafting; and what kind of leadership behavior can effectively reduce employee job crafting.</p> <p>To explore the above interview question by focusing on leadership role modeling.</p>	Independent variable: leadership regulatory focused behavior
		(2) How about your manager's impact on your changes?		
	4	(1) When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to? /What results and aims does he care more about?	<p>To explore the above interview question by focusing on leadership role modeling.</p>	
		(2) How did his/her mood change during the work process?		
		(3) When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager?	To explore the above interview question by focusing on leadership linguistic framing.	
		(4) Were you given a clear understanding of the task?		

	How were you given? (5) How did you get feedback?	To explore the above interview question by focusing on leadership feedback.	
Recommendations to suggest	5 What was your reaction? /What did you do?  How would you feel about the communications? Was it good? /Was it bad? Do you think it can be done better? How do you think it could be improved?	<b>Research objective2:</b> To understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behavior effectively improves employee job crafting; and via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behavior effectively reduces employee job crafting.	Mediating variable: Employee work regulatory focus
Personality	6 When you are completing your task, what is the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result are you sensitive to? /What results and aims do you care more about? How does your mood change during the work process?	<b>Research objective 3:</b> To know under what kind of <u>individual-level</u> context factors, the leadership behavior effectively improves employee job crafting; and under what kind of organization-level and individual-level context factors, the leadership behavior effectively reduces employee job crafting?	Moderating variable: trait regulatory focus

Main sources: Developed from Kanze et al., 2018, Higgins,1997, Zheng, 2020, Jason and SN, 2021, Snow et al., 2018, Lecheler and De Vreese, 2019, Sleiman et al., 2020, Ajjawi et al., 2021, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Petrou et al., 2012, Tims and Bakker, 2010.

#### ***4.6.3 Pilot study and the generated ways to improve reliability and validity***

Pilot testing was undertaken ensuring that the instruments were intelligible, credible, reliable, and feasible for the collection of the data (Haque, 2018). The pilot testing of this study took place in June 2022, and it was carried out with people who matched the attributes of the intended ultimate 'target respondents'. In the pilot study, the author completed four completed interviews.

The pilot study generated ways to improve reliability and validity. On the one side, it improved **validity** through the third way discussed in 4.8.1, **peer-participant discussions**. The author's Supervisor and Director of Studies oversaw and confirmed that the interview guide was valid and reliable to achieve the intended objective, which enabled fine-tuning and adjustments to the phrasing and flow (sequencing) of some questions. On the other side, the Pilot study improved **reliability** through the second way shown in 4.8.2, **reliable equipment**. Difficult phrases and words were replaced with simpler undemanding expressions. The author finds that with minor adjustments, the research instruments were aligned satisfactorily with the objectives of the research, enhancing the credibility, transparency, reliability, and feasibility.

#### ***4.6.4 Justification of in-depth interview***

From the existing qualitative research, especially the grounded theoretical research, it is appropriate to use in-depth interviews to obtain the required qualitative data (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). When a researcher wants to understand how a particular phenomenon came to be, semi-structured interviewing is a good fit (Islam et al., 2021). For qualitative research, open-ended questions, which are typically used in semi-structured interviews, are preferred (Islam et al., 2021). The grounded theory

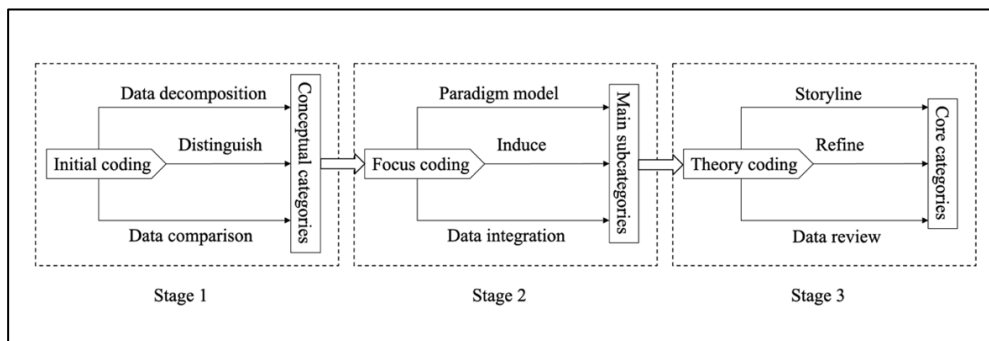


method and in-depth interview are both open and directional, formed and naturally generated, step-by-step and flexible methods (Xiangming, 2000). Compared with other data collection methods in grounded theory research, such as observation records or text analysis, researchers have more direct control over the construction of interview data. The qualitative interview provides an open and in-depth exploration of a topic (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The interviewers also have real experience and valuable insights on this topic, which can well lead to the subjective views of the research object. At the same time, an in-depth interview is a flexible and generative technology (Haque, 2018). Ideas and arguments are generated in the interview, and interviewers can track these clues in time (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Therefore, an in-depth interview with a combination of flexibility and internal control is suitable for this study.

#### **4.7 Data analysis method**

After the interview, in addition to preliminarily sorting out the content of the qualitative data, that is, the interview notes, making relevant annotations and constantly writing memos, the author has made technical hierarchical coding processing on the qualitative data. Coding is divided into three levels: initial coding, focus coding and theory coding, which are refined and processed step by step (Figure 4–7) (Anyuan, 2015). Based on regulatory focus theory, it is sorted out and abstracted according to the internal logic of the effect of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations, forming relevant concepts, categories, main categories and core categories, and studying the relationship between concepts and categories to form a category relationship structure chart.

**Figure 4–7 Grounded theory three-level coding path**



Main source: Developed from Anyuan (2015)

### 4.7.1 3-level coding

**Initial coding** refers to the process of defining the data content for the first time (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021, Charmaz, 2006). Researchers need to follow the logic below when doing initial coding: First, the initial coding should be close to the data, try to encode with words that reflect the action; second, the initial coding should be open; finally, the initial coding is temporary and comparative (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021, Charmaz, 2006).

The so-called openness means that keep an open mind, and the initial coding should keep the openness of the data, and not let any pre-formed concepts hinder the emergence of new ideas in the mind, like what is learned in the coding, and where it will take you (Anyuan, 2015). Temporary and comparative means leaving space for other analyses and forming the most appropriate code for the data (Anyuan, 2015). Researchers need to continually develop the code to fit into the data and then collect more data to explore and populate the code (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Corbin, 2021).

In this study, the line-by-line coding method for initial coding was used. To explain the initial coding process of this study more clearly, Appendix 2 records the initial coding process file of the auditee W8, including the interview content, initial codes and 3-level coding presentation in NVivo. The essence of the example of initial coding is to select a typical story that leaders promote employee job crafting. These initial codes do not exist as

independent individuals, and the original data they contain are logically related.

Through the initial coding analysis of qualitative data, the initial codes, coded with the letter "a" and numbers, are finally abstracted from the data. The 264 codes listed in Appendix 3 are not all the data collected in this study, and some are omitted. Among them, 146 codes are related to job crafting promotion and 118 are related to job crafting reduction. Some of these codes show strong data inclusion and have the potential to develop into a category.

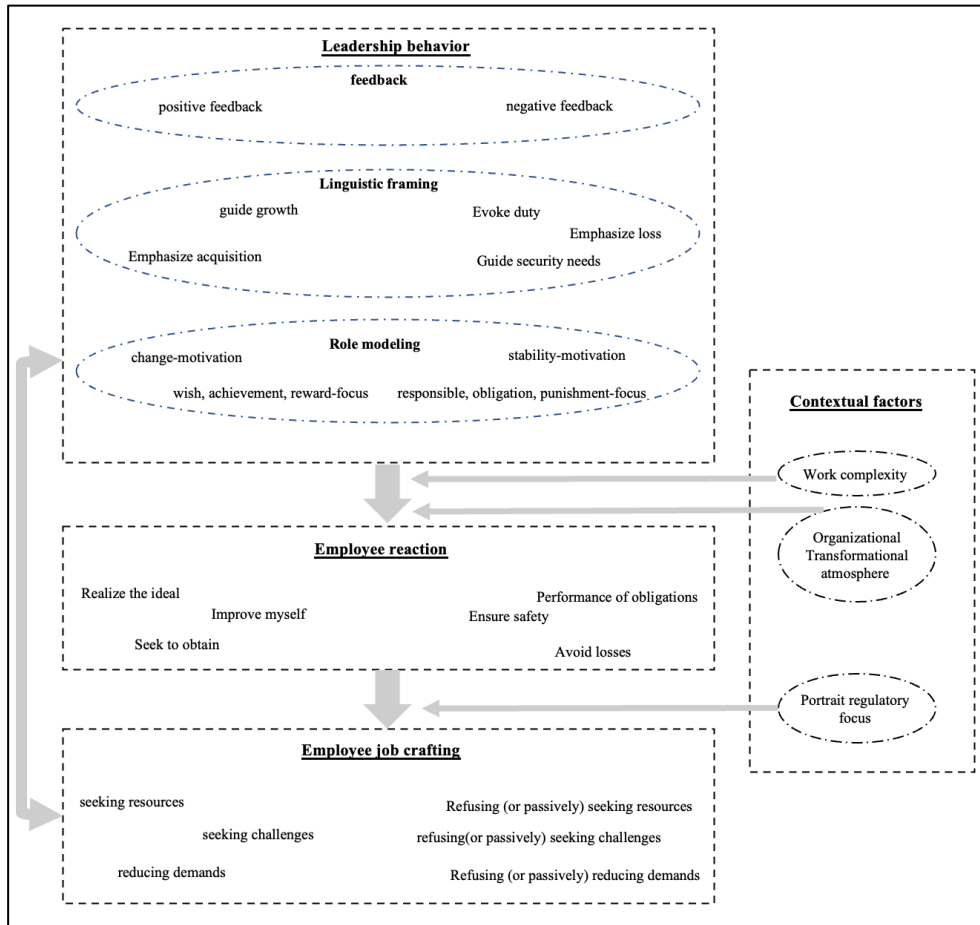
Through **focus coding**, this study repeatedly ponders, summarizes, analyzes and compares the initial codes, and refines 69 categories required for cost research, which are represented by aal-aa63. Then, 29 focus codes are extracted from the above 69 categories, which are represented by A1-29 (Appendix 4). Among the 29 focus codes, 11 are related to leadership behaviour, 6 to employee reactions, 6 reflect the results of the employee job crafting intervention, and the other reflects the contextual factors.

**Theory coding** is the coding at the complex level that researchers perform after focus coding (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021, Charmaz, 2006). In short, the generics are formed in the focus coding, and the theory coding is to make the possible relationships between these generics concrete (Anyuan, 2015). The focus code is integrated, giving form to the theory code collected by the researcher, making the analytical story coherent (Anyuan, 2015). Therefore, this process not only conceptualizes the form of association between substantive codes but also makes the analytical story theoretically (Anyuan, 2015). On the one side, "leadership regulatory focused behaviour", "employee work regulatory focus" and "employee job crafting", conceptualized as the theory codes, can properly represent what is reflected in the data. From the horizontal dimension, the data are mainly reflected in two aspects: job crafting improvement and job crafting reduction; vertically, it is mainly reflected in three aspects: leadership behaviour, employee



response and employee crafting. On the other side, inter-generic relationship construction turned into the other essential part which is shown in Appendix 5. The contextual factor part and the elaboration of findings and discussion will be shown in the following chapters. Figure 4–8 is the generic relationship integration map.

**Figure 4–8 Generic relationship integration map**



Source: Developed from author's fieldwork based on grounded theory, 2023

#### 4.7.2 Theoretical saturation test

The theoretical saturation problem of this study is solved in the following way: 6 participants at the end of the interview are asked the same question. According to the information shown in the answers, it is found that there is no concept expression different from the concepts in the previous 20 interviews, that is, it is covered by more than 264 concepts (initial codes)

before, and there is no new concept or new theoretical connotation. This situation proves that the theory of the grounded theory research part has reached the saturation state (Glaser and Strauss, 2017a, Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020)

## 4.8 Research assurance

### 4.8.1 Validity

Validity can be understood as concerned with measuring that which is intended (Bondy, 2008). In qualitative research, researchers deal with the threat of validity after the start of the research process. Table 4-6 shows six techniques for enhancing the validity of qualitative studies (Padgett, 2016). These strategies are not completely coherent or independent but represent the most common application in quality control of qualitative research (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Xiangming, 2000)

**Table 4-6 Strategies to increase validity**

Strategy /credibility threat	Responsive	Researcher bias	Objective bias
Long-term involvement	+	-	+
Multi-crossing method	+	+	+
Peer-participant discussions	0	+	0
Respondents-return	+	+	+
Counterexample analysis	0	+	0
Review	0	+	0

Main source: Developed from Padgett, 2016

Note: + Have a positive impact on reducing threats, - Have a negative impact on reducing threats, 0 No effect

Therefore, this study improved the validity of the study through the following ways: **(1) Long-term involvement.** Long-term involvement can improve the responsiveness and deviation of the researcher (Xiangming, 2000). The impact of the researcher on the scene will gradually disappear with his long stay, and long-term involvement can reduce the situation of refusing to provide information or lying (Appiah-Kubi and Annan, 2020).

The study took long-term (about 50 minutes each) interviews and multiple return visits to improve the validity. **(2) Multi-crossing method.** Multi-crossing method refers to the use of more than two resources, methods, etc. to fully understand a specific problem (Huberman et al., 1994). This study used the researcher's multi-crossing method (e.g., analysis by multiple decoders) to improve the validity. **(3) Peer-participant discussions.** Peer support groups can be called the “lifeline” of qualitative research (Appiah-Kubi and Annan, 2020, Arifin, 2018). Members of peer support groups come together to give feedback, provide fresh ideas, recharge researchers, increase rigour, and have instrumental features (Mohajan, 2018). In this research, my supervisory team, classmates, teachers, and members of the research group with different academic backgrounds formed the peer support group. The researchers discuss, grind research, and give some helpful suggestions to me. **(4) Respondents return.** Respondents-return is also referred to as member verification (Xiangming, 2000). When entering the data analysis period, the qualitative researcher should return to the researcher to reconfirm the decoding and interpretation. For qualitative research, this is one of the important ways to increase validity (Mohajan, 2018). The author returned to several interviewees to determine the correction and avoid "researcher bias."

#### **4.8.2 Reliability**

Reliability can be understood as the extent to which a measure can be repeatable and generalized to other measures (Bondy, 2008). This study improved the reliability of the study through the following ways: **(1) Systematic recording.** Within qualitative research, reliability is improved by ensuring as systematic a recording of the events as possible, as soon as possible after the event. Systematic notes, according to Spradley's (1979) notetaking guidelines (Bondy, 2008), ensure a more accurate recording of events and separation of these from the researcher's interpretations. In this

way, field notes are more systematic, and more accurate, improving both reliability and validity **(2) Reliable equipment.** Within interviews, reliability is improved by recording the interviews (e.g., digital recorder), carefully transcribing interviews through accepted transcription ways and presenting enough extracts of data in the write-up. These ways to improve reliability act to give readers improved access to raw data (Silverman 2001). Subsequently, the author had copied by computer software devices. Software includes Word for typing the work, NVivo for treatment, etc. A scanner, a digital camera, a USB key, and a printer were used for scanning, introducing scanned material into the computer and printing respectively **(3) Theoretical generalization.** Different from quantitative research, qualitative research adopts the theoretical sampling principles, the samples are usually less (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The way for ensuring generalization in qualitative research differs from the way in quantitative research (Xiangming, 2000). In qualitative research, it is a kind of identified generalization (or enlightenment or revelation), when the reader gets an ideological resonance in reading the research report (Xiangming and Xiaoying, 2004). It may act the role of theoretical generalization (or theoretical influence or radiation) since the theory established in this study is somewhat explanatory (Mays and Pope, 2020). This study, based on regulatory focus theory, proposes new constructs of leadership behaviour, explores the relationship between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting, and summarizes the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, aiming to produce theoretical generalization.

### **4.8.3 Ethic**

Resnik (2015) defines ethics as standards of behaviour that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Dantzker and Hunter (2012) argued it is essential to ensure that the researcher is undertaking legally and

morally defensible steps. The ethical issues involve at least five aspects of people or social institutions: the researcher himself, the researcher group, the researcher's occupational group, and the researcher (Xiangming, 2000). Interacting with institutions and the public, they impose varying degrees and different constraints on the ethical principles and codes of conduct of researchers. Qualitative research ethics issues involve all people and social institutions related to research and throughout the entire process of research (Fan and Xiangming, 2020, Xiangming, 2000).

This research focused on ethical issues from the following three aspects

**(1) Voluntary and unhidden.** The author believes that research should be open and flexible and that the judgment of the matter must consider the specific circumstances of the study and the consequences (Arifin, 2018). In this study, all respondents were informed about the research purpose and told the expected duration for completion of the survey and interviews. And their informed permission was required. The points of contact and participants were assured. The collected data could only be used for academic purposes and not for personal or commercial gain

**(2) Privacy and confidentiality.** In qualitative research, privacy is the range of things that are related to the private affairs of the research object but need to be handled privately by the researcher (Arifin, 2018, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). Researchers need to respect the right of the researcher to be willing to expose privacy and keep it strictly confidential (Xiangming and Xiaoying, 2004). The author keeps the identity and privacy of the research objectives confidential and may not make it public unless approved by the participants

**(3) Fair return.** In qualitative research, researchers need to be grateful for the help provided by the researchers and should not let the other party produce a "deprivation" feeling (Mohajan, 2018, Arifin, 2018). Researchers can express their feelings utilizing direct rewards (service fees, gifts, etc.) and indirect rewards (regular visits, problem settlement, and listening to them carefully to let them feel

respected and understood) (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). In this study, the author expressed gratefulness to the participants by giving gifts after interviews, giving some problem settlement strategy, listening to them carefully to let them feel respected and understood, etc.

## 4.9 Conclusion

In providing a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in this research, this chapter highlights seven key points:

1. The author explores the research paradigm from three levels ontology, epistemology, and methodology.

2. Constructivism research philosophy is appropriate for investigating the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations.

- 3 Inductive research approach allows for contribution to the existing theory.

4. Grounded theory research strategy is appropriate for investigating the impact of leadership behaviours on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations.

5. In-depth interviews are appropriate to obtain the required qualitative data.

6. The data analysis procedure aligns with the grounded theory data analysis procedure.

7. Activities to ensure the reliability and validity of data are consistent with expectations for qualitative research, and ethical issues are considered.

First, the author explores the research paradigm from three levels ontology, epistemology, and methodology. At the ontology level, these paradigms answer the questions of "authenticity": what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it? At the epistemology level, these paradigms inquire about the questions: what is the

nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known? At the methodology level, the problem that these paradigms need to solve is: how can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?

Second, it is proper to use constructivism as the philosophical inquiry philosophy in this study, the reasons are as follows. First, this study seeks to explore the phenomenon that leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting in Chinese organizations, which may have Chinese local characteristics and may be specifically constructed (ontology). Second, the author, based on grounded theory, tries to understand and interpret the fundamental nature of the phenomenon that leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting at the level of subjective experience by playing a controlling and creative role through symbolic interpretation and interaction (epistemology). Finally, the author uses a grounded theory research strategy to interact with the employees to understand how they perceive and work to shape the nature of the social patterns of which they are a part to realize the construction of core constructs and their relationships related to the research topic: how leadership behaviour impacts employee job crafting in Chinese organizations (methodology).

Third, the inductive approach is more suitable for this study. Since, this study is not seeking hypothesis or proposition testing; rather, it is seeking to contribute to the existing theory. Thus, inductive logic appears to be the most suitable approach to be followed. The deductive approach and abductive approach may be less suitable for this study.

Fourth, a grounded theory research strategy is appropriate for this study. For different research questions, researchers often use different research strategies. The research question in this study adopts the grounded theory strategy, since it is to explore the impact of leadership on employee job

crafting which aims to understand the changes in employee job crafting after affected by leadership behaviour and can be staged.

Fifth, an in-depth interview with a combination of flexibility and internal control is suitable for this study. The grounded theory method and in-depth interview are both open and directional, formed and naturally generated, step-by-step and flexible methods. Compared with other data collection methods in grounded theory research, such as observation records or text analysis, researchers have more direct control over the construction of interview data.

Sixth, the data analysis procedure aligns with the grounded theory data analysis procedure. After the interview, in addition to preliminarily sorting out the content of the qualitative data, that is, the interview notes, making relevant annotations and constantly writing memos, the author has made technical hierarchical coding processing on the qualitative data. Coding is divided into three levels: initial coding, focus coding and theory coding, which are refined and processed step by step (Figure 4–7) (Anyuan, 2015). Based on regulatory focus theory, it is sorted out and abstracted according to the internal logic of the effect of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations, forming relevant concepts, categories, main categories and core categories, and studying the relationship between concepts and categories to form a category relationship structure chart.

Seventh, activities to ensure reliability and validity of data are consistent with expectations for qualitative research, and ethical issues are considered (1) This study improved the validity of the study through long-term involvement, multi-crossing method, peer-participant discussions and respondents return (2) This study improved the reliability of the study through systematic recording, reliable equipment, and theoretical generalization (3) This research focused on ethical issues from the following four aspects: voluntary and unhidden, privacy and confidentiality, and fair return.



Therefore the qualitative research methodology provides the opportunity to investigate the research objective. The next chapter focuses specifically on the interview to illustrate a series of findings with themes.

## 5 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Purpose and aims

The previous chapter indicated how interview and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to investigate the research objective- to investigate, in detail, the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations. This chapter is the analysis of the findings from research and focuses primarily on the data gathered from interview research. The substantive process illustrates the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. First, this chapter refines the 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour” with six sub-concepts to reveal the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting. Second, the author purifies “employee work regulatory focus” to present that leadership regulatory focused behaviour guides employee work regulatory focus to impact employee job crafting. Finally, this chapter presents evidence of contextualization at the individual and organizational levels. This chapter therefore contributes to the overall research findings by providing empirical evidence of the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. Thus, around these themes, this chapter has eight aims:

1. To refine three substantive areas of leadership regulatory focused behaviour which impacts employee job crafting.
2. To split substantive areas of leadership regulatory focused behaviour into promotion type and prevention type.
3. To extract a 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”.
4. To use the substantive areas to help highlight the nature of leadership behaviour towards employee job crafting,

5. To reflect on how leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting,

6. To summarize the two types of employee work regulatory focus, via improving which, leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting,

7. To contextualize the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting, focusing on the following two types of organization-level context: work complexity and organizational transformational atmosphere, and one individual level context: employee trait regulatory focus, and

8. To discuss the individual and organizational contextualization effects with empirical evidence.

## 5.2 Leadership regulatory focused behaviour

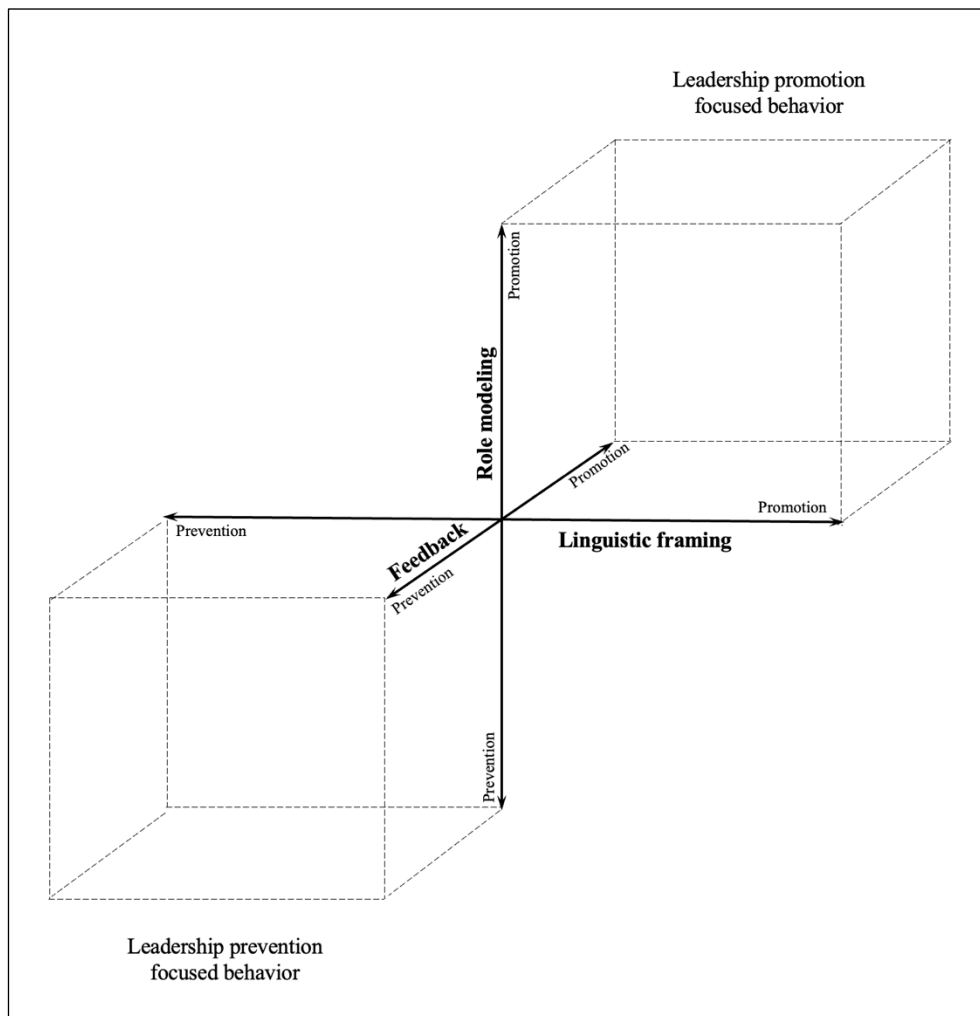
***Interview question:** (Have you ever tried to make changes to coordinate your work and life? What have you done on the following aspects: things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationships, seeking challenges and stress and strain relief?). Tell me the reasons why you **did/didn't** make the changes. How about your manager's impact on your changes?*

***Interview aim:** To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **improve** employee job crafting; and what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting.*

The following findings arise while the author reviews the related responses to this interview question. Leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting. That is, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, while leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. leadership regulatory behaviour refers to the behaviour of leaders who transmit different

regulatory focus tendencies when interacting with employees. This concept includes three substantive areas: leadership regulatory focused role modelling, leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing, and leadership regulatory focused feedback. Second, each substantive area of leadership regulatory focused behaviour can be presented as a promotion type or a prevention type. Thus, third, the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour" is shown in Figure 5–1 with 6 sub-concepts: **leadership promotion/prevention focused role modelling, leadership promotion/prevention focused linguistic framing, and leadership promotion/prevention focused feedback.**

**Figure 5–1 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”**



Main sources: Developed from Tims and Bakker, 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Crowe and

### 5.2.1 *Leadership promotion focused behaviour*

**Interview question:** *Tell me the reasons why you **made** the changes. How about your manager's impact on your changes?*

**Interview aim:** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **improve** employee job crafting.*

Leadership promotion focused behaviour refers to the behaviour of promotion focus transmitted by leaders when interacting with employees. It conveys such a message to subordinate employees: this work or task is expected to be completed well by leaders, and leaders expect ideal goals and better results. Leadership promotion focused behaviour is realized by role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback. As shown in Table 5-1, 14 (the total number of respondents is 26) of the respondents were of the view that leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting. Among the 14 respondents whose job crafting is improved (JC+), 12 respondents said that their leader showed leadership promotion focused feedback (LFB+). Specifically, 12 respondents reflected that their leader conducted positive feedback (A1), and there are 29 (the total number of references is 342) related references. 12 respondents said that their leader show leadership promotion focused linguistic framing (LLF+). Specifically, 7 respondents reflected that their leader guides growth (A2), and there are 9 (the total number of references is 342) related references; 9 respondents reflected that their leader emphasizes acquisition (A3), and there are 13 (the total number of references is 342) related references. And 10 respondents said that their leader show leadership promotion focused role modelling (LRM+). Specifically, 9 respondents reflected that their leader has change-motivation (A4), and there are 24 (the total number of references is 342) related references; 5 respondents reflected that their leader focuses on wish

achievement and reward (A5), and there are 9 (the total number of references is 342) related references.

**Table 5-1 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting**

Key issue with <b>theme</b> <b>(theory code)</b>	<b>Leadership promotion focused behavior improves employee job crafting</b>							
No. of respondents	14							
%	54							
Theory codes	LFB+	LLF+		LRM+		JC+		
No. of reference	12	12		10		14		
%	47	47		40		54		
Key words(focus codes)	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A9	A10	A11
No. of respondents	12	7	9	9	5	14	9	9
%	47	27	33	33	20	54	33	33
No. of reference	29	9	13	24	9	59	23	20
%	9	3	4	7	3	17	7	6

Source: Drawn from fieldwork, 2022

Note:A1 positive feedback; A2 guide growth; A3 emphasize acquisition; A4 change-motivation; A5 wish,achievement,reward-focus; A9 seeking resources; A10 seeking challenges; A11 reducing demands

#### (1) Leadership promotion focused role modelling

***Sub-interview question:*** *When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what was the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to? / What results and aims does he care more about? How did his/her mood change during the work process?*

***Interview aim:*** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively improve employee job crafting by focusing on leadership role modelling.*

Leadership promotion focused role modelling reflects that leaders provide such an example for employees in their work. They continue to seek improvement in their work, show the momentum of development in multiple fields, and dare to try and take risks, namely "change motivation"; They also pay more attention to goals, progress and the positive side, that is, "wish, achievement, reward focus". Many employees talked about **the**

**improvement impact of leadership promotion focused role modelling on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Change motivation) When a vice principal in a Chinese high school recalled the process of her job crafting improvement affected by her leadership promotion focused role modelling, she stated that: „... Moreover, my leaders are not afraid of contradictions or problems. When reform is needed, my leaders will resolutely make changes, even if the reform may harm the interests of some people. I think he has done a good job in this respect. He dares to face challenges and difficulties.’’ (respondent G7).*

*(Wish, achievement, reward focus) As quoted from one of the participants- a project manager in a social work organization: „... Yes, I think his influence on me may be more personal. Because he himself is a person with great personality charm. On the one hand, I will encounter many unexpected situations in my work. For example, sometimes when leaders preside over a meeting or mediate contradiction, they will encounter residents who are opposed and over-emotional. Sometimes they will fight, quarrel or abuse. But the leader always smiles calmly. Because he told us that in his mind, there is no trickster. The reason why they are so loud and emotional is that their voice is not heard through normal channels, so they choose such an extreme form. Although the people whom he contacts are all government leaders, he treats residents and subordinates with special peace and gentleness. And regardless of our rank, he sees every little thing I do. In short, his eyes are filled with every one of us.’’ (respondent W8)*

(2) Leadership promotion focused on linguistic framing

**Sub-interview question:** *When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager? Were you given a clear understanding of the task? How were you given?*

**Interview aim: To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **improve** employee job crafting by focusing on leadership **linguistic framing**.**

Leadership promotion focused linguistic framing refers to that when motivating employees to complete a job or task, leaders' verbal expression focuses on constructing a "gain, no-gain" situation for their subordinates, namely, "enhance acquisition"; focuses on guiding the growth of employees, that is, "guide growth". Many employees talked about **the improvement impact of leadership promotion focused linguistic framing on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Enhance acquisition) In the opinion of a customer manager and financial manager of a Chinese state-owned bank: „...When assigning tasks, my leader always aims at a general goal, assigns tasks according to the nature of our posts and personal abilities, and then leads us to achieve goals together. My leader especially encourages more work for more salary.’’(respondent Z11)*

*(Guide growth) This was supported by a design director of a Chinese design company who said: „... When arranging tasks, my leader often uses the method of trust and encouragement. My leader often trusts or supports me, lets me try many possibilities, and lets me not be afraid of failure. I think this is very important. Leaders often say, ‘Don't worry, give play to your initiative, and try as hard as you can, even if you fail.’’ (respondent H14)*

(4) Leadership promotion focused feedback

**Sub-interview question: How did you get feedback?**

**Interview aim: To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **improve** employee job crafting by focusing on leadership **feedback**.**

Leadership promotion focused feedback refers to the use of positive feedback (such as praise, reward, etc.) that leaders tend to use when giving feedback to employees on a task or work result. When employees succeed,



leaders express positive feedback. When employees fail, leaders withhold positive feedback, that is, focus code "positive feedback". Many employees talked about **the improvement impact of leadership promotion focused feedback on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Positive feedback) When an interviewer recalled that his job crafting was inspired, he said that the leader's feedback had a positive impact on him: „...I was impressed once because it was the first time when I did that project, I was not confident at that time, because I had not done it before. After it was done, I pushed the results to the work WeChat group. Because it's my first time doing it, it's still fresh and exciting. However, this job is a routine one with which other colleagues may be familiar, so they don't respond to my share of my work results in the WeChat group, and then there's no reply for a long time. But, when it was very late that day, My leader sent three likes emoji to me in the WeChat group, that is, the expression that said I was great. Then the next day, when we met, the leader told me that my tweet yesterday was very good.” (respondent W8)*

*(Positive feedback) The interviewee noted: „...Every semester, my leaders will select teaching awards and give notice of praise to the whole school. The leaders will also give performance awards for our teaching plans.” (respondent Z3)*

### **5.2.2 Leadership prevention focused behaviour**

**Interview question:** *Tell me the reasons why you **didn't** make the changes. How about your manager's impact on your changes?*

**Interview aim:** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting.*

Leadership prevention focused behaviour is defined as the behaviour of a leader who conveys the tendency of prevention focus when interacting with employees. It conveys a message to subordinate employees that this work or

task is what you should do. What the leader requires is the performance of responsibilities and the avoidance of risks. Leadership prevention focused behaviour is also realized by role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback.

As shown in Table 5-2, 12 (the total number of respondents is 26) of the respondents were of the view that leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. Among the 12 respondents whose job crafting is reduced (JC-), 12 respondents said that their leader showed leadership prevention focused feedback (LFB-). Specifically, 12 respondents reflected that their leader conducted negative feedback (A12), and there are 32 (the total number of references is 342) related references. 12 respondents said that their leader shows leadership prevention focused linguistic framing (LLF-). Specifically, 7 respondents reflected that their leader evokes duty (A13), and there are 16 (the total number of references is 342) related references; 7 respondents reflected that their leader guides security needs (A14), and there are 9 (the total number of references is 342) related references. And 7 respondents said that their leader show leadership prevention focused role modelling (LRM-). Specifically, 7 respondents reflected that their leader emphasizes loss (A15), and there are 9 (the total number of references is 342) related references; 7 respondents reflected that their leader focuses on responsible, obligation, and punishment, and there are 12 (the total number of references is 342) related references; 3 respondents reflected that their leader has stability motivations (A17), and there are 7 (the total number of references is 342) related references.

**Table 5-2 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting**

Key issue with theme (theory code)	Leadership prevention focused behavior reduces employee job crafting									
No. of respondents	12									
%	46									
Theory codes	LFB-	LLF-	LRM-				JC-			
No. of respondents	12	12	7				12			
%	46	46	27				46			
Key words(focus codes)	A12	A13	A14	A15	A16	A17	A21	A22	A23	
No. of respondents	12	7	7	7	7	3	12	10	5	
%	46	27	27	27	27	13	53	40	20	
No. of reference	32	16	9	9	12	7	47	13	9	
%	9	5	3	3	4	2	14	4	3	

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: A12 negative feedback; A13 evoke duty; A14 guide security needs; A15 emphasize loss; A16 responsible, obligation, punishment -focus; A17 stability-motivations; A21 refusing (or passively) seeking resources; A22 refusing (or passively) seeking challenges; A23 Refusing (or passively) reducing demands

(1) Leadership prevention focused role modelling

***Sub-interview question:*** *When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what was the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to? / What results and aims does he care more about? How did his/her mood change during the work process?*

***Interview aim:*** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting by focusing on leadership **role modelling**.*

Leadership prevention focused role modelling reflects that leaders provide such an example for employees in their work. They pay attention to compliance with organizational procedures and rules as well as the superior leaders in their work behaviour, namely, " responsibility, obligation, punishment-focus". At the same time, they act cautiously to avoid risks, such as criticism from the top and responsibility bearing, namely, "stability motivation". Many employees talked about **the reduced impact of**

**leadership prevention focused role modelling on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Responsibility, obligation, punishment-focus) A section chief of a Chinese power plant argued that: „...In China, the PRC (Programmable Logic Controller) is widely used in power plant systems. Once my leader assigned me a task, and he hoped that I would be responsible for introducing a more convenient control system, DSP (Digital Centralized Control System). My leaders tend to be very cautious about such attempts. This time, my leader also received the arrangements and requirements of the group company before he took over the pilot project. When my leaders are working, they always think about how to cater to their superiors and the group company and dare not go against their wishes. At the same time, he also attaches great importance to doing things according to procedures and rules.’’(respondent W15)*

*(Stability motivation) A sales director of a luxury sales China branch held that: „...My leader rarely takes risks to do projects that he has never tried before. He is very cautious because he is afraid of making mistakes. He generally follows the company's rules when doing things, so he usually emphasizes that we should not make mistakes, otherwise it will cause some bad effects on the company.’’(respondent L13)*

## (2) Leadership prevention focused linguistic framing

**Sub-interview question:** *When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager? Were you given a clear understanding of the task? How were you given?*

**Interview aim:** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting by focusing on leadership **linguistic framing**.*

Leadership prevention focused linguistic framing refers to that when encouraging employees to complete a certain work or task, leaders' verbal

expression focuses on arousing employees' strong obligations, that is, "Evoke duty"; focuses on the construction of a "loss, no-loss" situation for employees, that is, "emphasis loss"; focuses on improving employee security needs, namely "guide security needs". Many employees talked about **the reduced impact of leadership prevention focused linguistic framing on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Evoke duty) A respondent from a Chinese research institution noted that: „...We new colleagues needed to attend the induction training. My leader said that it was a waste of time and he wouldn't let us attend. However, induction training requires attendance and assessment, which will affect our career promotion in the future. If we don't do things according to his arrangements, he will guide all colleagues to isolate us, or let us write letters of apology, and then won't forgive us. My leader likes to assign tasks by command.’’ (respondent L6)*

*(Emphasis loss) When a section chief of a Chinese power plant recalled that he completed a task to implement the power plant control system, he said: „...So when assigning tasks, my leader said this: ‘The superior leader has arranged this pilot project for us, and we should do it well. We should do it according to the requirements of the superior leader. we must conscientiously complete it, otherwise, if there is a mistake, we will lose our reputation. I don't want our department's reputation to be damaged because of this project. If there is a mistake in this project, every one of us should take responsibility.’’ (respondent W15)*

*(Guide security needs) A section chief in a government financial department supported this view by acknowledging that: „...The superior has issued the relevant task arrangement, and my leader will forward it to me in the form of an email and tell me to follow the document requirements. He often holds meetings to tell me which key points to focus on when completing tasks, and don't miss key points.’’ (respondent K10)*

(3) Leadership prevention focused feedback

**Sub-interview question:** *How did you get feedback?*

**Interview aim:** *To explore what kind of leadership behaviour can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting by focusing on leadership **feedback**.*

Leadership prevention focused feedback refers to the use of negative feedback (such as criticism, punishment, etc.) when leaders give feedback to employees on a task or work results. When the employee fails, the leader expresses negative feedback. When the employee succeeds, the leader retains the negative feedback, which is reflected by the focus code "negative feedback" code. Many employees talked about **the reduction impact of leadership prevention focused feedback on their job crafting** during interviews, such as:

*(Negative feedback) A respondent who was section chief of a state-owned enterprise stated that: „...He lectures and criticizes through the meeting, and then urges us to complete the task. At 8.40 every morning, our factory director, my leader, holds a morning meeting for us. At the morning meeting, he summarizes the work of the previous day and checks whether there are work errors, unfinished indicators, production problems, and unfinished production indicators. Then, we should explain why they were not completed, and then, based on the problems, he emphasizes the next step of improvement measures and work precaution.’’  
(respondent L2)*

*(Negative feedback) A section chief of a Chinese power plant also expounds on the negative effect of leadership prevention focused feedback on job crafting: „...Finally, I completed the project without any problems. Of course, my leader did not criticize or reward me. He just thought I had fulfilled the task in a standardized way. If I made any mistakes, he would certainly criticize me and punish me, and he would remember what I did badly. I guess it would be hard for me to turn around after making mistakes.’’ (respondent W15)*

Thus, it's **suggested** that leadership promotion focused feedback improves employee job crafting, and leadership prevention focused feedback reduces employee job crafting.

### 5.3 Employee work regulatory focus

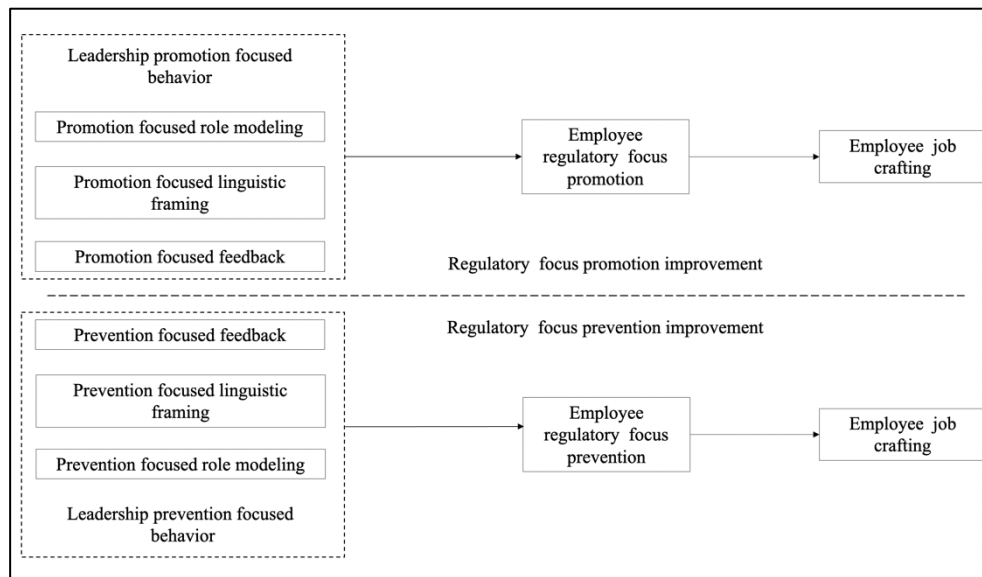
***Interview question:** (Tell me the reasons why you **did/didn't** make the changes? How about your manager's impact on your changes?) What was your **reaction** to your leadership-related behaviours? What did you do?*

***Interview aim:** To understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively **improves** employee job crafting; and via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively **reduces** employee job crafting.*

The following theme(s) arises while the author reviews the related responses to this interview question. Via improving employee work regulatory focus do leadership regulatory focused behaviours impact employee job crafting. That is, via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, while via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.

The core category of "employee work regulatory focus improvement" explains the role of leaders' regulatory focused behaviour in influencing employee job crafting, as shown in Figure 5-2, "Promotion focus improvement" refers to the process in which the leadership promotion focused behaviour guides employee work regulatory focus promotion to improve employee job crafting; "Prevention focus improvement" refers to the process in which the leadership prevention focused behaviour leads employee work regulatory focus prevention to reduce employee job crafting.

**Figure 5–2 Impact process of leadership regulatory-focused behaviour on employee job crafting**



Source: Developed from author's fieldwork based on grounded theory, 2022

### 5.3.1 *Employee work regulatory focus promotion*

**Interview question:** *What was your reaction to your leadership-related behaviours? What did you do?*

**Interview aim:** *To understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting.*

This part first comes to the analysis of the improvement process of leadership promotion focused behaviour on employee job crafting. "Promotion focus improvement" refers to the process in which the leadership promotion focused behaviour inspires employee work regulatory focus promotion, that is, the realization of their ideal selves, the need for growth and development, and the pursuit of positive results in their work, to improve their job crafting. The original data shows that when employees show job crafting improvement, the above states in their work or tasks are effectively improved. That is, **via improving employee work regulatory focus**



**promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting.** For example:

*(Employee work promotion focus improvement) When a customer manager and financial manager of a Chinese state-owned bank recalled the process of her job crafting improvement, she said: „...After being praised by my leader in the meeting for my achievement of the performance of the third place in the region, I felt very happy, thinking that I must make greater efforts for our band. But in terms of behaviour, I didn't show my happiness, because I wanted to pay more attention to team harmony. Because my work needs the support of my colleagues, if my behaviour makes my colleagues jealous and unhappy, it's not good. In addition, the support of my colleagues also contributed to my achievements. So, I want to pay more attention to team harmony, which is conducive to achieving work goals.”*  
*(respondent Z11)*

*(Employee work promotion focus improvement) As quoted by a design director of a Chinese design company: „... Although these things are not very big, their impact on me is that I do not worry about the risk of failure and try my best to do my job well. Anything, as long as I try to find a way, will be fruitful. If I follow the conventional approach, there will be no mistakes in some work. It must be risky to join my ideas, for example, when I follow my approach, my resources are insufficient, or my achievements do not meet the expectations of leaders. But because my leader's behaviour is nice, I don't deliberately consider the above risks when doing it.”* *(respondent H14)*

*(Employee work promotion focus improvement) A lecturer in a Chinese public university noted: „...I prefer my work. In addition, I think of doing the best job of the tasks assigned by the leader, and at the same time, I want to do more than my duty. After receiving encouragement, I want to work harder because I want to get more rewards.”* *(respondent R1)*

As shown in Table 5-3, 14 (the total number of respondents is 26) of the respondents were of the view that via improving employee regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting. These 14 respondents show employee regulatory focus promotion when facing leadership promotion focused behaviour. Among them, 3 respondents reflected on realizing the ideal self (A6); 4 respondents reflected on seeking to obtain (A7); and 9 respondents reflected on improving themselves (A8). And there are 3,3,11 (the total number of references is 342) related references separately. To explain the process of leadership promotion focused behaviour more systematically to positively influence employee job crafting by improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, the author presents two interviews of the improvement process of leadership promotion focused behaviour on employee job crafting described by respondents Z3 and W8 in Appendix 6.

**Table 5-3 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: via improving employee regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting**

Key issue with <b>theme (theory code)</b>	Via improving <b>employee regulatory focus promotion</b> , leadership promotion focused behavior improves employee job crafting.		
No. Of respondents	14		
%	54		
Theory codes	Employee work regulatory focus promotion		
Key words(focus codes)	A6	A7	A8
No. Of respondents	3	4	9
%	12	15	35
No. Of reference	3	3	11
%	18	18	65

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: A6 Realize the ideal; A7 Seek to obtain; A8 Improve myself

### **5.3.2 Employee work regulatory focus prevention**

**Interview question:** *What was your reaction to your leadership related behaviours? What did you do?*

**Interview aim:** *To understand via improving what kind of employee reactions the leadership behaviour effectively **reduces** employee job crafting.*

Then it comes to the analysis of the reduction process of leadership prevention focused behaviour on employee job crafting. "Prevention focus improvement" refers to the process in which the leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces job crafting by arousing employee work regulatory focus prevention, that is, employee self-realization, safety and security needs and avoidance of negative results in their work. The original data shows that when employees show job crafting reductions, the above states in their work or tasks are effectively improved. That is, **via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.** For example:

*(Employee work prevention focus improvement) This aligns with the views of a section chief in a government financial department who stated: „...What I am more concerned about is whether the tasks I have completed can meet his standards, that is, do not make mistakes. I think my work is a task assigned by the leader, and I just need to finish it as soon as possible. Many times, I don't have much expectation for him, because my leaders will criticize me no matter what I do. Later, I simply lowered my expectations and thought that my work was a first draft, which was used to be criticized and modified by him.” (respondent K10)*

*(Employee work prevention focus improvement) Corroborating this assertion, a researcher in Chinese research institutions said: „...I feel bad. I think I can do it well. Why does he always pick on me? I don't think I dare to apply for new projects or try breakthroughs in research. At the same time, I don't have much energy to work hard. I just want to earn this money and do these tasks.” (respondent K10)*

*(Employee work prevention focus improvement) A regional manager of insurance sales in an insurance company referring to the reaction to his leadership*

*criticism held that, ...Although my leaders started to give me feedback by praising me on the surface, they generally criticized me, so on the whole, I would be careful not to make mistakes, and I would mind letting him know even if there were mistakes.” (respondent Y12)*

As shown in Table 5-4, 12 (the total number of respondents is 26) of the respondents were of the view that via improving employee regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. These 12 respondents show employee regulatory focus prevention when facing leadership prevention focused behaviour. Among them, 8 respondents reflected on avoiding losses (A18); 11 respondents reflected on ensuring safety (A19); and 5 respondents reflected performance of obligations (A20). And there are 10,20,8 (the total number of references is 342) related references separately. To more systematically explain the process of leadership prevention focused behaviour influencing employee job crafting by inspiring employee work regulatory focus prevention, the author fully presents the interviews of reduction process of leadership prevention focused behaviour on employee job crafting told by respondents L2 and W15 in Appendix 7.

**Table 5-4 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: via improving employee regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting**

Key issue with <b>theme (theory code)</b>	Via improving <b>employee regulatory focus prevention</b> , leadership prevention focused behavior reduces employee job crafting.		
No. of respondents	12		
%	46		
Theory codes	Employee work regulatory focus prevention		
Key words(focus codes)	A18	A19	A20
No. Of respondents	8	11	5
%	31	42	20
No. Of reference	10	20	8
%	3	6	2

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: A18 avoid losses; A19 ensure safety; A20 performance of obligations

Thus, it's suggested that via improving employee work regulatory focus do leadership regulatory focused behaviours impact employee job crafting. That is, via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting, while via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting.

## 5.4 Contextual factors

***Interview question:** How would you describe the working atmosphere culture as empowerment? / What's the culture like? / Tell me about the culture.*

*When you were completing your task, what was the reward and what was the punishment? what kind of result were you sensitive to? / What results and aims do you care more about? How did your mood change during the work process?*

***Interview aim:** To know under what kind of **organization-level and individual-level context factors**, the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting; and under what kind of organization-level and individual-level context factors, the leadership behaviour effectively reduces employee job crafting?*

When asking the above questions, the author finds the following interesting answers and phenomena. In the process of a leader's impact on employee job crafting, in different cases, the response of employee job crafting to leaders' behaviour was different due to different professional characteristics and subordinates' characteristics. These phenomena are related to context factors. Thus, the following themes arise while the author reviews responses to this interview question. Contextual factors (work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere, employee trait regulatory focus)

cause the varying impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting. Table 5-5 shows the list of detailed information on every respondent's job crafting, work complexity, organizational transformation atmosphere, trait regulatory focus, gender, and industry information.

**Table 5-5 Information on every respondent's job crafting, work complexity, organizational transformation atmosphere, trait regulatory focus, gender, and industry information**

No.	Respondent	JC	WCO	OTA	TRF	Gender	Industry
1	R1	+	L	H	+	F	Education and training
2	L2	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
3	Z3	+	L	H	+	M	Education and training
4	Z4	+	L	H	+	F	Education and training
5	Y5	-	H	L	-	F	Healthcare
6	L6	-	L	L	-	F	Scientific research and technology services
7	G7	+	H	H	+	F	Education and training
8	W8	+	H	H	+	F	Social work
9	L9	-	L	L	-	F	Finance
10	K10	-	H	L	+	M	Finance
11	Z11	+	H	L	+	F	Finance
12	Y12	-	H	H	-	M	Finance
13	L13	-	H	H	-	M	Wholesale and retail
14	H14	+	H	H	+	M	Design
15	W15	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
16	X16	+	H	H	-	F	Social work
17	J17	+	H	H	+	F	Scientific research and technology services
18	D18	+	H	H	+	M	Wholesale and retail
19	S19	+	H	H	-	M	Design
20	B20	-	H	L	+	M	Healthcare
21	L21	+	H	H	+	M	Finance
22	H22	+	L	H	+	M	Education and training
23	S23	-	H	L	-	M	Manufacturing
24	H24	-	L	L	-	M	Scientific research and technology services
25	S25	-	H	L	+	F	Design
26	L26	+	H	L	+	F	Healthcare

Note: JC+ job crafting improvement; JC- job crafting reduction; WCO work complexity: WCOH higher work complexity, WCOL lower work complexity; OTA organizational transformation atmosphere: OTAH higher organizational transformation atmosphere, OTAL lower organizational transformation atmosphere; TRF Trait regulatory focus: TRF- Trait regulatory focus prevention, TRF+ Trait regulatory focus promotion

### 5.4.1 Work complexity

**Sub-interview question:** *Is there much freedom of work? What skills do you need in your work? How do you often complete your work?*

**Interview aim:** *To understand the respondent's work complexity. And to know with different work complexity, how the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting.*

"Work complexity" is characterized by a high degree of freedom, diversified skills, diversified results, and diversified potential paths. Many employees talked about their "work complexity" during interviews, such as:

*Respondent W8 noted :,... (Higher work complexity) ... At the same time, I need many skills in the whole process, including communication, implementation, design, research, empathy, etc. It is very important that I also need a little feeling of serving the masses. And if one way cannot solve the problem, I need to constantly explore multiple paths to solve the problem. In addition, our time is relatively free, because I need to arrange time according to the project progress."*

*Respondent L2 noted that, (Higher work complexity) ... My work is very complicated. I need to constantly communicate with superiors and subordinates, and I need to have various business skills. The problems I face are also very complex. For example, I mainly manage the safety problems of the production line, and I need to think about the prevention and response of production safety and quality problems in multiple ways."*

*Respondent R1 noted :,... (Lower work complexity) ... My work content is relatively single, including three aspects: teaching, scientific research and meetings. The time is relatively fixed, and there are many regulations in my work."*

*Respondent L6 noted :,... (Lower work complexity) ... Our task is relatively simple, mainly to do experiments, apply for projects, and then write articles."*

(1) Contextual effects of work complexity on employee job crafting improvement.

This part first comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of work complexity on employee job crafting improvement. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting improvement where other organization-level context factors are also similar, when the work complexity is higher, the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting is more obvious. That is, **the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

As shown in Table 5-6, 9 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 9 respondents have a higher organizational transformation atmosphere and trait regulatory focus promotion. Among them, 6 respondents showed higher work complexity. Compared with the other 4 with lower work complexity, they showed a bigger number (17) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting improvement, which indicates the stronger improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-6 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

Key issue with <b>theme</b> ( <b>theory code</b> )	The higher the <b>work complexity</b> , the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.			
No. of respondents	9			
%	35			
WCO	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC+	%
Higher WCO	6	23	17	5
Lower WCO	3	12	6	1



Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: WCO work complexity; JC+ job crafting improvement

*For example, respondent W8, a project manager in a social work organization, and respondent R1, a lecturer at a Chinese public university, both show the process of employee job crafting improvement. They both have a higher organizational transformational atmosphere, and they are both trait regulatory focus promotion types. However, since respondent W8, the project manager in a social work organization, has a higher work complexity, her job crafting is improved more obviously. Respondent W8 noted :,... (Higher work complexity) ... At the same time, I need many skills in the whole process, including communication, implementation, design, research, empathy, etc. It is very important that I also need a little feeling of serving the masses. And if one way cannot solve the problem, I need to constantly explore multiple paths to solve the problem. In addition, our time is relatively free, because I need to arrange time according to the project progress." Respondent R1 noted :,... (Lower work complexity) ... My work content is relatively single, including three aspects: teaching, scientific research and meetings. The time is relatively fixed, and there are many regulations in my work."*

## (2) Contextual effects of high work complexity on employee job crafting reduction

Then it comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of work complexity on employee job crafting reduction. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting prevention where other organization-level context factors are also similar, when the work complexity is higher, the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting is more obvious. That is, **the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

As shown in Table 5-7, 7 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 9 respondents have a lower

organizational transformation atmosphere and trait regulatory focus prevention. Among them, 4 respondents showed higher work complexity. Compared with the other 3 with lower work complexity, they showed a bigger number (13) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting reduction, which indicates a stronger reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-7 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

Key issue with theme (theory code)	The higher the <b>work complexity</b> , the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.			
No. of respondents	7			
%	27			
WCO	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC-	%
Higher WCO	4	15	13	4
Lower WCO	3	12	6	1

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: WCO work complexity; JC- job crafting reduction

*For example, respondent L2, a section chief of a state-owned enterprise and respondent L6, a researcher in a Chinese research institution both show the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have lower organizational transformational atmosphere, and they are both trait regulatory focus prevention type. However, since respondent L2 has a higher work complexity, her job crafting is reduced more obviously. Respondent L2 noted that,,(Higher work complexity) ... My work is very complicated. I need to constantly communicate with superiors and subordinates, and I need to have various business skills. The problems I face are also very complex. For example, I mainly manage the safety problems of the production line, and I need to think about the prevention*

*and response of production safety and quality problems in multiple ways.”*  
*Respondent L6 noted :,... (Lower work complexity) ... Our task is relatively simple, mainly to do experiments, apply for projects, and then write articles.”*

Thus, it's suggested that the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting; the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.

#### **5.4.2 Organizational transformational atmosphere**

*Sub-interview question: Does your work need many revolutions or changes? How does your organization support your transformational ideas?*

*Interview aim: To understand the respondent's **organizational transformational atmosphere**. And to know with different organizational transformational atmospheres, how the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting.*

Organizational transformational atmosphere performance includes the organization's willingness to experiment with transformational ideas, support for employee transformational work, tolerance for employee diversity, rewards for transformational performance, and providing resources for the realization of transformational work or tasks. Many employees talked about their " organizational transformational atmosphere " during interviews, such as:

*Respondent W8 noted :,... (Higher organizational transformational atmosphere),... My work is summarized as community participation in action. The main contents include 1) communicating with the community government and finding their needs to adjust the community residents' conflicts; 2) continuously learning, reforming and innovating solutions to problems, 3) communicating with*

residents to solve conflicts; 4) Summarizing and turning practical experience into theory. For example, I have our books. I need to keep the spirit of openness and innovation and continue to practice.”

Respondent Y12 noted :,,... (Higher organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our industry needs to try a lot of changes, because the social environment is changing, and the nature of our work is to face risks. At the same time, both the company and the Hong Kong government have given us better support.”

Respondent L2 noted :,,... (Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our company is a state-owned enterprise as well as an old enterprise. This enterprise is now in the downward phase of the enterprise life cycle. I face few opportunities for innovation, mainly to complete the tasks of the superior according to the process.

Respondent Z11 noted that,,(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our work is less revolutionary, first of all, because, in the bank, I need to comply with various regulations to regulate our behaviour, so that I can avoid risks.”

#### (1) Contextual effects of the organizational transformational atmosphere on employee job crafting improvement

This part first comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of the organizational transformational atmosphere on employee job crafting improvement. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting improvement where organization-level context factors are also similar, when the Organizational transformational atmosphere is higher, the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting is more obvious. That is, **the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship**

**between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

As shown in Table 5-8, 8 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 8 respondents have higher work complexity and trait regulatory focus promotion. Among them, 6 respondents showed a higher organizational transformation atmosphere. Compared with the other 2 with a lower organizational transformation atmosphere, they showed a bigger number (17) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting improvement, which indicates the stronger improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-8 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

Key issue with <b>theme</b> <b>(theory code)</b>	The higher the <b>organizational transformation atmosphere</b> , the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.			
No..of respondents	8			
%	35			
OTA	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC+	%
Higher OTA	6	27	17	5
Lower OTA	2	8	6	1

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: OTA organizational transformation atmosphere; JC+ job crafting improvement.

*For example, respondent W8, a project manager in a social work organization and Respondent Z11, a customer manager and financial manager of a Chinese state-owned bank show the process of employee job crafting improvement, and they both have higher work complexity, and they are both trait regulatory focus promotion type. However, since respondent W8, the project manager in a social work organization, has a higher organizational*

*transformational atmosphere, her job crafting is improved more obviously. Respondent W8 noted :,,... (Higher organizational transformational atmosphere),... My work is summarized as community participation in action. The main contents include 1) communicating with the community government and finding their needs to adjust the community residents' conflicts; 2) continuously learning, reforming and innovating solutions to problems, 3) communicating with residents to solve conflicts; 4) Summarising and turning practical experience into theory. For example, I have our books. I need to keep the spirit of openness and innovation and continue to practice.” Respondent Z11 noted that,,(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our work is less revolutionary, first of all, because, in the bank, I need to comply with various regulations to regulate our behaviour, so that I can avoid risks.”*

## (2) Contextual effects of the organizational transformational atmosphere on employee job crafting reduction

Then it comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of organizational transformational atmosphere on employee job crafting reduction. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting reduction where organization-level context factors are also similar, when the Organizational transformational atmosphere is higher, the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting is less obvious. That is, the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

As shown in Table 5-9, 6 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 6 respondents have higher work complexity and trait regulatory focus prevention. Among them, 2 respondents showed a higher organizational transformation atmosphere. Compared with the other 4 with a lower organizational transformation

atmosphere, they showed a smaller number (5) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting reduction, which indicates the stronger reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-9 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.**

Key issue with <b>theme</b> (theory code)	The higher the <b>organizational transformation atmosphere</b> , the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.			
No. of respondents	6			
%	27			
OTA	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC-	%
Higher OTA	2	12	5	1
Lower OTA	4	15	9	3

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: OTA organizational transformation atmosphere; JC- job crafting reduction

*For example, respondent Y12, a regional manager of insurance sales in an insurance company, and Respondent L2, a section chief of a state-owned enterprise, show the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have higher work complexity, and they both have trait regulatory focus prevention. However, since respondent Y12, the regional manager of insurance sales in an insurance company, has a higher organizational transformational atmosphere, his job crafting is reduced less obviously. Respondent Y12 noted :,... (Higher organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our industry needs to try a lot of changes, because the social environment is changing, and the nature of our work is to face risks. At the same time, both the company and the Hong Kong government have given us better support." Respondent L2 noted :,... (Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our company is a state-owned enterprise as well as an old enterprise. This enterprise is now in the downward phase of the*

*enterprise life cycle. I face few opportunities for innovation, mainly to complete the tasks of the superior according to the process.*

Thus, it's suggested that the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting; the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.

#### **5.4.3 Employee trait regulatory focus**

**Sub-interview question:** *When you are completing your task, what is the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result are you sensitive to? /What results and aims do you care more about?*

**Interview aim:** *To understand the respondent's trait regulatory focus type. And to know with different trait regulatory focus types, how the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting.*

Employees with trait regulatory focus promotion always focus on wish, achievement, and reward, and they are willing to make change. Employees with trait regulatory focus prevention always focus on responsibility, obligation, and punishment and they are more prefer stability. Many employees talked about their " trait regulatory focus " during interviews, such as:

*Respondent W8 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion) ...I think I always pay more attention to what I want to do and what goals I want to achieve. Because it is impossible to completely avoid mistakes, no matter what I do, I will never avoid mistakes. Making mistakes and correcting them is a necessary process. I think it's not terrible to have mistakes, and it's more important to sum up from mistakes and make myself better."*



*Respondent K10 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion)...Later, I simply lowered my expectations and thought that my work was a first draft, which was used to be criticized and modified by my leader. Many people will feel aggrieved by criticism, but I will not because I know what I am doing, and I have my own goals in my work.*

*Respondent Y5 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention)...I am probably more concerned about avoiding punishment. I don't like to be criticized in any way. I have my ideas and views on work. The people and things around me have relatively little influence on me. I will not change too much.*

*Respondent X16 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...I am more concerned about preventing mistakes. I'm afraid to be criticized in public I will be very careful because I am afraid of making a fool of myself, and then try to avoid communicating with leaders.*

(1) Contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus promotion on employee job crafting improvement

This part first comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus promotion on employee job crafting improvement. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting improvement where other organization-level context factors are also similar, compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is more obvious. That is, **compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger.**

As shown in Table 5-10, 8 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 8 respondents have higher work complexity and higher organizational transformation atmosphere. Among them, 6 respondents showed trait regulatory focus promotion. Compared with the other 2 with trait regulatory focus prevention, they showed a bigger number (14) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting improvement, indicating a stronger improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-10 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger.**

Key issue with theme (theory code)	Compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with <b>trait regulatory focus</b> promotion is stronger.			
No. of respondents	8			
%	31			
TRF	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC+	%
TRF+	6	23	14	4
TRF-	2	8	6	1

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

Note: TRF Trait regulatory focus; TRF- Trait regulatory focus prevention; TRF+ Trait regulatory focus promotion; JC+ job crafting improvement.

*For example, both respondent W8 and respondent X16 are project managers in the same social work organization. They both show the process of employee job crafting improvement, and they both have higher work complexity and organizational transformational atmosphere. However, respondent W8 and respondent X16 are separate trait regulatory focus promotion and prevention types, and respondent W8's job crafting is improved more obviously. Respondent W8 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion) ...I think I always pay more attention*

*to what I want to do and what goals I want to achieve. Because it is impossible to completely avoid mistakes, no matter what I do, I will never avoid mistakes. Making mistakes and correcting them is a necessary process. I think it's not terrible to have mistakes, and it's more important to sum up from mistakes and make myself better." Respondent X16 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...I am more concerned about preventing mistakes. I'm afraid to be criticized in public I will be very careful because I am afraid of making a fool of myself, and then try to avoid communicating with leaders.*

(2) Contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus promotion on employee job crafting reduction

Then it comes to the analysis of the contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus promotion on employee job crafting reduction. The original data shows that during the process of employee job crafting reduction where other organization-level context factors are also similar, compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is less obvious. That is, **compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.**

As shown in Table 5-11, 7 (the total number of respondents is 26) respondents' views sustain this theme. All these 7 respondents have higher work complexity and lower organizational transformation atmosphere. Among them, 3 respondents showed trait regulatory focus promotion. Compared with the other 4 with trait regulatory focus prevention, they showed a smaller number (5) of the average amount of references (the total number of references is 342) for job crafting reduction, which indicates the

stronger reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

**Table 5-11 Cumulated views of respondents on the issue: compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.**

Key issue with <b>theme (theory code)</b>	Compared with employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with <b>trait regulatory focus</b> promotion is weaker.			
No. of respondents	7			
%	27			
TRF	No. of respondents	%	No. of average amount of reference for JC-	%
TRF+	3	12	5	1
TRF-	4	15	10	3

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2023

Note: TRF Trait regulatory focus; TRF- Trait regulatory focus prevention; TRF+ Trait regulatory focus promotion; JC- job crafting reduction.

*For example, both respondent K10 and Respondent Y5 show the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have higher work complexity and organizational lower transformational atmosphere. However, respondent K10 and Respondent Y5 are separately trait regulatory focus promotion and prevention types, so respondent K10's job crafting is reduced less obviously. Respondent K10 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion)...Later, I simply lowered my expectations and thought that my work was a first draft, which was used to be criticized and modified by my leader. Many people will feel aggrieved by criticism, but I will not because I know what I am doing, and I have my own goals in my work. Respondent Y5 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention)...I am probably more concerned about avoiding punishment. I don't like to be criticized in any way. I have my ideas and views on work. The people and things around me have relatively little influence on me. I will not change too much.*

Thus, it's suggested that compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger; compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.

## 5.5 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter results in ten key points:

1. There are three substantive areas of leadership regulatory focused behaviour which impact employee job crafting.
2. Each substantive area of leadership regulatory focused behaviour can be presented as a promotion type or a prevention type.
3. Thus, a 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour” is constructed.
4. The substantive areas are useful to show the range of leadership behaviour in the impact on employee job crafting.
5. The resulting 6 types of leadership regulatory focused behaviours reflect how leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting.
6. There are two types of employee work regulatory focus, via improving which, leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting.
7. it's needed to contextualize the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting practically and theoretically.
8. Work complexity contextualizes the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting.

9. Organizational transformational atmosphere contextualizes the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting.

10. Employee trait regulatory focus contextualizes the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting.

First, leadership regulatory focused behaviour refers to the behaviour of leaders who transmit different regulatory focus tendencies when interacting with employees. This concept includes three substantive areas: leadership regulatory focused role modelling, leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing, and leadership regulatory focused feedback. Second, each substantive area of leadership regulatory focused behaviour can be presented as a promotion type or a prevention type. Thus, third, the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour" is shown in Figure 5–1 with 6 sub-concepts: leadership promotion/prevention focused role modelling, leadership promotion/prevention focused linguistic framing, and leadership promotion/prevention focused feedback.

Fourth, these substantive areas are useful in part because they highlight the fact that leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting and allows for the creation of the 6 types of leadership behaviours. Fifth, each of these 6 has implications for how leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting. In other words, leadership promotion focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback improves employee job crafting; and leadership prevention focused role modelling/ linguistic framing/ feedback reduces employee job crafting.

Sixth, "employee work regulatory focus improvement" explains the role of leaders' regulatory focused behaviour in influencing employee job crafting. It has two types: employee work regulatory focus promotion and employee work regulatory focus prevention. Thus, the impact of leadership regulatory-focused behaviour on employee job crafting includes: "promotion focus

improvement" process, in which the leadership promotion focused behaviour guides employee work regulatory focus promotion to improve employee job crafting; and "prevention focus improvement" process, in which the leadership prevention focused behaviour leads employee work regulatory focus prevention to reduce employee job crafting (Figure 5–2)

Seventh, in the process of a leader's impact on employee job crafting, in different cases, the response of employee job crafting to leaders' behaviour was different due to different professional characteristics and subordinates' characteristics. These phenomena are related to context factors. Contextual factors (work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere, employee trait regulatory focus) cause the varying impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting.

Points eight, nine and ten taken together contextualize the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviours on employee job crafting:

Eighth, work complexity is characterized by a high degree of freedom, diversified skills, diversified results, and diversified potential paths. Empirical evidence supports that, the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting, while the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

Ninth, organizational transformational atmosphere performance includes the organization's willingness to experiment with transformational ideas, support for employee transformational work, tolerance for employee diversity, rewards for transformational performance, and providing resources for the realization of transformational work or tasks. Empirical evidence supports that, the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting, while the higher the organizational

transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting.

Tenth, employees with trait regulatory focus promotion always focus on wish, achievement, and reward, and they are willing to make a change. Employees with trait regulatory focus prevention always focus on responsibility, obligation, and punishment and they are more prefer to stability. Empirical evidence supports that, compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger, while, compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.

The main and emerging themes are summarized in Table 5-12.

While this chapter contributes to the overall research findings by providing empirical evidence, the next chapter will integrate these research findings and theoretical discussion to form the final theoretical model.



**Table 5-12 Main and emerging themes**

Main themes	
Themes (theory codes)	Key issues
Leadership regulatory focused behavior	Leadership <b>promotion</b> focused role modeling/ linguistic framing/ feedback improves employee job crafting.
	Leadership <b>prevention</b> focused role modeling/ linguistic framing/ feedback reduces employee job crafting.
Employee work regulatory focus	Via improving employee work regulatory focus <b>promotion</b> , leadership promotion focused behavior improves employee job crafting.
	Via improving employee work regulatory focus <b>prevention</b> , leadership prevention focused behavior reduces employee job crafting.
Emerging themes	
Themes (theory codes)	Key issues
Work complexity	The higher the <b>work complexity</b> , the stronger the <b>improvement</b> relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.
	The higher the <b>work complexity</b> , the stronger the <b>reduction</b> relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.
Organizational transformational atmosphere	The higher the <b>organizational transformation atmosphere</b> , the stronger the <b>improvement</b> relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.
	The higher the <b>organizational transformation atmosphere</b> , the weaker the <b>reduction</b> relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.
Employee trait regulatory focus	Compared with the employees with the <b>trait regulatory focus</b> prevention, the <b>improvement</b> relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger.
	Compared with the employees with <b>trait regulatory focus</b> prevention, the <b>reduction</b> relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.

Source: Developed from author's major fieldwork,2022

## 6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 6.1 Purpose and aims

The previous chapter analyzes the findings from the research and focuses primarily on the interview data. Following grounded theory research strategy this chapter integrates these research findings stereoscopically and conducts theoretical discussion to achieve the research aim: to form a management conceptual model to systematically characterize the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting.

Emphatically, the function of the literature discussion above in the discussion chapter is different from that in the literature review chapter which is more to provide researchers with an overall theoretical grasp (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020). The function of existing research discussion here in the discussion chapter is to compare existing literature (predecessors' theories), collected data and themes presented in the data (research on understanding) to form a meaningful conclusion to construct the theoretical model (Xiangming, 2000, Fan and Xiangming, 2020).

Since the study was guided by 3 specific objectives and data gathered through the in-depth interviews and then analyzed based on grounded theory paved the way for the discussion of the findings against the objectives and the drawing up of meaningful conclusions. The discussion has been presented in a serial order. This means that discussion related to specific research objective 1 is presented first, followed by specific research objective 2, then 3, and the overall aim.

Thus, this chapter has nine aims:

1. To integrate research findings stereoscopically with themes, quotes, keywords,
2. To conduct a theoretical discussion with literature to confirm the findings,

3. To conclude based on the stereoscopical finding discussion and theoretical literature confirmation to achieve every research objective.
4. To identify the agreements and gaps between the study conclusion and existing literature in every objective-related discussion.
5. To tabulate and summarize the agreements and gaps between the study conclusion and existing literature.
6. To develop the final research model.
7. To map out the contribution of the conceptual framework
8. To critically evaluate how the data collected, in the current conceptual model, has informed the previous conceptual framework.
9. To critically evaluate how the data collected, in the current conceptual model, has changed the previous conceptual framework.

## 6.2 Research objective1 -related discussion

*Research objective 1: To summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively impact employee job crafting. That is, to summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively **improve** employee job crafting; and to summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively **reduce** employee job crafting.*

### 6.2.1 Leadership regulatory focused role modelling

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research that leadership **role modelling** impacts employee job crafting. On one hand, it is argued that **leadership promotion focused role modelling improves employee job crafting**. Field respondents notably experiencing willingness to “seek resources”, “seek challenges” and “reduce demands” acknowledged that their leaders provided such an example in their work: they continued to seek improvement in their work, showed the momentum of development in multiple fields, and dared to try and take risks, namely "change motivation";

they also paid more attention to the goal, progress and positive side, that is, "wish, achievement, reward focus".

*For instance, a respondent from a Chinese high school tending to "seek resources" explained:,,... I seize the opportunity to go out to study and exchange learning, conscientiously consult education management experts and psychology experts, and keep the people around me consistent in my behaviour and ideological goals, to work together to make my school better and better." (respondent G7)*

*And she tended to "seek challenges" and noted:,,... I actively seize the opportunity to undertake a new task or challenge a new position feeling that my leader must trust me to give this challenge." (respondent G7)*

*When seeking the reasons why she actively "crafted job", the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader's "promotion focused role modelling" behaviour. She said:,,... my leader was not afraid of contradictions or problems, dared to face challenges and difficulties, and when reform was needed, my leader would resolutely make changes, even if the reform may harm the interests of some people." (respondent G7)*

On the other hand, **leadership prevention focused role modelling reduces employee job crafting**. Field respondents notably "refusing (or passively) seeking resources", "refusing (or passively) seeking challenges" and "refusing (or passively) reducing demands" acknowledged that their leaders provided such an example in their work: they paid attention to the compliance with organizational procedures and rules as well as the superior leaders in their work behaviour, namely, "responsible, obligation, punishment-focus". At the same time, they acted cautiously to avoid risks, such as criticism from the top and responsibility bearing, namely, "stability motivation".

*For instance, a sales director of a luxury sales China branch tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking resources” and explained:,,... I am always forced to attend some training which is seemingly voluntary and passively master the methods of relationship management for job need.” (respondent L13)*

*And he tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking challenges” and noted:,,... I am very resistant to doing a new project which completely exceeds my comfort zone and the scope of my knowledge and experience.” (respondent L13)*

*Moreover, he tended to “refuse (or passively) reducing demands” and said:,,... I rarely seek help from others when encountering pressure, and I work hard and digest the pressure by myself, thereby I have been experiencing frequent insomnia.” (respondent L13)*

*When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader’s “prevention focused role modelling” behaviour, he noted:,,... my leader rarely took risks to do projects that he had never tried before, was very cautious to prevent making mistakes, generally followed the company's rules when doing things and usually emphasized that we should not make mistakes to prevent some bad effects on the company.” (respondent L13)*

**In literature**, social cognition theory points out that individuals in an organization learn by demonstrating leadership role modelling and adjusting their cognitive resources to imitate the observed behaviour (Bandura and Walters, 1977, Zheng, 2020). If a leader continues to seek work improvement through improving methods, demonstrates multi-field development momentum, and pays little attention to compliance with organizational routines and avoidance of mistakes, then the leader demonstrates a leadership promotion-focused behaviour (Yinghui and Ken, 2016, Bavik et al., 2017, Gan, 2018, Guoquan and Zidong, 2017). On the contrary, if the leader

emphasizes the adherence to organizational procedures and rules in behaviour to avoid criticism from the upper level, even if the breaking of the rule is reasonable or the inevitable condition for success, the leader shows a prevention-focused behaviour (Yinghui and Ken, 2016, Bavik et al., 2017, Gan, 2018, Guoquan and Zidong, 2017). Existing literature which analyzed the impact of leader role modelling on employee sales behaviour, regulatory focus, work-family balance, and moral orientation behaviour (Yinghui and Ken, 2016, Bavik et al., 2017, Gan, 2018, Guoquan and Zidong, 2017) underpins the statement.

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests that:** leadership promotion focused role modelling improves employee job crafting, and leadership prevention focused role modelling reduces employee job crafting. Therefore, this partially **supports** Zheng, (2020), because role modelling attributes are evident contributory to job crafting. And the present findings support, to some extent, Xiangfen et al. (2016), Zheng, (2020) and Yufan and Lei (2015b) who defines the two concepts of promotion-focused behavioural role modelling and prevention-focused role modelling. But, to some extent, the findings differ from the previous work of Xiangfen et al. (2016). Xiangfen et al. (2016) conclude that leadership prevention focus has no influence on proactivity, but this study suggests that leadership prevention focus reduces employee proactivity. The different outcomes of leadership regulatory focused behaviour may contribute to the differences. Thus some large-scale empirical tests are needed in the future to enhance the qualitative conclusion (see **Table 6-8**)

### **6.2.2 Leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing**

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research that leadership **linguistic framing** impacts employee job crafting. Separately, **leadership promotion focused linguistic framing improves employee job crafting.**

Field respondents notably experiencing job crafting improvement acknowledged that when motivating employees to complete a job or task, their leaders focused on "enhancing acquisition" and "guiding growth".

*For instance, a subject leader in a Chinese primary school explained that she tended to “seek resources”, she noted:,,... To improve my teaching skills, I downloaded relevant software on the internet and learn relevant courses. For example, in the Jian Zhi app, there are many famous teachers such as Yu Dan. I learn relevant knowledge and communication skills, and I also follow the host in the app to read to practice spoken Mandarin.” (respondent Z3)*

*Also, she tended to “seek challenges” and noted:,,... I actively seize the opportunity of project application and actively participate in project research and teaching skills competition.” (respondent Z3)*

*And she tended to “reduce demands”. As quoted from her:,,... I felt that there was always pressure, but I tried to turn it into motivation and urge her to push forward slowly; when there is periodic progress, the pressure will naturally decrease or disappear; and I can relieve the pressure by singing, listening to music, running, swimming and yoga.” (respondent Z3)*

*When seeking the reasons why she actively “crafted job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader’s “promotion focused linguistic framing”. She noted:,,... she emphasized that my leader always clearly listed the goals we need to accomplish, and arranged tasks based on the goals.” (respondent Z3)*

Besides, **leadership prevention focused linguistic framing reduces employee job crafting**. In this situation, field respondents notably “refusing (or passively) seeking resources”, “refusing (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refusing (or passively) reducing demands” acknowledged that when encouraging employees to complete a certain work or task, their leaders'

verbal expression focused on arousing employee strong obligations, that is, "Evoke duty"; on the construction of a "loss, no-loss" situation for employees, that is, "Emphasis loss"; and on improving employee security needs, namely "Guide security needs".

*For instance, a section chief of a state-owned enterprise tending to "refuse (or passively) seeking resources" explained:,,... I am forced to attend some job-related training, and I seldom communicate with my leader and my subordinates. And I feel that it is uneasy to communicate with subordinates and my subordinates don't complete the allocated tasks well." (respondent L2)*

*And he tended to "refuse (or passively) seeking challenges" and noted:,,... only when we met problems on site, will I analyze what technical conditions to improve, and then standardize the improvement." (respondent L2)*

*Moreover, he tended to "refuse (or passively) reducing demands". He "passively accepted mental and physical tension". For example, he said:,,... I felt that the pressure could only be endured. No matter how heavy the task assigned by the leader is, I could only do it. There is no other way. And, in my enterprise, the staff loss was very serious, and there is a lot of backlog of work, so I think that the tasks arranged by leaders can only be completed by working overtime." (respondent L2)*

*When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to "craft a job", the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader's "prevention focused linguistic framing" behaviour. He complained:,,... my leader always lectures and criticizes through the meeting every morning, and then urges us to complete the task." In this way, his leader "evokes his duty", "emphasizes loss" and "guides security needs". And he added:,,... my leader often emphasizes that I must be careful not to have problems, otherwise there will be very serious accident*



*consequences. In this way, when making arrangements, his leader "emphasizes loss"."* (respondent L2)

**In literature**, task framing is also gradually considered to be one of the important factors affecting the level of individual initiative activities (Cui and Wiggins, 2017, Simmons and Ren, 2009, Friedman et al., 2007). Similarly, leadership linguistic framing with different regulatory focus tendencies can effectively affect employee job crafting levels. When explaining a work or task to employees, leaders improve employee job crafting by promotion focused linguistic framing: the leaders encourage employees to pursue their desired future by arousing employee higher values, using visualized words and proactive attractive visions for employees, focusing on the presentation of "gain, no-gain" of task or work information, and showing concern for the growth and development needs of employees, to effectively improve and encourage employee work enthusiasm, enhances their flexible thinking and adventurous attitude, and then promote employee job crafting (Cui and Wiggins, 2017, Simmons and Ren, 2009, Friedman et al., 2007)

When explaining a work or task to employees, leaders reduce employee job crafting by prevention focused linguistic framing: the leaders explain a work or task to employees by conveying what they need to do to make their work tasks move in the right direction without deviation, which will make employees aware of their responsibilities, obligations or what they should do, by focusing on the presentation of "loss, no-loss" of task or work information and showing concern for employee safety and obligations in words, so that employee situation prevention focus may be effectively improved and employees are more conservative to reduce job crafting level (Cui and Wiggins, 2017, Simmons and Ren, 2009, Friedman et al., 2007).

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that: leadership promotion focused linguistic framing

improves employee job crafting, and leadership prevention focused linguistic framing reduces employee job crafting. Therefore, this partially **supports** Yufan and Lei (2015b) and Brockner and Higgins (2001) who define the two concepts of promotion-focused linguistic framing and prevention-focused linguistic framing. And the present findings support, to some extent, Simmons and Ren (2009). Yufan and Lei (2015b), Bean and Hamilton (2006), and Naidoo and Lord (2008) focus on and examine the role of leadership regulatory focused framing on employee proactivity (see **Table 6-8**)

### **6.2.3 Leadership regulatory focused feedback**

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research that, on the one side, **leadership promotion focused feedback can effectively improve employee job crafting behaviour**, which can be seen from the original data. Field respondents notably experiencing willingness to “seek resources”, “seek challenges” and “reduce demands” acknowledged that their leaders use “positive feedback” (such as praise, reward, etc.) when reaction to employees on a task or work result. When employees succeed, their leaders express positive feedback. When employees fail, leaders withhold positive feedback.

*For instance, the respondent from a Chinese high school mentioned at the beginning of section 6.2, explained that she tended to “seek resources” and “seek challenges” (respondent G7)*

*When seeking the reasons why she actively “crafted job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader’s “promotion focused feedback” behaviour, she noted: „... my leader, my headmaster, is very meticulous at work. He was also very cautious when making suggestions, not criticizing us, but analyzing problems with reason and basis, and then making suggestions. For example, he may go to the field to investigate their work, not just listen to someone. For example, as the principal in charge of teaching, it is one of my duties to*

*supervise whether the teacher leaves early in the last class. Several times, when I didn't check, my leader went to check and found that many teachers left early. After several consecutive observations, my leader pointed out the problem reasonably, and then we discussed the solution. Moreover, when giving feedback, my leader would not be very forceful and would not take the form of criticism but would take the facts as the basis.” (respondent G7)*

On the other side, **leadership prevention focused feedback is a behaviour that can reduce employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably “refusing (or passively) seeking resources”, “refusing (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refusing (or passively) reducing demands” acknowledged that their leaders use “negative feedback” (such as criticism, punishment, etc.) when giving reaction to employees on a task or work results. When the employee fails, the leader expresses negative feedback. When the employee succeeds, the leader retains the negative feedback.

*For instance, the sales director of a luxury sales China branch mentioned at the beginning of section 6.2 explained that he tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking resources”, “refuse (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refuse (or passively) reducing demands” (respondent L13)*

*When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader’s “prevention focused feedback” behaviour, he said:,,... If a new project completely exceeds my comfort zone and my knowledge and experience, I always resist doing it. Because I was worried that I couldn’t do it well and had no confidence. My leader scolded me for undertaking such tasks before, so I am very resistant to such kinds of things. And my leader sometimes criticizes me in public.” (respondent L13)*

**In literature**, different feedback from leaders to employees may effectively improve or reduce the job crafting level of employees. Some

studies have discussed the relationship between leadership feedback and employee initiatives (Joo et al., 2012, Zhou, 2003, Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001). Promotion focused feedback style means that when the leader implements feedback to the employees on a task or work result, he may emphasize the use of positive language (such as praise), pass it to the employees when they succeed, and detain it when they fail (Lei et al., 2010). He may also emphasize the impact of performance results on employee ideals, values and self-growth (Lei et al., 2010). The feedback information is also presented in the way of "gain, no gain" (Lei et al., 2010). Thus, the feedback style of promotion focused emphasizes employee pursuit of ideals and self-worth and improves employees to actively seek information to solve problems in the process of pursuing goals, to try various solutions, and to finally promote employee risk preference and initiative thinking (Joo et al., 2012). Prevention focused feedback style means that the leader emphasizes the use of negative language (such as criticism) when they feedback to their employees on a task or work result (Lei et al., 2010). When the employees fail, it is passed to the employees, and when the employees succeed, it is detained (Lei et al., 2010). He may also emphasize the impact of performance results on employee responsibilities, obligations and self-protection (Lei et al., 2010). The feedback information is presented in the form of "loss, no loss" (Lei et al., 2010). Thus, the prevention focused feedback style emphasizes employee avoidance of the risk of mistakes and failures in the process of fulfilling their obligations, which means that employees will show more conservative tendencies and resolutely maintain the status quo rather than try new methods and tasks, and finally, their active thinking may be reduced (Joo et al., 2012, Zhou, 2003, Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001).

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that: leadership prevention focused feedback improves employee job crafting, and leadership prevention focused feedback

reduces employee job crafting. Therefore, the present findings **support**, to some extent, Zheng (2020), Yufan and Lei (2015b) and Brockner and Higgins (2001) who define the two concepts of promotion-focused behaviour and prevention-focused behaviour. This partially supports Orpen and King (1989) with experimental study and Hawes and Rich (1998) with literature discussion who focus on and examine the role of leadership regulatory focused feedback on employee proactivity. But this study uses grounded theory qualitative research strategy to suggest the impact of leadership regulatory focused feedback on employee job crafting and develops 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”, which contributes to the conclusion with more practical significance (see Table 6-8)

### 6.3 Research objective 2 -related discussion

**Research objective2:** *To reveal the employee reaction-related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to reveal the employee reaction-related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting; to reveal the employee reaction-related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively reduces employee job crafting.*

#### 6.3.1 *Employee work regulatory focus × leadership regulatory focused role modelling*

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research. On one hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused role modelling improves employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership promotion focused role modelling”, their “work regulatory focus promotion” improved, that is, the realization of their ideal selves, the need for growth and

development, and the pursuit of positive results in their work, then they experienced positive “job crafting”.

*As evidence, one respondent as a subject leader in a primary school mentioned in section 6.2, explained that she tended to “seek resources”, “seek challenges” and “reduce demands” (respondent Z3)*

*When seeking the reasons why she was willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader’s “promotion focused role modelling” behaviour, she noted:,,... my leader is very energetic and always carries out various reforms at work.” (respondent Z3)*

*Facing her leader’s “promotion focused role modelling” behaviour, she reacted by “work regulatory focus promotion”, she explained:,,... I thought I would work harder and focus on positive objectives at work, like pursuing teaching rewards.” (respondent Z3)*

On the other hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused role modelling reduces employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership prevention focused role modelling”, their “work regulatory focus prevention” improved, that is, t employee self-realization, safety and security needs and avoidance of negative results in their work, then they experienced negative “job crafting”.

*As evidence, one respondent as a sales director of a luxury sales China branch mentioned in section 6.2 explained that he tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking resources”, “refuse (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refuse (or passively) reducing demands” (respondent L13)*

*When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader’s “prevention focused role modelling” behaviour. (respondent L13)*

*Facing his leader's "prevention focused role modelling" behaviour, he reacted by "work regulatory focus prevention", he said:,,... I was unwilling to take risks to undertake tasks that I was not sure of." (respondent L13)*

**In literature**, when showing promotion focused role modelling, the leaders constantly improve their work through proactive methods, maintain development in multiple fields and pay less attention to compliance with organizational conventions and careful mistake avoidance (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). The promotion focused leadership role modelling improves the employee work promotion focus by promoting them to constantly challenge the current situation and break through conventional methods (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). Then the employees show a high level of job crafting (Bandura and Walters, 1977, Bandura, 1986, Bandura, 2021). On the contrary, when leaders show prevention focused role modelling, they emphasize compliance with work procedures to avoid criticism and pay more attention to avoiding failure by minimizing social risks (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). Thus, the employee work prevention focus will be improved, they will be more inclined to adhere to the patterned working methods, and finally show a low level of job crafting (Bandura and Walters, 1977, Bandura, 1986, Bandura, 2021). According to regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001), some studies have explored the shaping of leadership role modelling in the work context, and the more the leader shows the promotion or prevention role modelling, the more likely the employee will imitate accordingly (Valle et al., 2019, Muavia et al., 2022). For example, Lockwood et al. (2002) showed that positive and negative role models improve individual motivation to achieve success and avoid failure respectively, in essence, these two motivations are important manifestations of promotion focus and prevention focus.

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that: employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused role modelling and employee job crafting, and employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused role modelling and employee job crafting. Therefore, this partially **supports** Brockner and Higgins (2001), Zheng, (2020) and Lei et al.(2010) because leaders can arouse the work regulatory focus of employees in their work, and then affect their subsequent attitudes and behaviours (see **Table 6-8**)

### **6.3.2 Employee work regulatory focus × leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing**

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research. On one hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused linguistic framing improves employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership promotion focused role modelling”, their “work regulatory focus promotion” improved, that is, the realization of their ideal selves, the need for growth and development, and the pursuit of positive results in their work, then they experienced positive “job crafting”.

*As evidence, an interviewee as a customer manager and financial manager of a Chinese state-owned bank was experiencing positive “job crafting”: she tended to “seek resources” and said:,,... I want to build a good relationship with my colleagues. If I am not on duty one day, I will call my colleagues to help me receive my customers. My colleagues may be all the same enthusiastic and the same service.” (respondent Z11)*



*And she tended to “reduce demands” and noted:,,... When encountering pressure, I may calm down and think about it, let my mind relax, which can be regarded as decompression for myself.” (respondent Z11)*

*When seeking the reasons why she actively “crafted job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader’s “promotion focused linguistic framing” behaviour, she explained:,,... my leader emphasized that we should treat customers as their parents, to provide good service. And when assigning tasks, my leader aimed at a general goal assigns tasks according to the nature of their posts and personal abilities, and then leads us to achieve goals together.” (respondent Z11)*

*Facing my leader’s “promotion focused linguistic framing” behaviour, she reacted by “work regulatory focus promotion”:,,... I think to work hard and pay more attention to team harmony, which is conducive to achieving work goals.” (respondent Z11)*

On the other hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused linguistic framing reduces employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership prevention focused role modelling”, their “work regulatory focus prevention” improved, that is, t employee self-realization, safety and security needs and avoidance of negative results in their work, then they experienced negative “job crafting”.

*As evidence, one respondent as a section chief of a state-owned enterprise mentioned in section 6.2 explained that he tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking resources”, “refuse (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refuse (or passively) reducing demands” (respondent L2)*

*When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader’s “prevention focused role modelling” behaviour.” (respondent L2)*

*Facing his leader’s “prevention focused linguistic framing” behaviour, he reacted by “work regulatory focus prevention”.:, When I am working, the first thing I think about is that I don’t want to be fined. So, first of all, I may think about reducing mistakes and not making mistakes. On the other hand, I think I may stop doing some things. For example, I avoid doing things that are risky but beneficial to the organization, so that I can minimize mistakes.” (respondent L2)*

**In literature**, the linguistic framing of leaders' regulatory focus also affects job crafting by affecting employee work regulatory focus (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011). When explaining a work or task to employees, if the leaders encourage employees to pursue their desired future by arousing employee higher values, using visualized words and creating attractive visions for employees, it will arouse employees' strong ideals and guide their promotion focused focus (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). For example, transformational leadership and charismatic leadership implement their influence by transmitting inspiring and visionary messages to their employees. These words and messages focus on their ideal self and motivate their promotion focus (Van Dijk et al., 2021, Kark and Van Dijk, 2007). Some studies on the information framing effect (Mora-Esquivel et al., 2022, Holler et al., 2008) show that the promotion focused information often emphasizes the aspects of "acquisition" or "no acquisition", so the presentation of "acquisition - no acquisition" of problem or task information by leaders may also guide the promotion focus of employees. Promotion focused individuals are mainly driven by internal motives such as growth, development, and self-realization

(Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). They seek to do something they want to do. Therefore, the attention to the growth and development needs of employees in leaders' words may also improve the promotion focus of employees (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). That is to say, leadership promotion focused linguistic framing will effectively improve the employee work promotion focus and work enthusiasm by enhancing the flexible thinking and risk-taking mentality, so that employee preference for initiative may be improved. (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011). At this point, the verbal expression of leaders, when explaining a work or task to their employees, focuses on arousing strong ideals, constructing a "gain, no-gain" situation for their employees and improving their growth needs. (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011)

When explaining a work or task to their employees, if the leaders convey what the employees need to do to make the tasks move in the right direction without deviation, it will make employees aware of their responsibilities, obligations or what they should do and guide their prevention focused focus. (Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011). For example, transactional or monitoring leaders pay more attention to reality rather than idealism, and order employees to complete the arranged and necessary tasks, which will eventually lead employee attention to their strong obligations to work, improve their vigilance and improve their prevention focus (Lei et al., 2010, Lei et al., 2011). The information of prevention focused is considered to emphasize "loss" or "no loss" (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, if the language description of leaders when explaining tasks to employees emphasizes "loss, no-loss", the way of

expression of this language will more likely improve the employee prevention focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011). Prevention focused individuals are mainly driven by external motives such as safety, security, and obligations (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Some of the tasks they do not because they want to do it, but because they must do it (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, leaders' words, showing concern for the safety and obligations of employees, may improve their prevention focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011). That is to say, leadership prevention focused linguistic framing will effectively improve the employee work prevention focus, make the employee more conservative, and then make the employees not show a good level of job crafting (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2011). At this point, the verbal expression of leaders, when explaining a work or task to their employees, focuses on arousing strong obligations, constructing a "loss no loss" situation for their employees and improving their safety needs (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Wei and Youmin, 2009a, Levin et al., 1998, Lei et al., 2011)

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above-detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused linguistic framing and employee job crafting, and employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused linguistic framing and employee job crafting. The present findings support, to some extent, Therefore, this study largely **supports** Brockner and Higgins (2001) and Zheng (2020). However, the differently used grounded theory qualitative research strategy in this study

contributes to the conclusion with more practical significance (see **Table 6-8**)

### **6.3.3 Employee work regulatory focus × leadership regulatory focused feedback**

There is evidence from the interviewees to the research. On one hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused feedback improves employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership promotion focused feedback”, their “work regulatory focus promotion” improved, that is, the realization of their ideal selves, the need for growth and development, and the pursuit of positive results in their work, then they experienced positive “job crafting” (respondent Z11)

*As evidence, the respondent from a Chinese high school mentioned in section 6.2, explained that she tended to “seek resources” and “seek challenges”. When seeking the reasons why she was willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of her leader’s “promotion focused feedback” behaviour.” (respondent G7)*

*And facing my leader’s “promotion focused feedback” behaviour, she noted: „... my leader points out my problems reasonably. I am particularly willing to accept them and have made positive improvements in future work. After that, I also reflect on whether there are similar problems.”*

On the other hand, **via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused feedback reduces employee job crafting.** Field respondents notably acknowledged that when facing the “leadership prevention focused feedback”, their “work regulatory focus prevention” improved, that is, employee self-realization, safety and security

needs and avoidance of negative results in their work, then they experienced negative “job crafting”.

*As evidence, one respondent as a sales director of a luxury sales China branch mentioned in section 6.2 explained that he tended to “refuse (or passively) seeking resources”, “refuse (or passively) seeking challenges” and “refuse (or passively) reducing demands”. When seeking the reasons why he was not willing to “craft a job”, the respondent further noted that, in a way, it was because of his leader’s “prevention focused role modelling” behaviour (respondent L13)*

*Facing his leader’s “prevention focused feedback” behaviour, he reacted by “work regulatory focus prevention”:,... I was unwilling to take risks to undertake tasks that I was not sure of. And since I was afraid to be criticized in public and making a fool of myself, I became very careful.” (respondent L13)*

**In literature**, regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001) provides some enlightenment for the discussion of the impact mechanism of leadership feedback on employee job crafting. First, leadership feedback can effectively guide employee work regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). When leaders show positive feedback efficacy and promotion focused feedback style, employees may be more sensitive to rewards (such as praise) caused by high performance and pay more attention to the pursuit of rewards or success, which results in the improvement of employee work promotion focus (Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). On the contrary, when leaders show negative feedback potency and prevention focused feedback style, employees may be more sensitive to the punishment (such as criticism) caused by low performance and pay more attention to the avoidance of punishment or failure, which results in the improvement of contextual prevention focus (Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi,

1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). Some studies have discussed the relationship between leadership feedback and employee initiative (Tang et al., 2021, Orpen and King, 1989, Hawes and Rich, 1998, Rathel et al., 2008, Kacmar et al., 1996). Some research conclusions in the field of pedagogy have indirectly supported this view (Kim and Kim, 2020, Orpen and King, 1989, Hawes and Rich, 1998, Rathel et al., 2008, Kacmar et al., 1996). Different leadership feedback styles may affect employee job crafting level by effectively improving employee situation regulatory focus (Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). Specifically, when leaders show their promotion focused feedback style to their employees, they will be able to effectively improve the employee work promotion focus, encourage the employee work enthusiasm, and enhance their flexible thinking and adventurous mentality (Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). Thus, employees tend to use proactive skills or strategies, thus showing a high level of job crafting. On the contrary, when leaders show their prevention focused feedback style to their employees, they will effectively improve the employee work prevention focus and make the employees more conservative (Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020, Kluger and DeNisi, 1996, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019). At this time, employees pay more attention to responsibility or job safety information, less attention to learning and improvement, and will not show a good job crafting level.

Thus, the present finding partially supports the earlier work of Brockner and Higgins (2001) and Zheng (2020), to a larger extent, as the present findings **suggest** that employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused

feedback and employee job crafting, and employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused feedback and employee job crafting (see Table 6-8)

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO INTEGRATE CONTEXTUAL FACTORS IN THE IMPACT PROCESS

### 6.4 Research objective 3 - related discussion

***Research objective3:** To find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting; to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively reduces employee job crafting.*

Based on the findings with primary data in the previous chapter, the author finds that within the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, employee job crafting responses to leadership behaviour may vary according to different contexts, such as professional characteristics and employee personal characteristics. These phenomena are related to context factors. And, in recent years, contextualization research has been paid more and more attention in the field of management (Filatotchev et al., 2022, Oc, 2018, Zheng, 2020). Contextualization refers to the constraints that affect the relationship between variables of organizational behaviour which makes the obtained theories more accurate and richer (Filatotchev et al., 2022, Lei et al., 2010). According to the above point of view, the author recommends bringing the mechanism model of leaders' influence on employee job crafting into the real situation, so that the research conclusions can be more accurate and have



practical guiding significance (Filatotchev et al., 2022, Oc, 2018, Zheng, 2020, Lei et al., 2010).

This research focuses on the following two types of organization-level context: work characteristics and organizational cultural atmosphere, and one individual-level situation: employee trait regulatory focus. This is traceable in the interview text and related literature (Park and Luo, 2001, Kim, 2021, Woo, 2020, Li et al., 2022a). To begin with, when analyzing the role of organization-level context in the process of leaders' influence on employee job crafting, researchers mainly focused on the discussion of organizational atmosphere (Park and Luo, 2001, Kim, 2021) and work characteristics (Woo, 2020, Li et al., 2022a). Based on the existing research and the suggestions of relevant theories, this study will focus on the following two types of organizational-level situations: work characteristics and organizational cultural atmosphere and discuss how they play a role in the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting (Park and Luo, 2001, Kim, 2021, Woo, 2020, Li et al., 2022a)

Moreover, regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) points out that the behaviour of an individual is affected by both its trait regulatory focus and work regulatory focus. Similarly, the impact of leadership behaviour on employees differs according to the different employee trait regulatory focus tendencies (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020). Previous studies have extensively discussed and tested the role of employee trait regulatory focus in the impact of leadership on employee work results (Hetland et al., 2018, González-Cruz et al., 2019). Therefore, when reviewing the role of leadership regulatory-focused behaviour on employee job crafting, employee trait regulatory focus is also a key individual-level contextual factor that cannot be ignored (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu

and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020)

#### **6.4.1** *Contextual impact of work complexity*

**There is evidence from the interviewees to the research. On one hand, the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting.** As the evidence detail clarified in 5.4.1, respondent W8, a project manager in a social work organization, and respondent R1, a lecturer in a Chinese public university, both show the process of employee job crafting improvement, and they both have a positive organizational transformational atmosphere, and they both show trait regulatory focus promotion type. However, since respondent W8, the project manager in a social work organization, has a higher work complexity, her job crafting is improved more obviously. In Table 6-1, respondent W8's and R1's job crafting improvement performance is shown. Compared with R1 without the "seeking resources" dimension of job crafting improvement, respondent W8 has a more comprehensive performance showing all of the 3 dimensions of job crafting improvement. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting improvement, respondent W8's number (6) is bigger than respondent R1's (4) And as to the total number of different references of dimensions of job crafting improvement, the respondent W8's number (12) is bigger than respondent R1's (6).

**Table 6-1 Comparison of the contextual effects of work complexity on respondents' job crafting improvement**

Dimensions of job crafting improvement	No. of different categories for W8	No. of references for W8	No. of different categories for R1	No. of references for R1
Seeking resources	3	7	2	2
Seeking challenges	2	3	0	0
Reducing demands	1	2	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

*Respondent W8 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion) ...I think I always pay more attention to what I want to do and what goals I want to achieve. Because it is impossible to completely avoid mistakes, no matter what I do, I will never avoid mistakes. Making mistakes and correcting them is a necessary process. I think it's not terrible to make mistakes, and it's more important to sum up from mistakes and make myself better.*

*(Higher organizational transformational atmosphere),... My work is summarized as community participation in action. The main contents include 1) communicating with the community government and finding their needs to adjust the community residents' conflicts; 2) continuously learning, reforming and innovating solutions to problems, 3) communicating with residents to solve conflicts; 4) Summarising and turning practical experience into theory. For example, I have our books. I need to keep the spirit of openness and innovation and continue to practice.*

*(Higher work complexity) ... At the same time, I need many skills in the whole process, including communication, implementation, design, research, empathy, etc. It is very important that I also need a little feeling of serving the masses. And if one*

*way cannot solve the problem, I need to constantly explore multiple paths to solve the problem. In addition, our time is relatively free, because I need to arrange time according to the project progress.*

*(Job crafting improvement) ...In terms of seeking resources: first, I may read more work-related books in my own time. Second, our leaders will give training and lectures to other social organizations and government departments. I seize every opportunity to carefully listen in and take notes. Third, because I am a person who asks questions when I don't know anything at work, I am very modest in asking my predecessors to help me find problems and ask them to answer my puzzles. I think it is mainly from these three aspects. In terms of seeking challenges, I feel that I am not limited to doing this, so I will keep learning and moving to a higher level. I am also preparing to take the postgraduate examination in this field, so the books I read are closely related to my field of work. I think the process of preparing for the exam is also a process of constantly learning knowledge in the field of work. At work, I am more practical. For the theory I lack, I mostly learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work. In terms of stress and strain relief (reducing demands), first, I often ask my colleagues for advice on practical difficulties at work. Second, I am a person who likes to share my good and bad emotions with others and talk to people close to me. I think it will be much better after I finish sharing. However, after sharing, I will continue to work hard, learn and solve problems.” (Respondent W8)*

*Respondent R1 noted:;,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion) ... I am more concerned about the goal to achieve, about my salary, and about earning this salary with a clear conscience.*

*(Higher organizational transformational atmosphere) ...A large part of my work includes scientific research, which requires a lot of creative and transformational ideas.*

*(Lower work complexity) ... My work content is relatively single, including three aspects: teaching, scientific research and meetings. The time is relatively fixed, and there are many regulations in my work.*

*(Job crafting improvement) ...If the task is not necessary, I may not do it. Because the monitor can represent the wishes of most students, I may not have unnecessary and excessive exchanges with students, but more exchanges with the monitor. This greatly improved my work efficiency. I will pay attention to establishing networks with leaders and colleagues so that I can get some useful information. I will try my best to reduce unnecessary competition so that I can relax and not be too nervous about my mental and physical health. If it is beneficial to me, I will fight for it. I don't like that kind of task that comes all of a sudden and may try to avoid that" (Respondent R1)*

On the other hand, the higher the work complexity, **the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting**. As the evidence detailed in 5.4.1, respondent L2, a section chief of a state-owned enterprise, and Respondent L6, a researcher in a Chinese research institution, both show the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have negative organizational transformational atmosphere, and they both show trait regulatory focus promotion type. However, since the respondent L2 has a higher work complexity, her job crafting is reduced more obviously. In Table 6-2, respondent L2's and L6's job crafting reduction performance is shown. Compared with L6 without the "refusing (or passively) seeking challenges" dimension of job crafting reduction, L2 has a more comprehensive performance showing all of the 3 dimensions of job crafting reduction. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent L2's number (5) is bigger than respondent L6's (4). As to the total number of different references of dimensions of job

crafting reduction, respondent L2's number (8) is bigger than respondent L6's (5). As to both the total number of different categories (initial codes) and the number of references, respondent W8's performance shows more than respondent L6's.

**Table 6-2 Comparison of the contextual effects of work complexity on respondents' job crafting reduction**

Dimensions of job crafting improvement	No. of different categories for L2	No. of references for L2	No. of different categories for L6	No. of references for L6
Refusing (or passively) seeking resources	3	5	2	3
Refusing (or passively) seeking challenges	1	1	0	0
Refusing (or passively) reducing demands	1	2	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

*Respondent L2 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...I think I am not a person who likes taking risks. I have few ideas in my work and am not particularly sensitive to changes. I have my ideas and views on work. The people and things around me have relatively little influence on me. I will not change too much.*

*(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our company is a state-owned enterprise as well as an old enterprise. This enterprise is now in the downward phase of the enterprise life cycle. I face few opportunities for innovation, mainly to complete the tasks of the superior according to the process.*

*(Higher work complexity) ... My work is very complicated. I need to constantly communicate with superiors and subordinates, and I need to have various business skills. The problems I face are also very complex. For example, I mainly manage*

*the safety problems of the production line, and I need to think about the prevention and response of production safety and quality problems in multiple ways.*

*(Job crafting reduction) ...These have been going on since I started working, but they are all small aspects. For example, state-owned enterprises still have requirements for training, and I have to participate in the training. For example, I have to attend some management-related training. There are many changes in personnel and leaders in our unit. I will report as required by leaders. Some leaders require that everything should be reported to them, and some leaders just give it to me directly for me to handle, and then report some major production changes to them. I feel that my communication with the leader is insufficient. Sometimes, when I complete a task, I rarely report to the leader actively, so the leader is not very clear about some situations. For the tasks assigned by the leaders, I have been used to finishing the tasks first if I can finish them. If I let my subordinates complete or share some of my work, I feel that my efficiency is very low, and I am not doing well. On the one hand, I don't think it's easy to communicate. On the other hand, I think they don't do well. I still have to improve the work they have finished. I think this is a disadvantage of my work as a manager. Our company's production technology has been relatively mature, and there are relatively few large process improvements, all of which are minor. What's more, I should analyze the technical conditions to be improved, and then standardize the improvement. The pressure can only be endured. No matter how heavy the task assigned by the leader is, I can only do it. There is no other choice. The staff loss in our enterprise is very serious, and there is a lot of backlog of work, so the tasks arranged by leaders can only be completed by working overtime. This is the state now (respondent L2)*

*Respondent L6 noted:;, ... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...I am probably more concerned about avoiding punishment.*

*(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our leaders only let us do the tasks they asked us to do. The working environment is very depressing, and they only provide resources for the work he asked for. I feel that we are all his tools, and we are almost becoming robots.*

*(Lower work complexity) ... Our task is relatively simple, mainly to do experiments, apply for projects, and then write articles.*

*(Job crafting reduction) ...My leader holds exchange meetings every week, hoping that we can exchange research views and experiences together. But we are not willing to attend that meeting. Our leaders will force each of us to ask him a question after asking everyone to say their views. Even though our research direction is different from his, we still have to ask. At the exchange meeting, he often says that he has no spare time to read the paper and that the study we read is his source of knowledge. When we make a presentation, he will absorb some knowledge that he has not seen. When we share, we don't necessarily explain to our colleagues, but we must explain to them. However my leader will not listen carefully, and he plays with their mobile phone when listening, thus ignoring our content. Then he may let us repeat what he missed. Maybe a meeting that didn't need a long time would take us two or three hours because of his neglect. Our research projects are arranged by my leader, and there is little time for other projects. If there are new projects, I may apply for them. But there is no like or dislike, what I only think is that these are just my task to do. My leader often assigns me a lot of tasks, and I have no time to do some extra work to make my work consistent with my preferences. I can't do it, because I don't have time.”*  
*(respondent L6)*

**In literature,** because work characteristics play an important role in shaping employee motivation and behaviour, differences in work characteristics are bound to affect employee responses to leadership behaviour (Abelha et al., 2018, Nosratabadi et al., 2020, Zheng, 2020).



Abelha et al. (2018) directly pointed out that work design has always been considered an important factor affecting employee intrinsic work motivation and initiative performance. Similarly, some scholars in the field of leadership research believe that it is necessary to introduce work characteristics factors (such as work characteristics model, job richness and work complexity) into leadership research, and thus deepen the understanding of the impact mechanism of leadership (Nosratabadi et al., 2020, Zheng, 2020). Some studies have examined the impact of the interaction between leadership and work characteristics on subordinates, specifically, work characteristics respectively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and subordinate organizational commitment (Nurjanah et al., 2020, Purwanto et al., 2021).

Among the numerous work characteristics factors, work complexity plays an important role in explaining how subordinates react to leadership behaviour (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Work complexity is characterized by a high degree of freedom, diversified skills, diversified results and diversified potential paths (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021). Based on this definition and the foregoing discussion, it is theoretically and logically appropriate to regard work complexity as a conditional factor to explain the relationship between leadership behaviour and subordinate job crafting (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010)

As an important organization-level context factor, work complexity plays an important role in the process: the leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). (1) When work complexity is high, employees will react more strongly to leadership promotion focused behaviour (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). The

process is clarified as follows. To begin with, what the leadership promotion focused behaviour conveys is the initiative work style of leadership and the constant pursuit of success (Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Moreover, when employees face more challenging and complex work, they are often accompanied by the need for high-level skills and multiple methods (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010). At this point, employees will be more sensitive to the leadership promotion focused behaviour, and their strong desire will also be inspired (Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Then, they will pay more attention to the emergence of positive results in their work, try to achieve the desired goal through some positive actions and show a high promotion focus on their work (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Finally, a high job crafting level is improved (2) On the contrary, when the work complexity is low, employee reaction to leadership promotion focused behaviour will be weakened (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). The reasons are as follows. Under this circumstance, employees only need to use conventional methods to complete the work, and there is no need for diversified methods and high-level skills (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010). So, they are not as sensitive to leadership promotion focused behaviour as when the work complexity is high (Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Thus, the role of leadership promotion focused behaviour in guiding employee promotion focus will be weakened, and ultimately its positive impact on job crafting will be weakened (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010)

Similarly, work complexity plays an important role in the process: leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces job crafting by guiding employee work regulatory focus prevention (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010).

(1) When the work complexity is high, subordinates also show a stronger reaction to leadership prevention focused behaviour (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). The process is clarified as follows. To begin with, leadership prevention focused behaviour conveys the principle of doing things cautiously to avoid mistakes (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Moreover, when employees face more challenging and complex work, they are often accompanied by higher potential risks of errors (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010). At this point, employees will also be more sensitive to leadership prevention focused behaviour, their safety needs will be more likely to be motivated (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Then, they will pay more attention to the prevention of negative results in work, try to avoid negative results through some prudent behaviours, and show a high prevention focus on their work (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Finally, a low job crafting level is led. On the contrary, when the work complexity is low, employee reaction to leadership prevention focused behaviour will be weakened. The reasons are as follows (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). In this situation, subordinates only need to use conventional methods to complete the work, which will not be accompanied by many potential risks of errors (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Lei et al., 2010). So, they are not as sensitive to leadership prevention focused behaviour as when the work complexity is high (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Thus, the leadership prevention focused behaviour will weaken its guiding effect on the subordinate's prevention focus, and ultimately weaken its negative impact on

the subordinate's job crafting (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020)

In addition, when the work complexity is high, the leadership regulatory focused behaviour has a stronger impact on subordinate job crafting (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). It's because of the reinforcement of employee work regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Meanwhile, when the work complexity is low, the leadership regulatory focused behaviour has a weaker impact on subordinate job crafting. It's because of the avianize of employee work regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020). Thus, **the moderation effect of work complexity in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on subordinate job crafting is achieved through employee work regulatory focus** (Vélez-Coto et al., 2021, Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010, Zheng, 2020).

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that: work complexity moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. That is, the higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting; the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting. **It suggests that** employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of work complexity on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. That is, employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the positive regulatory effect of work complexity on the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and job crafting; employee work regulatory focus prevention

mediates the positive regulatory effect of work complexity on the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and job crafting. Thus, overall, the findings **support** Zheng, (2020) and Lei et al.(2010), in that employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of work complexity on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behaviour and employee proactivity (see **Table 6-8**)

#### **6.4.2** *Contextual impact of organizational transformation atmosphere*

**There is evidence from the interviewees** to the research. On one hand, The higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting. As evidence, respondent W8, a project manager in a social work organization, and respondent Z11, a customer manager and financial manager of a Chinese state-owned bank, show the process of employee job crafting improvement, and they both have positive work complexity, and they are both trait regulatory focus promotion type. However, since respondent W8, the project manager in a social work organization, has a higher organizational transformational atmosphere, her job crafting is improved more obviously. In Table 6-3, respondent W8's and Z11's job crafting improvement performance is shown. Compared with Z11 without the "seeking resources" dimension of job crafting improvement, respondent W8 has a more comprehensive performance showing all the 3 dimensions of job crafting improvement. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting improvement, respondent W8's number (6) is bigger than respondent Z11's (2). As to the total number of different references of dimensions of job crafting improvement, respondent W8's number (12) is bigger than respondent Z11's (3).

**Table 6-3 Comparison of the contextual effects of the organizational transformational atmosphere on respondents' job crafting improvement**

Dimensions of job crafting improvement	No. of different categories for W8	No. of references for W8	No. of different categories for Z11	No. of references for Z11
Seeking resources	3	7	1	2
Seeking challenges	2	3	0	0
Reducing demands	1	2	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

*What respondent W8 noted is shown in 6.4.1.*

*Respondent Z11 noted that ,, (Trait regulatory focus promotion)...I am more concerned about the goal of our bank outlets to achieve, about my salary, and about earning this salary with a clear conscience.*

*(Higher work complexity) ... My work belongs to bank marketing, and it is also very complicated and requires a multi-path breakthrough. For example, I need to communicate well with my superiors and cooperate with colleagues in various functional positions, so that when I need to serve customers, they can make my customers feel warm; The most important thing is to meet the complex needs of customers with various service numbers. Of course, I also need various skills, such as financial management, bank settlement, etc.*

*(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our work is less revolutionary, first of all, because, in the bank, I need to comply with various regulations to regulate our behaviour, so that I can avoid risks.*

*(Job crafting improvement)...In my position, I need to have a good relationship with my colleagues and leaders. For example, if my customer comes*

*to the counter and the counter staff is unwilling to cooperate, my work will not go smoothly. I can't do all the business of our bank alone. I have to cooperate with my colleagues. If I am not on duty one day, I will call my colleagues to help me serve my customers. My colleagues are all the same enthusiastic and provide the same warm service. In short, as our leaders often say, we should treat customers as our parents so that we can provide good service.*

*... When encountering pressure, I will calm down and think about it, let my mind relax, which can be regarded as decompression for myself.*

*... If my colleagues or customers don't cooperate, I will calm down and think about it, and find the reason myself first (Respondent Z11)*

On the other hand, the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting. For instance, respondent Y12, a regional manager of insurance sales in an insurance company and respondent L2, a section chief of a state-owned enterprise showed the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have positive work complexity, and they are both trait regulatory focus prevention type. However, since Respondent Y12, the regional manager of insurance sales in an insurance company has a higher organizational transformational atmosphere, his job crafting is reduced less obviously. In Table 6-4, respondent Y12's and L2's job crafting reduction performance is shown. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent Y12's number (4) is smaller than respondent L2's number (5). As to the total number of references of dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent Y12's number(5) is smaller than respondent L2's number(8).

**Table 6-4 Comparison of the contextual effects of the organisational transformational atmosphere on respondents' job crafting reduction**

Dimensions of job crafting stimulation	Amount of different categories for Y12	Amount of references for Y12	Amount of different categories for L2	Amount of references for L2
Refusing (or passively) seeking resources	2	3	3	5
Refusing (or passively) seeking challenges	1	1	1	1
Refusing (or passively) reducing demands	1	1	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

*Respondent Y12 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...If the loss of a risk does not exceed my tolerance, I am willing to take the risk. For example, there may be problems with this decision, but I can bear the worst problem, and the return is relatively large. I am willing to take this risk. But the premise is that its gains are generally greater than its losses.*

*(Higher work complexity)... For example, I have completed my tasks for the whole year in this period, or I can even choose this month, this half month I can have a holiday, I can go to Europe to play, but I can't turn off my mobile phone while playing, I can't pay attention at any time, and I have to deal with anything remotely. Hong Kong's policies are very good. I have obtained a lot of qualification certificates, which I need or can use in our daily work.*

*(Higher organizational transformational atmosphere) ... Our industry needs to try a lot of changes, because the social environment is changing, and the nature of our work is to face risks. At the same time, both the company and the Hong Kong government have given us better support.*



*(Job crafting reduction) ...The entire Hong Kong Monetary Authority has its requirements for further education which I have to participate. I think the social relationship must be managed. I participated in some activities and met some excellent people. I don't like it, but I do it better than I do. These may be what I need to do but I don't want to do. The company requires us to do some extra things, which is our duty. I will present extreme situations and think about coping methods on this basis, which is very energy-consuming.*

*...When encountering some pressure, I will be very anxious, and I don't like to share it with others, because I don't like to show my weakness to others, so I always have a lot of things in my heart, which is very stressful. ”(Respondent Y12)*

*What Respondent L2 noted is shown in 6.4.1.*

**In literature**, the organizational atmosphere is widely defined as a shared perception of organizational members about formal and informal policies, practices and procedures that reflect organizational goals and their effective realization paths (Park and Luo, 2001, Kim, 2021, Woo, 2020, Li et al., 2022a). This assertion is confirmed by Kim (2021) that the organizational atmosphere reflects the expectations of the organization on employee behaviours and potential results related to these behaviours perceived by the members of the organization. Organizational atmosphere has always been regarded as an important explanatory factor of employee work results, especially the level of initiative activities (Jun, 2019, Kim and Wee, 2020, Park and Luo, 2001, Kim, 2021, Woo, 2020, Li et al., 2022a). Similarly, organizational atmosphere, as one of the important organization-level contextual factors related to leadership activities, its differences in characteristics are bound to affect employee responses to leadership behaviour (Kim and Wee, 2020). Some studies have explored and verified the interaction between leadership behaviour and organizational atmosphere on employee attitudes and behaviours (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020).

Among many organizational atmosphere factors, transformational atmosphere is the most representative and inclusive factor (Smuts and Smith, 2021), and it is closely related to employee job crafting (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Organizational transformational atmosphere performance includes the organization's willingness to experiment with transformational ideas, support for employee transformational work, tolerance for employee diversity, rewards for transformational performance, and providing resources for the realization of transformational work or tasks (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Based on this and the previous discussion, it is theoretically and logically appropriate to regard the transformation atmosphere as the contextual factor in the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010)

A critical look at the findings provided by field interviewees shows that when the organizational transformation atmosphere is strong, the employee reaction to the leadership promotion focused behaviour will be enhanced (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). First, a transformational atmosphere encourages employees to take risks and face uncertainty directly. At the same time, it improves the need for employee growth and self-realization (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). This is in essence consistent with the content reflected in the work regulatory focus promotion (Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Under such an organizational atmosphere, employees will naturally be more receptive to leadership promotion focused behaviour and make more positive responses (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Secondly, the transformational atmosphere promotes the generation of employee transformational thinking (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Because the leadership promotion focused behaviour conveys the transformational way leaders work, and leaders' ideal vision and continuous pursuit of success (Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al.,

2010). And transformational atmosphere encourages employees to think freely, communicate their ideas and views more openly with others, and therefore are more willing to share knowledge and transformational ideas with others (Smuts and Smith, 2021). Thus, employees have more opportunities to explore initiative ideas in their work and the sensitivity to leadership promotion focused behaviour is naturally strengthened (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). To sum up, the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee work regulatory focus promotion depends on the organizational transformation atmosphere level (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). In an organization with a strong transformation atmosphere, employees will have a more positive response to the leadership promotion focused behaviour (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Under the guidance of the leadership, their strong desire will be better inspired, they will pay more attention to the emergence of positive results in their work and strive to achieve the desired goals through some positive actions, showing a high level of work regulatory focus promotion in their work (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Finally, it leads to a high level of job crafting (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). On the contrary, when the transformational atmosphere in the organization is weak, the employee reaction to the leadership promotion focused behaviour will weaken (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Then, the leadership promotion focused behaviour's guiding role in employee work regulatory focus promotion will also weaken, and ultimately weaken its positive impact on employee job crafting (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010)

Parallely, according to interviewees' responses, the organizational transformation atmosphere weakens the effect that the leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces job crafting by guiding employee work regulatory focus prevention (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). It weakens employee perception of leadership prevention focused behaviour, which in turn affects employee work regulatory focus prevention and even job crafting levels (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Leadership prevention focused behaviour conveys to employees the principle of being cautious to avoid mistakes, a strong sense of responsibility and obligation in work, and concern for risks and losses (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). The transformational atmosphere makes employees feel the organization's expectations and support for their risk-taking behaviour, promotional goal orientation, and initiative behaviours (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). This kind of expectation and support will certainly offset the impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). In organizations with a lower transformational atmosphere, the impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour is not constrained too much, because there is no significant conflict between leadership guidance to employees and perceived organizational expectations (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). To sum up, the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee work regulatory focus prevention is restricted by organizational transformation atmosphere (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). In an organization with a strong transformational atmosphere, employees will have fewer sensitive responses to leaders' prevention focused behaviour (Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al.,

2010). And leadership will be less motivated by employee strong responsibilities and obligations (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Thus, leaders' prevention focused behaviour will also have less guidance to employee work regulatory focus prevention. Finally, its negative impact on employee job crafting will eventually be weakened (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010)

In addition, when the organizational transformation atmosphere is high, on the one side, the positive impact of leadership promotion focused behaviour on subordinate job crafting is enhanced, which is because of the enhancement of employee work regulatory focus promotion; on the other side, the negative impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour on subordinate job crafting is weakened, which is because of the weakening of employee work regulatory focus prevention (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010). Thus, the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on subordinate job crafting is achieved through employee work regulatory focus (Brockner and Higgins,1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Smuts and Smith, 2021, Lei et al., 2010)

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that: organizational atmosphere moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. That is, the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting, the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting. **It suggests that** employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere on the relationship

between leaders' regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. That is, employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the positive regulation of transformational atmosphere on the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and job crafting; employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the negative regulatory effect of the transformational atmosphere on the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and job crafting. Interestingly, in research related to proactivity, scholars have also analyzed organizational structure as an embedded context of employee proactivity explanatory models, but such literature is uncommon (Jingzhao et al., 2012, Jung et al., 2008). And in job crafting research, it's rare. Hence, this finding is a **new development** in job crafting research. This exploratory finding for the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere has laid the foundation for job crafting research development (see Table 6-8)

#### **6.4.3** *Contextual impact of employee trait regulatory focus*

**In the field**, the impact of differences in employee trait regulatory focus on the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting is observed. On one side, during the process of employee job crafting improvement where other organization-level context factors are also similar, compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is more obvious. That is, **compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement impact of leadership promotion focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger.**

For example, respondent W8 and Respondent X16, are both a project manager in a social work organization. They both show the process of

employee job crafting improvement, and they both have positive work complexity and an organizational transformational atmosphere. However, respondent W8 and respondent X16 are separate trait regulatory focus promotion and prevention types, and respondent W8's job crafting is improved more obviously. In Table 6-5, respondent W8's and respondent X16's job crafting improvement performance are shown. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting improvement, respondent W8's number (6) is bigger than respondent X16's (4). And as the total number of different references of dimensions of job crafting improvement, content W8's number (12) is bigger than respondent X16's (4).

**Table 6-5 Comparison of the contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus on respondents' job crafting improvement**

Dimensions of job crafting improvement	No. of different categories for W8	No. of references for W8	No. of different categories for X16	No. of references for X16
Seeking resources	3	7	2	2
Seeking challenges	2	3	1	1
Reducing demands	1	2	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2022

*What Respondent W8 noted is shown in 6.4.1.*

*Respondent X16 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention) ...I am more concerned about preventing mistakes. I'm afraid to be criticized in public I will be very careful because I am afraid of making a fool of myself, and then try to avoid communicating with leaders.*

*(Job crafting improvement) ... I am more concerned about preventing mistakes. And I don't like to show my weakness to others. So, I may communicate with leaders and colleagues, but I often go after I have thought about it. I usually read a lot of relevant books to reduce the chance of making mistakes. There are many opportunities in my work, but I often participate in some of my own more confident work cautiously and selectively. When I am under pressure, I will not share all of them with my family, friends, or colleagues, because I still hope not to show my weaknesses to others. " (Respondent X16)*

On the other side, during the process of employee job crafting reduction where other organization-level context factors are also similar, compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is less obvious. That is, **compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.**

For example, both respondent K10 and respondent Y5 show the process of employee job crafting reduction, and they both have higher work complexity and organizational lower transformational atmosphere. However, respondent K10 and respondent Y5 are separate trait regulatory focus promotion and prevention types, and respondent K10's job crafting is reduced less obviously. In Table 6-6, respondent K10's and respondent Y5's job crafting reduction performance are shown. Compared with Y5 with all the 3 dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent Y12 shows only 1 dimension of job crafting reduction. As to the total number of different categories (initial codes) of dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent K10's number (3) is smaller than respondent Y5's (5). And as to the total



number of different references of dimensions of job crafting reduction, respondent K10's number (2) is smaller than respondent Y5's (6).

**Table 6-6 Comparison of the contextual effects of employee trait regulatory focus on respondents' job crafting reduction**

Dimensions of job crafting improvement	No. of different categories for K10	No. of references for K10	No. of different categories for Y5	No. of references for Y5
Seeking resources	3	2	3	4
Seeking challenges	0	0	1	1
Reducing demands	0	0	1	1
Total	3	2	5	6

Source: Drawn from fieldwork,2023

*Respondent K10 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus promotion)...Later, I simply lowered my expectations and thought that my work was a first draft, which was used to be criticized and modified by my leader. Many people will feel aggrieved by criticism, but I will not because I know what I am doing, and I have my own goals in my work.*

*(Higher work complexity) ... My work in the financial industry belongs to a relatively advanced category, and my job requires dealing with different units and people. I may have a lot of work at the same time, and my work is a continuous process of ending and starting. My job requires fast learning speed, and it requires me to study 70% or 80% in a very short period.*

*(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ... My job has less willingness to experiment with transformational ideas, it's a responsibility assigned to me by law, and many of my actions are administrative, but they are quite serious. My job itself has little room for level changes and is relatively stable. Stability means that there is not much change either up or down.*

*(Job crafting reduction) ...My job requires that I have strong learning ability and fast learning speed. That is, the work requires me to understand the documents in a very short time. In my work, I seldom communicate with leaders and colleagues, but mostly ask questions or for work support (Respondent K10)*

*Respondent Y5 noted :,... (Trait regulatory focus prevention)...I am probably more concerned about avoiding punishment. I don't like to be criticized in any way. I have my ideas and views on work. The people and things around me have relatively little influence on me. I will not change too much.*

*(Higher work complexity)... I am an ultrasound doctor, and my job is quite complex, with a lot of content, such as doing electrocardiograms, ultrasound, Doppler, and examining patients. During this process, I also need to pay attention to the way of communication. For example, communicating with patients can be quite troublesome, and poor communication can easily lead to problems.*

*(Lower organizational transformational atmosphere) ...Due to the limitations of the nature of my job as a doctor, I need to be cautious in my work, not having too many variations, and generally not being allowed to have too many transformational ideas.*

*(Job crafting reduction) ...In my department, I often have the opportunity to go to a better hospital for further study. The hospital stipulates that in each department, leaders must regularly carry out some learning and training activities, and everyone must attend. We must participate in training regularly, otherwise, we are not qualified for the position of ultrasound physician. I will improve my ability in various ways, otherwise, when I encounter some difficult and miscellaneous diseases, I cannot complete the basic diagnosis. When I encounter problems that I do not know, I will go to communicate with colleagues. If colleagues do not know, I will go to the leader for the answer. I will try my best to get the first batch to participate in the training. Because if I don't participate in the*

*first training, I have to ask my colleagues who participated in the first training to teach me, but sometimes they don't tell me (Respondent Y5)*

**In literature,** better matching of trait regulatory focus and situation regulatory focus will improve employees' work motivation, which means that the consistency of trait regulatory focus and situation regulatory focus will promote better work performance (Shah et al., 1998, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Researchers find that in the context of prevention orientation, employee trait regulatory focus prevention was positively correlated with performance, while in the context of promotion orientation, it was negatively correlated (Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Kark and Van Dijk, 2019, Brockner and Higgins, 1997, Scholer et al., 2019, Lei et al., 2010). Therefore, this study points out that, employee work regulatory focus (inspired by leadership regulatory focused behaviour) and employee trait regulatory focus jointly impact the job crafting level (Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Kark and Van Dijk, 2019). Therefore, the author will discuss in detail the moderation role of employee trait regulatory focus in the relationship between employee work regulatory focus (inspired by the leadership regulatory focused behaviour) and job crafting (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020)

The foregoing discussion has analyzed the mediation role of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting, which mainly focus on the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on subordinate job crafting by improving employee work regulatory focus, without considering the possible impact of differences in subordinate trait regulatory focus (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020,

Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020). A series of studies on the impact of leaders on their subordinates' attitudes and behaviours have shown that differences in subordinates' traits can affect their reactions to the same leadership style or behaviour (Flavián et al., 2022, Goute et al., 2021). Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) also points out that the behaviour of an individual is affected by both its trait regulatory focus and situation regulatory focus (Scholer et al., 2019). Some studies have verified that the interaction between the trait regulatory focus and the situation regulatory focus can impact the individual's attitude or behaviour (Lockwood et al., 2002, Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020).

Based on the above analysis, this study believes that employee work regulatory focus (inspired by the leadership regulatory focused behaviour) and employee trait regulatory focus jointly impact the level of job crafting in their work or tasks, that is, employee trait regulatory focus moderates the impact of work regulatory focus on job crafting (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020). Specifically, the more subordinates tend to trait regulatory focus promotion, the stronger the positive impact of employee work regulatory focus promotion (inspired by the leadership promotion focused behaviour) on employee job crafting. On the contrary, the more subordinates tend to trait regulatory focus prevention, the weaker the negative impact of employee work regulatory focus prevention (inspired by leadership prevention focused behaviour) on employee job crafting (Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Yufan and Lei, 2015, Zheng, 2020, Shang et al., 2023)

Thus, what emerges from the analysis and the above detailed discussion of the findings **suggests** that employee trait regulatory focus moderates the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus on the relationship

between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and job crafting. That is, compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement impact of leadership promotion focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger; compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker. Hence, the present findings largely **support** Zheng, 2020 and Shang et al., 2023, who explore the mediating role of work regulatory focus and the moderating role of trait regulatory focus. However, Shang et al.(2023) focus on the impact of stressors on job crafting, Zheng, 2020 and Shang et al. only use the quantitative method, but this study uses the qualitative method and builds a more systematic 2L (2-line) model of the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting, this develops the moderator from fieldwork interview which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance (see **Table 6-8**)

## **6.5 Identifying and characterizing the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting: final conceptual model and discussion**

### **6.5.1 *Final conceptual model***

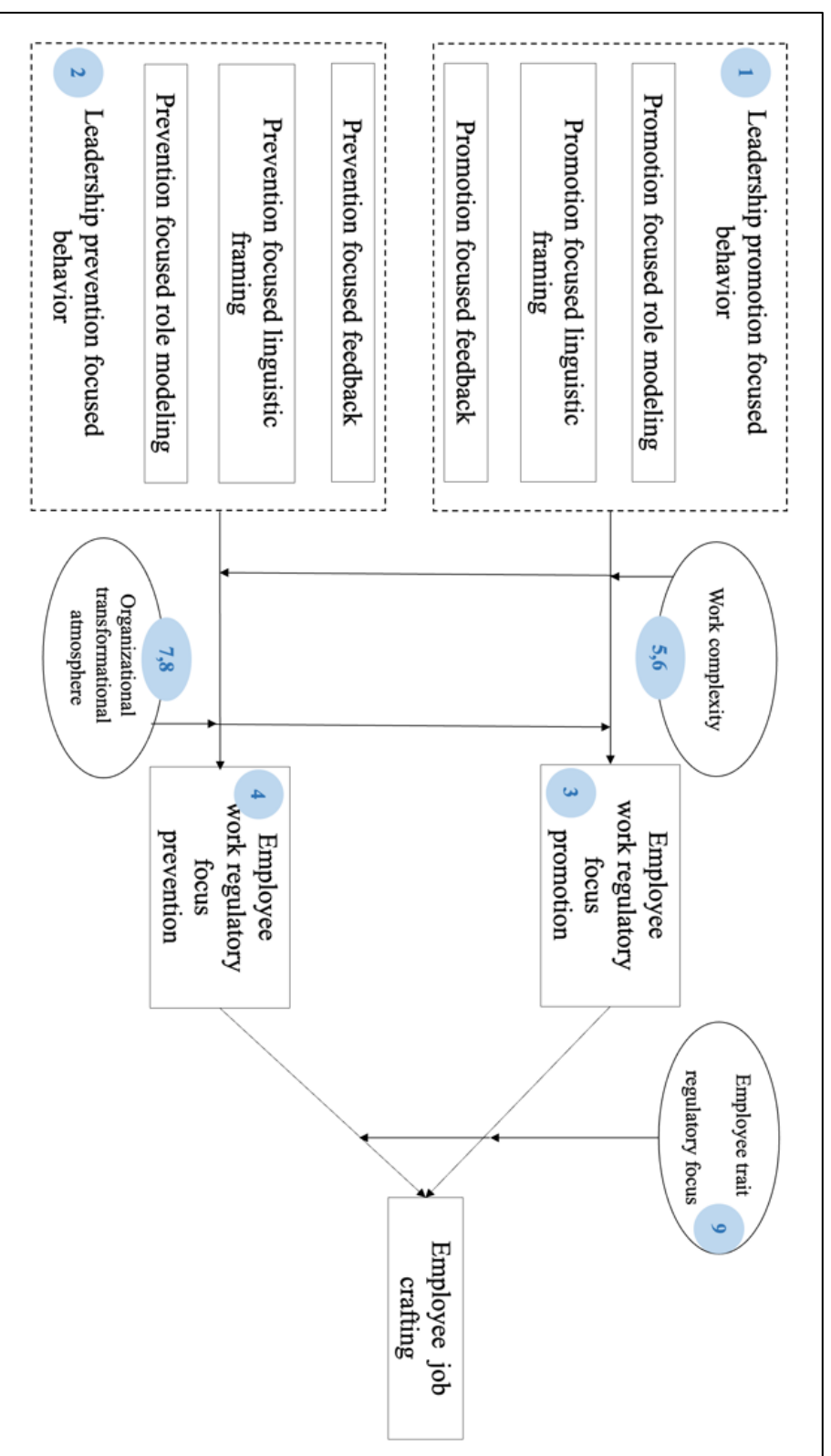
***Research aim:** To form a management conceptual model to systematically characterize the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting.*

Thus, following grounded theory research strategy to **integrate primary data, themes presented in the data(researcher's understanding) and theoretical discussion discussed in 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 (predecessors' theories), the final conceptual model of this study is concluded** in Figure 6-1, and the aligned conclusions which are discussed in 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 are

summarized in the conclusions based on the stereoscopic finding discussion and theoretical literature confirmation which lead to every research objective achievements are summarized in Table 6-7.

Specifically, first, the daily leadership behaviour can have an impact on employee job crafting: leadership promotion focused behaviour can effectively improve the level of employee job crafting, and leadership prevention focused behaviour can reduce the production of employee job crafting. Second, via improving employee work regulatory focus do leadership regulatory focused behaviours impact employee job crafting: via improving employee work regulatory focus promotion, leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting; via improving employee work regulatory focus prevention, leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. Finally, the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting is also affected by such situations as work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere, and employee trait regulatory focus. These related contextual factors, together with leadership behaviour, determine the performance of employee job crafting.

Figure 6–1 2L (2-line) model of the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting



Main sources: Developed from Zheng, 2020, Chen and Tang, 2022, Scholer et al., 2019, Michaelsen and Esch, 2021, Schleu and Hüffmeier, 2021, Gottfredson and Reina, 2020, Filatotchev et al., 2022, Abelha et al., 2018, Nosratabadi et al., 2020, Purwanto et al., 2021, Véléz-Coto et al., 2021, Sm. ts and Smith, 2021, Bandura, 2021, Ajjawi et al., 2021, Sleiman et al., 2020

Note: the number in the figure is aligned with the conclusion number in Table 6-7.

**Table 6-7 Summary of conclusions aligned with research objectives**

<p><b>Research objective1:</b> To summarize the leadership behavior related concepts which can effectively impact employee job crafting. That is, to summarize the leadership behavior related concepts which can effectively <b>improve</b> employee job crafting; to summarize the leadership behavior related concepts which can effectively <b>reduce</b> employee job crafting.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion 1:</b> Leadership promotion focused behavior improves employee job crafting:  (a) Leadership promotion focused role modeling, (b) leadership promotion focused linguistic framing, and (c) leadership promotion focused feedback improve employee job crafting.</p> <p><b>Conclusion 2:</b> Leadership prevention focused behavior reduces employee job crafting:  (a) Leadership prevention focused role modeling, (b) leadership prevention focused linguistic framing, and (c) leadership prevention focused feedback reduce employee job crafting.</p>
<p><b>Research objective2:</b> To reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behavior effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behavior effectively <b>improves</b> employee job crafting; to reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behavior effectively <b>reduces</b> employee job crafting.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion 3:</b> Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting:  (a) Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused role modeling and employee job crafting.  (b) Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between Leadership promotion focused linguistic framing and employee job crafting.  (c) Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between Leadership promotion focused feedback and employee job crafting.</p> <p><b>Conclusion 4:</b> Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting:  (a) Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused role modeling and employee job crafting.  (b) Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between Leadership prevention focused linguistic framing and employee job crafting.  (c) Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between Leadership prevention focused feedback and employee job crafting.</p>
<p><b>Research objective3:</b> To find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behavior effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behavior effectively <b>improves</b> employee job crafting; to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behavior effectively <b>reduces</b> employee job crafting.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion 5:</b> Work characteristics moderate the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behavior and employee job crafting:  (a) The higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.  (b) The higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between</p>



leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.

**Conclusion 6:** Employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of work complexity on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behavior and employee job crafting:

(a) Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the positive regulatory effect of work complexity on the relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and job crafting.

(b) Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the positive regulatory effect of work complexity on the relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and job crafting.

**Conclusion 7:** Organizational atmosphere moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behavior and employee job crafting:

(a) The higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting.

(b) The higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting.

**Conclusion 8:** Employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behavior and employee job crafting:

(a) Employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the positive regulation of transformational atmosphere on the relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and job crafting.

(b) Employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the negative regulatory effect of transformational atmosphere on the relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and job crafting.

**Conclusion 9:** Employee trait regulatory focus moderates the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus on the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behavior and job crafting:

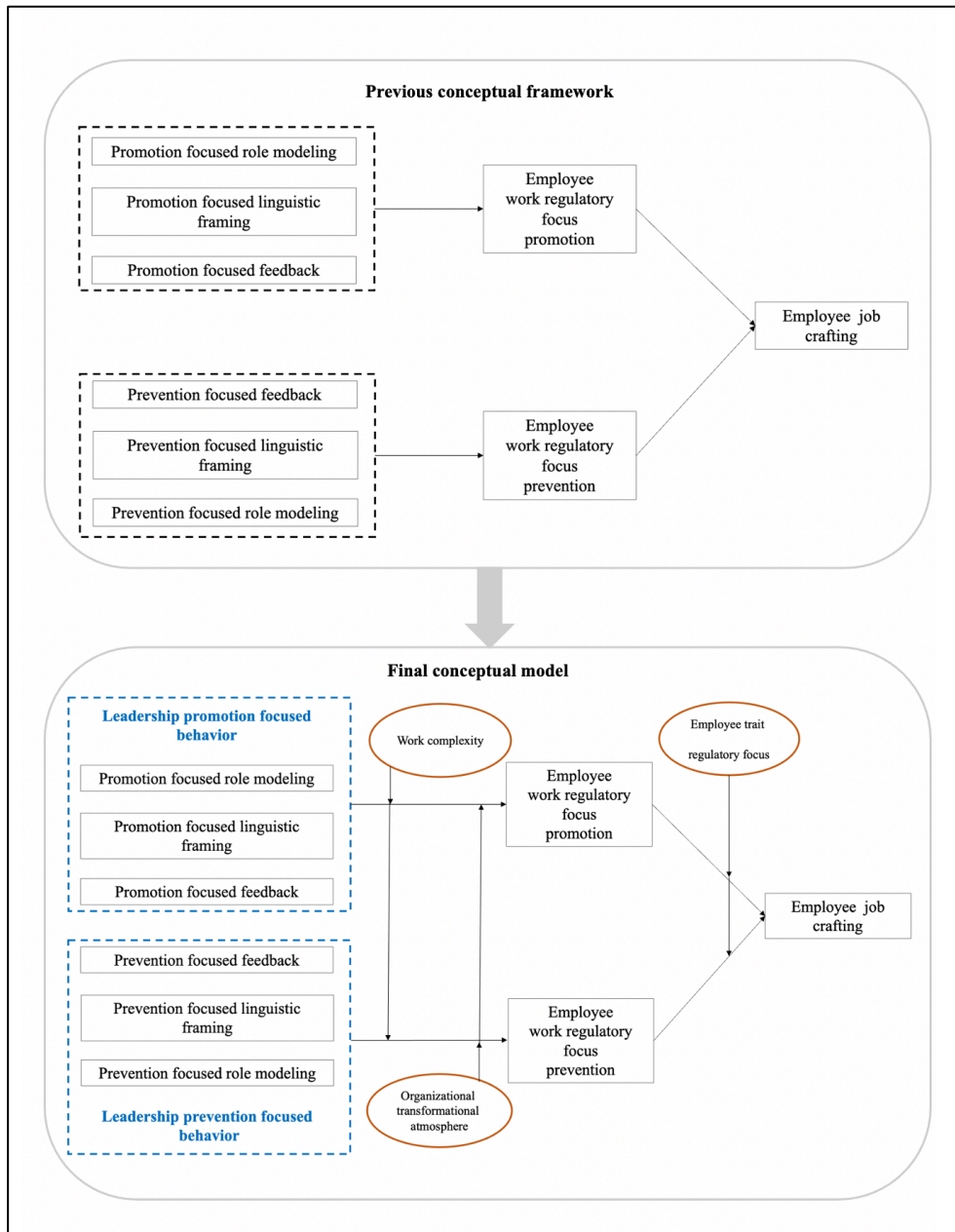
(a) Compared with the employees with the portrait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with work regulatory focus promotion is stronger.

(b) Compared with the employees with portrait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behavior and employee job crafting for employees with work regulatory focus promotion is weaker.

### **6.5.2** *Identifying differences between the final conceptual model and the previous conceptual framework*

With data collected having informed and changed the previous conceptual framework, the current conceptual model makes contributions in the following aspects:

**Figure 6–2 Changes from the previous conceptual framework to the final conceptual model**



Source: developed from Figure 3–4 and Figure 6-1.

**In the current conceptual model, the data collected has informed the previous conceptual framework in the following two ways.**

Firstly, the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting is verified. It is argued that leadership promotion focused behaviour improves employee job crafting. Field respondents notably showing job crafting improvement acknowledged their leadership

promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, or feedback. For example, a respondent as a vice principal in a Chinese high school who showed job crafting improvement explained that her leader had positive feedback and was also very cautious when making suggestions and would not criticize her. Instead, the leader might analyze the problems reasonably and put forward suggestions. Also, her leader might not be very forceful and will not take the form of criticism but will take the facts as the basis when giving feedback and when following up the improvement in the later stage of the error, her leader would not be very strong. He could tell her to advance and solve the problem step by step. By comparison, it's opined that leadership prevention focused behaviour reduces employee job crafting. Field respondents showing job crafting reduction insisted their leadership prevention focused on role modelling, linguistic framing, or feedback. For instance, a sales director of a luxury sales China branch in a job crafting reduction situation noted that his leaders rarely took risks to do projects they had never tried, were cautious in doing things, were afraid of making mistakes in doing things and generally followed the company's procedures in doing things. The respondent further noted that his leader generally stressed that their subordinates should not make mistakes when arranging tasks, and when arranging tasks, his leader emphasised the negative impact of task failure on the company.

Secondly, the impact mechanism of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting is verified. It is argued that leadership regulatory focused behaviour impacts employee job crafting by improving employee work regulatory focus. Compared with the existing studies that only analyze the mechanism of leadership impacting employee job crafting from the perspective of positive promotion, this study systematically analyzes the two-line mechanism of leadership improvement and reduction impact on employee job crafting based on regulatory focus theory, thus further opening

the "black box" between leadership and employee job crafting. For instance, a respondent in a design director of a Chinese design company who is experiencing job crafting improvement explained that facing his leadership regularly promotion focused behaviours, he did not worry about the risk of failure and tried his best to do his job well. He noted that it must be risky to join his ideas, but because his leadership behaviours were nice, he didn't deliberately consider some risks. And he thought his leaders pointed out his problems reasonably. He was particularly willing to accept the suggestions and has made positive improvements in future work.

**Meanwhile, the data collected has changed the previous conceptual framework in the following two ways.**

The changes from the previous conceptual framework to the final conceptual model are shown in Figure 6–2. First, this study raises the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour" from the perspective of regulatory focus theory, which enriches the existing research on leadership behaviour and provides theoretical support for subsequent relevant empirical research. In this point, places where the current 2L conceptual model has changed the previous one are shown in the blue boxes in Figure 6–2.

Second, there is evidence from the interviewees to the research that it's essential to integrate contextual factors in the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting. This current model theoretically integrates the "mediated modelling effect" of organization-level context (including work characteristics and organizational atmosphere) and the "moderated mediation effect" of individual-level context (employee trait regulatory focus). This enriches and deepens the research on context related to " leadership behaviour -job crafting". Specifically, the contextual effects of work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere and employee trait regulatory focus on the impact of leadership behaviour on

employee job crafting support the following suggestions (1) The higher the work complexity, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting; the higher the work complexity, the stronger the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting (2) The higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the stronger the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting; the higher the organizational transformation atmosphere, the weaker the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting (3) Compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger; compared with the employees with trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker. In this point, places where the current 2L conceptual model has changed the previous one are shown in the red circles in Figure 6–2.

### ***6.5.3 Identifying differences between present findings and past research studies***

Regulatory focus theory has made an important contribution to understanding, categorizing, and explaining the impact of leadership on employee behaviour (Zheng, 2020, Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Hetland et al., 2018, Kark et al. 2018, Neubert et al. 2008). The key elements of regulatory focus theory involve a two-line perspective of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction. The prior literature, though mostly informs fragmented perspectives on the mechanism by which leaders implement influence by improving the employee work regulatory focus and

seldom emphasizes the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership on employee job crafting from a systematic and holistic perspective, suggests that employment of regulatory focus theory is to be encouraged in the research on the impact of leadership on employee behaviour.

Table 6-8 records the differences and similarities between selected key authors and our findings. Gaps remain. It is clear then, that there are puzzles yet to be solved and this study has pointed out where those puzzles lie. It has been shown that these studies offer new insights that are missed or misread otherwise, which lays the foundation for future direction suggestions.

On the one side, the gaps appear in the form of methodology. **First, exploratory grounded theory research is necessary at the embryonic stage of a research field.** Via reviewing literature, the author found that the research on the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting is sprouting, but the analyzed leadership behaviour dimension is single-dimension but not systematical-regarded (Research gap1), the analyzing perspective is one side of positivity/improvement but not two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (Research gap2), and the discussion of impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and not sufficient (Research gap3). Thus, it's needed to conduct exploratory grounded theory research to build a research framework. **Second, selected related research is mainly employing quantitative methods and literature research.** Scientific research needs to be gradually promoted. Thus, **in future,** researchers could design questionnaires that analyse leadership regulatory focused behaviour from an integrated or systematic perspective and develop a leadership regulatory focused behaviour scale, based on the 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”. In **future,** researchers could consider conducting large-scale

empirical tests on the overall model of this study, the 2L (2-line) model of the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting, thus deepening the testing of the research results of this paper.

On the other side, the gaps appear in the content. First, **some previous findings contradict those of this study**. For instance, Xiangfen et al. (2016) conclude that leadership prevention focus has no influence on proactivity, but this study suggests that leadership prevention focus reduces employee proactivity. However, the outcomes of leadership regulatory focused behaviour and different research methods may contribute to the differences. For instance, Xiangfen et al. (2016) take creativity as the outcome variable and use a quantitative method, while this study takes employee job crafting as the outcome variable and uses a qualitative method. Second, **some previous findings support those of this study, but some core variables are different**. For instance, Xiangfen et al. (2016) and Shang et al.(2023) partially support this study findings, but Xiangfen et al. take creativity as outcome variable and examine the role of leadership regulatory focus behaviour on employee creativity, and Shang et al.(2023) focus on stressors as antecedent variable and test the role of stressors on employee job crafting, while this study research on the impact of leadership regulatory focus behaviour on employee job crafting. Thus, **in future**, some large-scale empirical tests in the future based on this study's outcomes may enhance the research contribution. Moreover, introducing more interesting variables, such as mediation variables and moderation variables, into this study model is inspired and encouraged.

**Table 6-8 Identifying differences between present and past research studies and findings**

Author(s) (year)	Employed theory/ method	Past research findings	Present study findings	Brief explanation
Zheng(2020)	Social cognition theory, regulatory focus theory/quantitative study	Work regulatory focus mediates the relationship between perceived leader regulatory-focused modeling and job crafting; work complexity moderates the relationship between perceived leader regulatory-focused modeling and job crafting; work regulatory focus mediates the moderating relationship among perceived leader regulatory/focused modeling, work complexity and job crafting. The author discussed implications of these results for research and practice.	Leadership promotion/prevention focused behavior improves/reduces employee job crafting.	Zheng(2020) only focuses on the impact of leadership regulatory focused modeling, but this study develops 3d×2l stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behavior” including 3 dimensions: modeling, feedback and linguistic framing and examines the impact of leadership regulatory focused behavior. Zheng(2020) only uses quantitative method, but this study uses qualitative method and built a more systematic 2l (2–line) model of impact of leadership regulatory focused behavior on employee job crafting. This study develop the moderator from field work interview which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance.
Bakker et al. (2016)	Literature discussion	Transformational leadership is positively related to job crafting of	Leadership promotion/prevention	Both highlight the role of leader behaviors in the process of employee job crafting.



		employees, and empowering leadership is a strong predictor of employee proactive behavior such as job crafting.	focused behavior improves/reduces employee job crafting.	Bakker et al. (2016) only conduct literature discussion, but this study uses qualitative method. Bakker et al. (2016) only expounds the role of leadership on employee job crafting from the positive/improving perspective, but this study uses regulatory focus theory as theory scope and analyze the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement/promotion and negativity/reduction/prevention.
Xiangfen et al. (2016)	Regulatory focus theory/quantitative study	The influence of leadership regulatory focus on the innovation and organizational commitment of subordinates	Leadership promotion focused role modeling impact employee job crafting.	Both define the leadership behavior(role modeling) as promotion type and prevention type. Both focus on the role of leadership regulatory focus behavior on employee proactivity. Xiangfen et al. (2016) concludes that leadership prevention focus has no influence on proactivity, but this study concludes that leadership prevention focus reduce employee proactivity. The different outcomes of leadership regulatory focused behavior and different research method may contribute to the differences. thus some large-scale empirical tests in the future based on this study outcomes may enhance the research contribution.
Yufan and lei (2015b)	Regulatory focus theory/quantitative study	Construct leadership regulatory focused behaviour concept with literature discussion, and examines and discusses the validity and importance of concept.	Constructs leadership regulatory focused behaviour concept with grounded theory qualitative research strategy.	Both construct leadership regulatory focused behaviour concept. Yufan and lei (2015b) uses literature discussion and quantitative examination, but this study uses grounded theory qualitative research strategy and develops 3d×2l stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behavior" which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance.

<p>Simmons and ren (2009)</p>	<p>Regulatory focus theory/ quantitative study</p>	<p>The influence of goal orientation and risk on creativity. Results showed a positive relationship between risk and creativity. The findings also supported the idea that individuals low in avoid orientation cultivate more creative outputs under high rather than low risk conditions.</p>	<p>Leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing impacts employee job crafting.</p>	<p>Both focus on the role of leadership framing on employee proactivity, and examine the negative impact of avoid orientation/prevention focused framing.</p> <p>Simmons and ren (2009) explore the moderation role of goal orientation via quantitative method, this study explore the direct impact of linguistic framing via qualitative method.</p>
<p>Orpen and king (1989)</p>	<p>Experimental study</p>	<p>The effects of valence of feedback, credibility of superior, and expertise of superior on subordinates' reactions to superior and effort intentions were examined in a 2 × 2 × 2 experimental study in which 120 management students participated. A significant main effect was found for feedback but not for credibility or expertise. It is argued that subordinates' reactions to feedback from superiors may sometimes be relatively unaffected by the perceived credibility or expertise of the superior.</p>	<p>Leadership regulatory focused linguistic framing impact employee job crafting.</p>	<p>Both focus on the role of leadership framing on employee proactivity.</p> <p>Both analyze the impact from a two-side perspective of positive/improvement/promotion and negativity/reduction/prevention.</p> <p>Orpen and king (1989) explores the impact via quantitative experimental method, this study explore the direct impact of feedback via qualitative method in the regulatory focus theory as theory scope for more practical significance.</p>
<p>Hawes and rich (1998)</p>	<p>Literature discussion</p>	<p>Sales coaching has long been cited by sales professionals as a critically important means used by sales managers to enhance the performance of their salespeople. A review of a number of popular press</p>	<p>Leadership promotion/prevention focused behavior improves/reduces employee job crafting</p>	<p>Hawes and rich (1998) only conduct literature discussion, but this study uses grounded theory qualitative research strategy and develops 3d×2l stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behavior" which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance.</p>

		<p>articles and books indicates that practitioners typically discuss sales coaching as a multidimensional activity consisting of three core constructs: supervisory feedback, role modeling, and salesperson trust in manager. This article defines and examines the three sales coaching constructs in detail, reviewing the most recent academic theory and research in order to more precisely understand how and why sales coaching is effective.</p>		
<p>Brockner and Higgins (2001)</p>	<p>Regulatory focus theory/ research</p>	<p>For the first time divides the leadership regulatory focused behavior into two types: promotion focused, and prevention focused and pointed out that leaders can arouse the work regulatory focus of employees in their work, and then affect their subsequent attitudes and behaviors.</p>	<p>Defines the two concepts of promotion-focused behavioral linguistic framing and prevention-focused linguistic framing</p>	<p>Both define the two concepts of promotion-focused behavior and prevention-focused behavior1.</p> <p>Brockner and Higgins (2001) only conduct theory research, but this study uses grounded theory qualitative research strategy and develops 3d×2l stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behavior" which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance.</p> <p>Brockner and Higgins (2001) focuses on regulatory focus theory establish, this study, but this study uses regulatory focus theory as theory scope and analyze the impact of leadership regulatory focused behavior on employee job crafting.</p>
<p>Shang et al.(2023)</p>	<p>Regulatory focus theory/ quantitative</p>	<p>The purpose of this paper is to investigate the mechanism through which stressors influence job</p>	<p>Leadership promotion/prevention focused behavior</p>	<p>Both explore the the mediating role of work regulatory focus and the moderating role of trait regulatory focus.</p>

	study	<p>crafting. Based on regulatory focus theory, this study explores the mediating role of work regulatory focus between the challenge-hindrance stressors and approach-avoidance job crafting and the moderating role of trait regulatory focus.</p>	improves/reduces employee job crafting	<p>Shang et al (2023) focuses on the impact of stressors on job crafting. But this study focuses on the impact of leadership regulatory focused behavior on employee job crafting. Shang et al (2023) only uses quantitative method, but this study uses qualitative method and built a more systematic 21 (2-line) model of impact of leadership regulatory focused behavior on employee job crafting. This study develop the moderator from field work interview which contributes the conclusion with more practical significance.</p>
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## 6.6 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter reveals six key points:

1. The conclusions based on the stereoscopical finding discussion and theoretical literature confirmation lead to every research objective achievement.
2. The final research model is developed which leads to the research aim achievement.
3. The data collected, in the current conceptual model, has informed the previous conceptual framework.
4. The data collected, in the current conceptual model, has changed the previous conceptual framework.
5. There are agreements and gaps between the study conclusion and existing literature.
6. The agreements and gaps between the study conclusion and existing literature lay the foundation of future direction suggestions.

First, the conclusions based on the stereoscopical finding discussion and theoretical literature confirmation which lead to every research objective achievement are summarized in Table 6-7.

Second, following the grounded theory research strategy to integrate primary data, themes presented in the data (researcher's understanding) and theoretical discussion discussed in 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 (predecessors' theories), the final conceptual model of this study is suggested in Figure 6-1.

Specifically, first, the daily leadership behaviour can have an impact on employee job crafting. Second, via improving employee work regulatory focus do leadership regulatory focused behaviours impact employee job crafting. Finally, the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting is also affected by such situations as work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere, and employee trait regulatory focus. These

related contextual factors, together with leadership behaviour, determine the performance of employee job crafting.

Third, the current conceptual model has informed the previous conceptual framework in the following two ways (Figure 6–2). Firstly, leadership promotion focused behaviour stimulates employee job crafting; by comparison, leadership prevention focused behaviour inhibits employee job crafting. Secondly, leadership regulatory focused behaviour affected employee job crafting by stimulating employee work regulatory focus.

Fourth, the current conceptual model has changed the previous conceptual framework in the following two ways (Figure 6–2). First, this study raises the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regularly focused behaviour" from the perspective of regulatory focus theory, which enriches the existing research on leadership behaviour and provides theoretical support for subsequent relevant empirical research. Second, it's essential to integrate contextual factors in the impact process of leadership regularly focused behaviour on employee job crafting. Specifically, the contextual effects of work complexity, organizational transformational atmosphere and employee trait regulatory focus on employee job crafting improvement and reduction support the effect of the contextual factors.

Fifth, the author identifies the agreements and gaps between the study conclusion and existing literature in every objective-related discussion and summarizes them in Table 6-8 which records the differences and similarities between selected key authors' and the author's findings.

Sixth, the differences and similarities between selected key authors and our findings lay the foundation for future direction suggestions. On the one side, the gaps appear in the form of methodology. Exploratory grounded theory research is necessary at the embryonic stage of a research field. On the other side, the gaps appear in the content. Some previous findings contradict

those of this study. Some previous findings support those of this study, but some core variables are different. Thus, in future, some large-scale empirical tests based on this study's outcomes may enhance the research contribution. Moreover, introducing more interesting variables, such as mediation variables and moderation variables, into this study model is inspired and encouraged. Chapter 5 provides empirical evidence of the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting in Chinese organizations. This chapter achieves the three research objectives by integrating these research findings and theoretical discussion and finally achieves the research aim by forming the final management conceptual model with research conclusions to systematically characterize the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting. The next chapter, Chapter 7, gives the overall conclusion and key contributions.

## 7 OVERALL CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION, AND IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Purpose and aims

The previous chapter illustrates the achievements of the first three research objectives with 9 conclusions by integrating what emerges from the analysis and theoretical discussion. Thus, for research aim, it builds the final conceptual model. This chapter brings all previous chapters together in a discussion of the results and how these findings contribute to academic knowledge and practical application. It begins by providing an overall view of the research outcomes, followed by a section reiterating these results in the form of contributions to literature, methodology and conceptual framework, and finishes with a review of the overall research and some concluding remarks. Therefore, the chapter has six aims:

1. To conclude the research with a reiteration of the overall outcomes,
2. To discuss and map out contribution to literature,
3. To identify the contribution to methodology,
4. To present a contribution to the conceptual framework.
5. To provide implications for management, and
6. To critically assess limitations and suggest areas of further research.

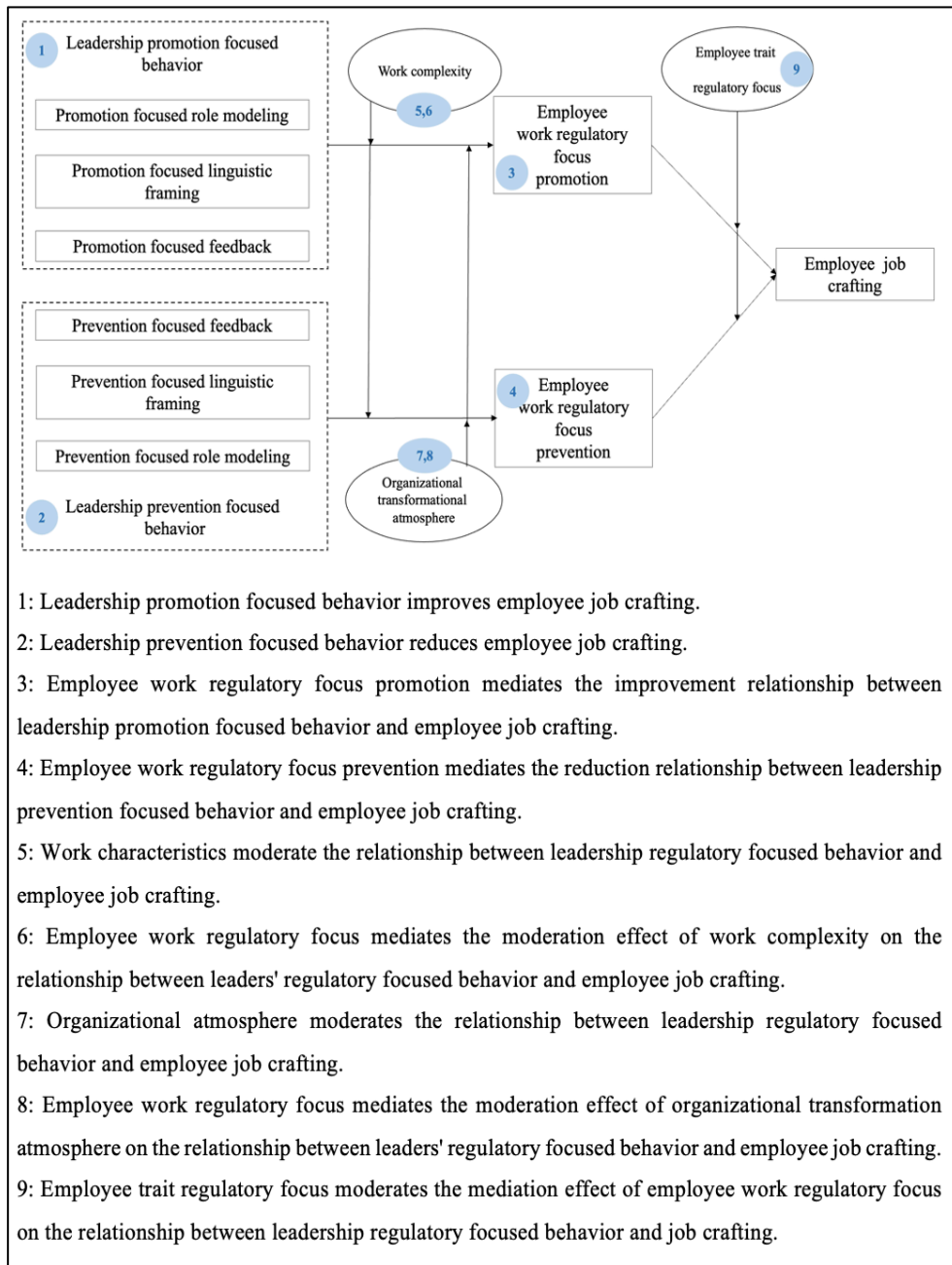
### 7.2 Overall conclusion

**Research aim:** *To form a management conceptual model to systematically characterize the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting.*

The final conceptual model of this study and the aligned conclusions are shown in Figure 7–1.



**Figure 7–1 Final conceptual framework with conclusions**



**Research objective1:** *To summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively impact employee job crafting. That is, to summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively improve employee job crafting; to summarize the leadership behaviour related concepts which can effectively reduce employee job crafting.*

To begin with, this study raises the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour" with 6 sub-concepts: leadership promotion/prevention focused role modelling, leadership promotion/prevention focused linguistic framing, and leadership promotion/prevention focused feedback (Figure 5–1).

Then, this study explores the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting. The qualitative research results support the following research conclusions: (1) leadership promotion focused behaviour (leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback) improves employee job crafting; while (2) leadership prevention focused behaviour (leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback) reduces employee job crafting.

**Research objective2:** *To reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting; to reveal the employee reaction related concepts through which the leadership behaviour effectively **reduces** employee job crafting.*

This study explores the impact mechanism of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting. The qualitative research results support the following research conclusions: (3) employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leadership promotion focused behaviour (leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback) and employee job crafting; while, (4) employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour (leadership promotion focused role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback) and employee job crafting

**Research objective3:** *To find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively impacts employee job crafting. That is, to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively improves employee job crafting; to find out the organization-level and individual-level context factors under which the leadership behaviour effectively reduces employee job crafting.*

This study integrates contextual factors in the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting. The qualitative research results support the following research conclusions: first, (5) work complexity moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting, and (6) employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of work complexity on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. Second, (7) organizational atmosphere moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting, and (8) employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere on the relationship between leaders' regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting. Lastly, (9) employee trait regulatory focus moderates the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus on the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and job crafting.

## 7.3 Contribution to knowledge

### 7.3.1 Contributions to literature

Here are the contributions to literature:

- (1) *Raising the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour".*
- (2) *Exploring the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting from promotion and prevention views based on regulatory focus theory.*
- (3) *Presenting the mediation factors of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting.*
- (4) *Integrating contextual factors in the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting.*

**Figure 7-2 Contribution map presenting contribution to literature organized under similar theme and contribution to literature organized under research gap**

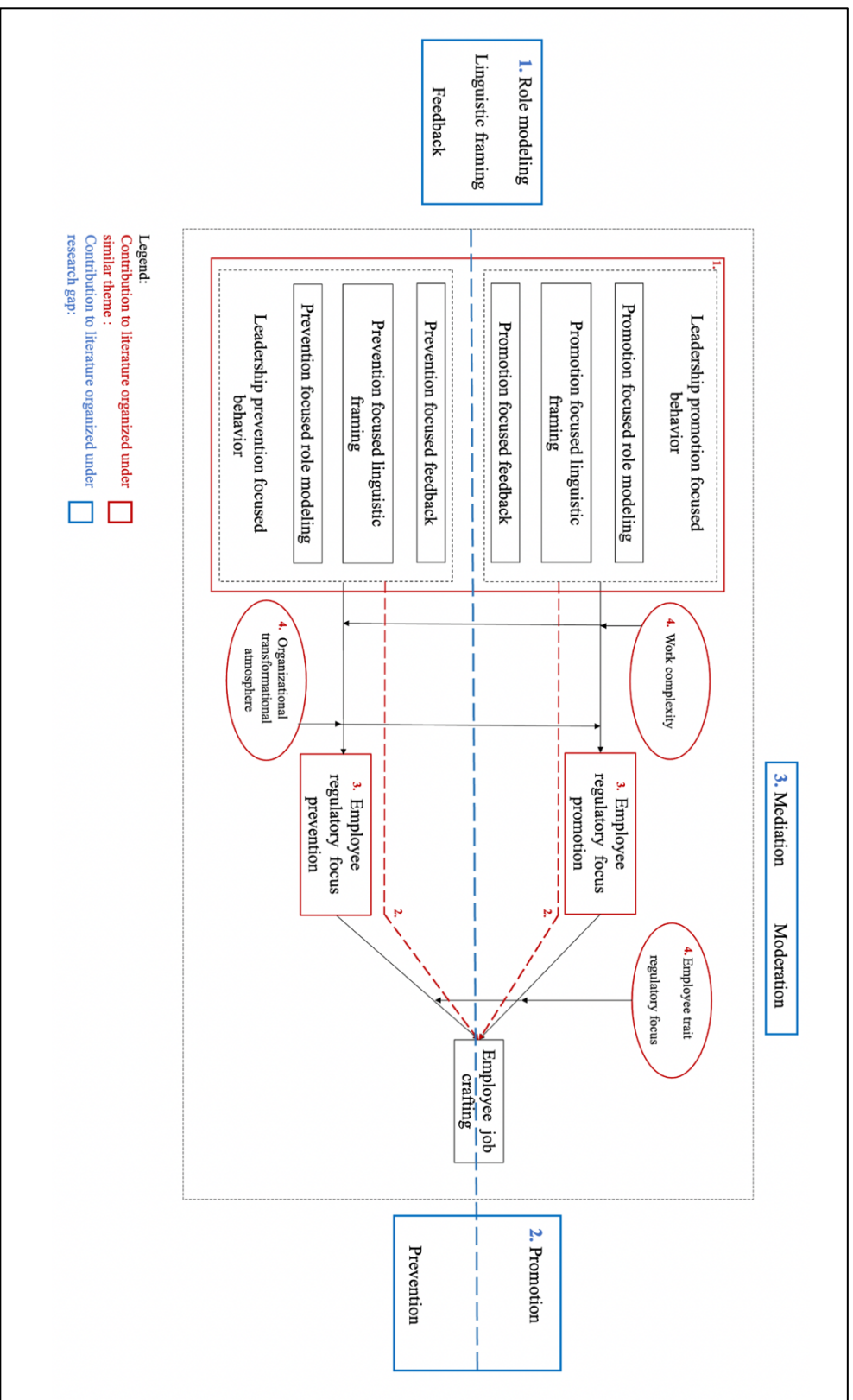
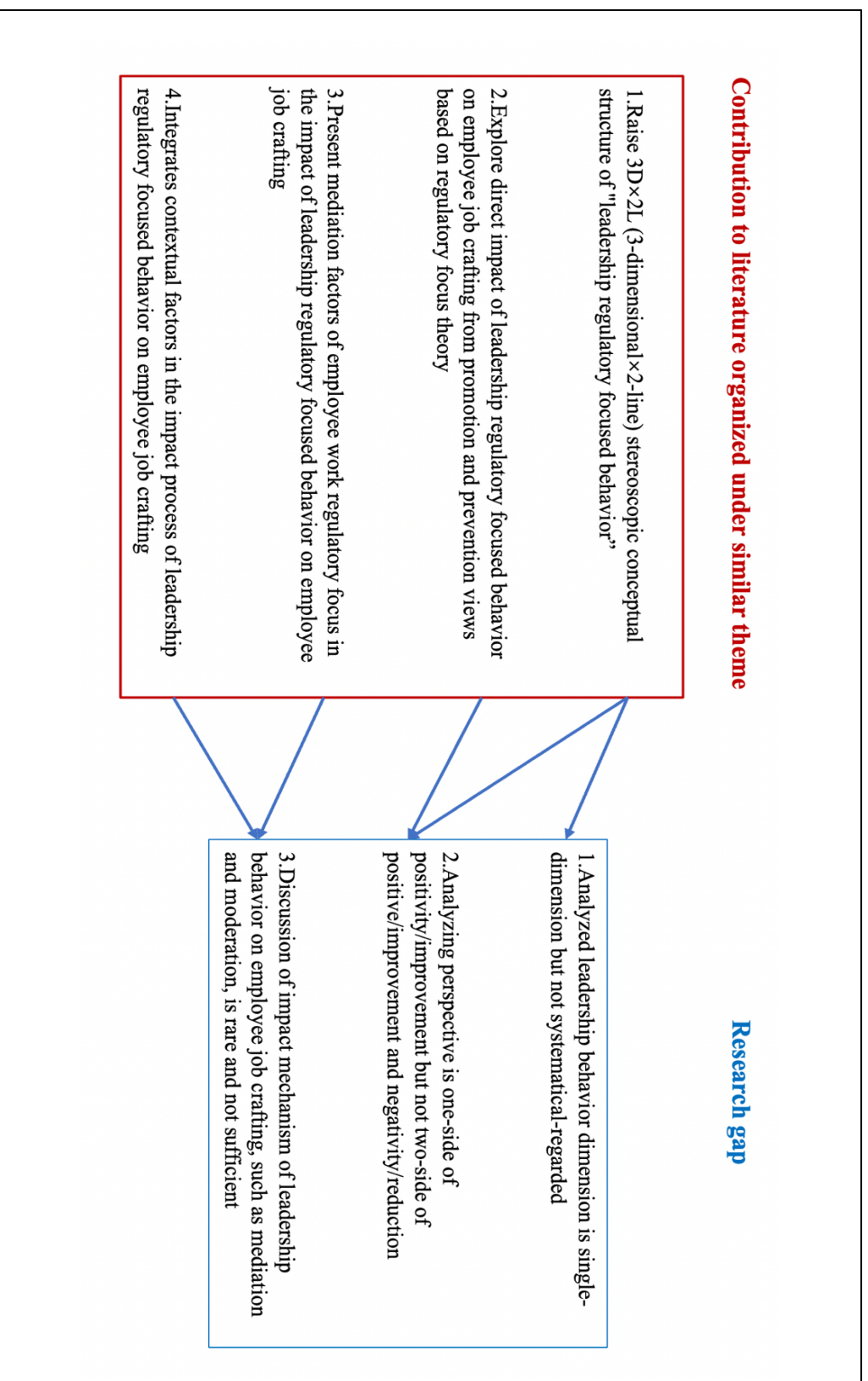


Figure 7-3 The match of contribution to literature organized under similar themes and research gap



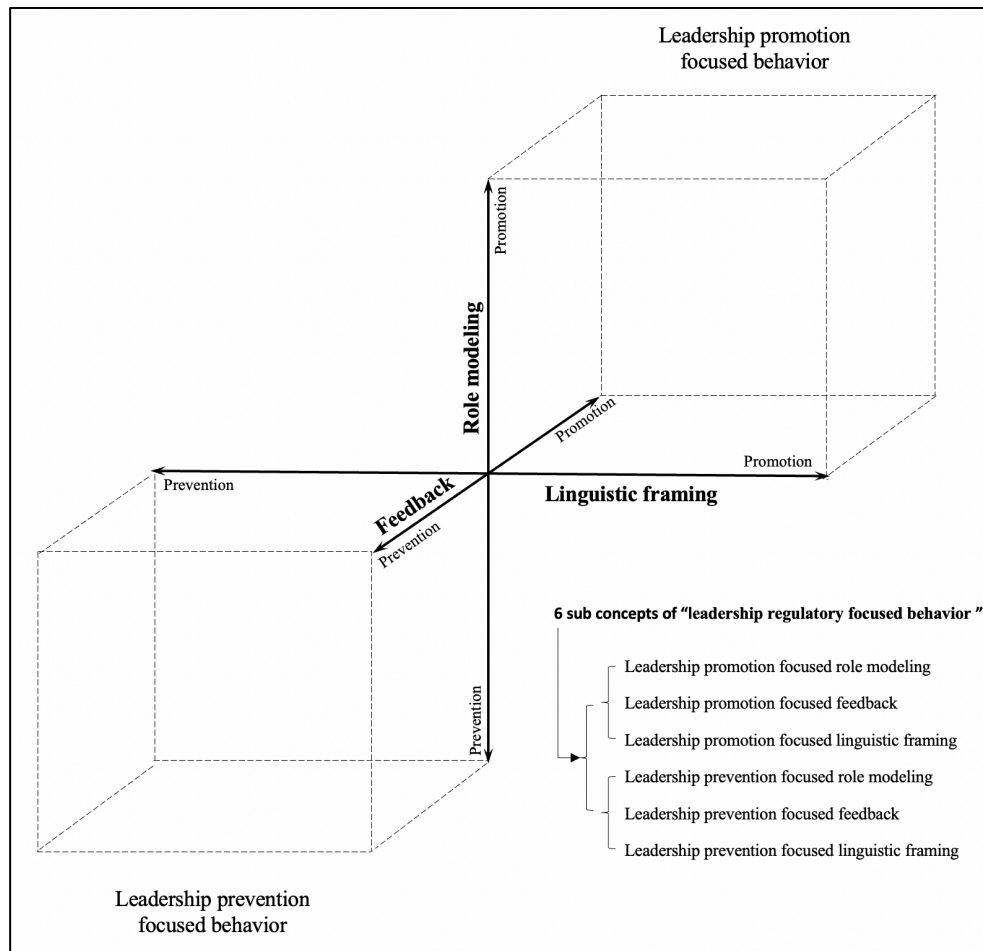
To fill the research gap and integrate the research results, this research makes a contribution to the literature in the following four aspects. The contribution map presenting contribution to literature organized under a similar theme and research gap is shown in Figure 7–2, and the match of contribution to literature organized under a similar theme and research gap is shown in Figure 7–3.

First, **this study raises the 3D×2L (3-dimensional×2-line) stereoscopic conceptual structure of "leadership regulatory focused behaviour"**(Figure 7–4 , red box 1 on Figure 7–2 , 1 in red box on Figure 7–3) to fill the first two gaps: analyzed leadership behaviour dimension is single-dimension but not systematical-regarded; analyzing perspective is one-side of positivity/improvement but not two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (1 in blue box on Figure 7–2, 1,2 in blue box on Figure 7–3)

Through qualitative research and analysis based on grounded theory, this study finds that the construction of leadership regulatory focused behaviour includes two relative core concepts, namely, promotion focused behaviour and prevention focused behaviour. At the same time, these two concepts are expressed as a three-dimensional structure of leadership role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback. From the perspective of regulatory focus theory, the author systematically depicts leadership behaviour, which enriches the existing research on leadership behaviour and provides theoretical support for subsequent relevant empirical research.



**Figure 7–4 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”**



Main sources: Developed from Tims and Bakker, 2010, Brockner and Higgins, 2001, Crowe and Higgins, 1997, Friedman and Förster, 2001, Seibt and Förster, 2004, Vaughn et al., 2008

Second, this study explores the direct impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting from promotion and prevention views based on regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) (red box 2 in Figure 7–2 , 2 in the red box on Figure 7–3) to fill the second gap: analyzing perspective in this research field is one-side of positivity/improvement but not two-side of positive/improvement and negativity/reduction (2 in blue box on Figure 7–2, 2 in blue box on Figure 7–3). The establishment of this research model enriches and expands the existing research in the field of leadership and job crafting. Through in-depth interviews with 26 employees in multiple industries in the context of China, this study explores the relationship between leadership regulatory focused



behaviour and employee job crafting. The results show that: on one side, leadership promotion focused behaviour and its three dimensions (promotion focused role modelling, promotion focused linguistic framing and promotion focused feedback) improves employee job crafting; on the other side, leadership prevention focused behaviour and its three dimensions (prevention focused role modelling, prevention focused linguistic framing and prevention focused feedback) reduces employee job crafting. The analysis of the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting systematically reveals the effective improvement and reduction of leadership behaviour performance of employee job crafting under the Chinese context, thus expanding the content category of influencing factors of employee job crafting.

Third, **this study presents the mediation factors of employee work regulatory focus in the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting** (red box 3 in Figure 7-2 , 3 in red box on Figure 7-3) to fill the gap: discussion of impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and not sufficient (3 in blue box on Figure 7-2, 3 in blue box on Figure 7-3). This research has deeply discussed the impact path and mechanism of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting by improving employee work regulatory focus. The research finds that: on one side, employee work regulatory focus promotion mediates the improvement relationship between leaders' promotion focused behaviour and employee job crafting; on the other side, employee work regulatory focus prevention mediates the reduction relationship between leadership prevention focused behaviour and employee job crafting. Compared with the existing studies that only analyze the mechanism of leaders' motivating employee job crafting from the perspective of positive promotion, this study systematically analyzes the two-line mechanism of leadership improvement and reduction impact on

employee job crafting based on regulatory focus theory, thus further opening the "black box" between leaders and employee job crafting.

Fourth, **this study integrates contextual factors** in the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting (red box 4 in Figure 7-2 , 4 in red box on Figure 7-3)to fill the third gap: discussion of the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job craftings, such as mediation and moderation, is rare and not sufficient (3 in blue box on Figure 7-2, 3 in blue box on Figure 7-3)This study theoretically analyzes the "mediated modelling effect" of organization-level context (including work characteristic and organizational atmosphere) and the "mediated mediation effect" of individual-level context (employee trait regulatory focus), an individual level situation. The results show that: first, work complexity moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting, and employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of work complexity; second, organizational atmosphere moderates the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and employee job crafting and employee work regulatory focus mediates the moderation effect of organizational transformation atmosphere; third, employee trait regulatory focus moderates the mediation effect of employee work regulatory focus on the relationship between leadership regulatory focused behaviour and job crafting. Different from previous studies that simply examined the moderation effect of context factors on the relationship between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting, (Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022, Zheng, 2020) this study systematically concludes the "mediated moderation effect" of organization level context and the "moderated mediation effect" of individual level context based on the complexity of the real context and the integrity of the research model. This enriches and deepens the research on context related to "leadership behaviour -job crafting" (Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022, Zheng, 2020)

### 7.3.2 Contributions to methodology

In job crafting research, there are two research genres: one is the "work meaning" genre, focusing on the pursuit of personal value, job meaning, and job well-being, and the other is the "person-job fit" genre, focusing on the match between people and the work environment. The innovative use of grounded theory contributes, in terms of methodology, to both genres in the following aspects:

- (1) *The use of qualitative methods like grounded theory creatively proceeds new theoretical-model development which shows scarcity in research on both genres.*
- (2) *The two-line-perspective use of grounded theory based on Regulatory focus theory provided systematic perspective for grounded theory application.*

The use of grounded theory in this study makes contributions in terms of methodology. In job crafting research, there are two research genres: one is the "work meaning" genre, focusing on the pursuit of personal value, job meaning, and job well-being, and the other is the "person-job fit" genre, focusing on the match between people and the work environment (Ying et al., 2018). However, qualitative methods like grounded theory are limitedly used by both genres (Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022). On the one side, the research on the "work meaning" genre is good at analyzing personal behaviour motivation and process (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Ying et al., 2018). Through in-depth observation of the job crafting phenomenon of various professional employees, this type of research has found a variety of different behaviour strategies, summarized a wide range of job crafting behaviours, and had insights into the meaning of cognition crafting for personal work and important influence of job identity (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, Ying et al., 2018). These studies have deepened people's understanding of job crafting theory and developed theoretical models (Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang,

2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022). Although research from this type of perspective often adopts qualitative methods like grounded theory, the number of corresponding research is also very limited since it requires more researchers' time, energy, and analytical comprehension skills (Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022).

On the other side, the "person-job fit " genre is good at extensively verifying various relationships of groups of variables and various influencing factors (Petrou et al., 2012b, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022). The main contribution made by this genre is to prove the universality of job crafting in different occupations, ages, genders, and countries, and to examine the relevance of influencing factors including personal characteristics, work engagement, and job crafting (Petrou et al., 2012b, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022). Because the research mostly adopts quantitative methods based on cross-sectional data, this type of research mostly failed to creatively develop theoretical models deeply (Petrou et al., 2012b, Petrou et al., 2018, Chmiel et al., 2017, Tims and Bakker, 2010, Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022)

The innovative use of grounded theory contributes, in terms of methodology, to both genres in the following aspects.

To begin with, **the use of qualitative methods like grounded theory creatively proceeds new theoretical-model development which shows scarcity in research on both genres** (Ying et al., 2018, Chen and Tang, 2022, Schoberova, 2015, Chen and Tang, 2022). Grounded theory is a qualitative research design whose main purpose is to build a theory based on empirical data (Thornberg and Dunne, 2019). This is a way to establish substantive theory from the bottom up, that is, to find the core concepts reflecting the essence of the phenomenon of things based on systematic collection of data,

and then construct relevant social theories through the connection between these concepts (Fan and Xiangming, 2020). This study, thereby, based on grounded theory, constructs a new theoretical model, which has expanded new research fields. Thus, the innovative use of grounded theory shows its methodological contribution effectiveness.

In addition, **the two-line-perspective use of grounded theory based on Regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) provided a systematic perspective for grounded theory application.** According to the literature review, when analyzing the impact mechanism of leadership in employee job crafting, research in this field mostly expounds the role of leadership on employee job crafting from the perspective of positive promotion singly (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015b, Petrou et al., 2012a, Chi and Pan, 2012, Chiaburu et al., 2014, Parker and Wu, 2014, Zhang and Bartol, 2010, Martin et al., 2013). The model, constructed through grounded theory conduction in this study, integrates the positive perspective (promotion) as well as the negative one (prevention), which fills the above gap comprehensively. Thus, the two-line innovative application of grounded theory based on regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins, 2001) in this study sets the model where the research problem involves binary relationships.

## 7.4 Implications to management

Here are the implications to management:

- (1) *Leaders may avoid prevention focused strategies as much as possible.*
- (2) *Leaders may show promotion focused strategies as much as possible.*
- (3) *The organization or team can select as many employees with trait regulatory focus promotion as possible.*
- (4) *The revelation of contextual factors guides leadership behaviour effectively.*

The lack of employee initiative has not only become a special phenomenon of a certain enterprise, but also a social reality problem that restricts the innovation of Chinese enterprises and even the development of the country (Yunshuo et al., 2019). And the employee job crafting in their positions is often obscured by leadership behaviour (Grant and Parker, 2009). If the essential laws of the impact of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting cannot be clarified from the mechanism and theoretical sources, it is impossible to take a fundamental intervention (Zheng, 2020)

Based on regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001), this study constructs a 2L (2-line) model of the impact process of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting, which clarifies the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting to a certain extent and reveals the role of employee characteristics and organizational context in this process. This is not only an important promotion of theoretical research on the above practical problems, but also a comprehensive method system for reference for the intervention of employee job crafting, the search for job meaning and the improvement of job satisfaction in Chinese enterprises under the new economic environment. At the same time, it also provides a theoretical reference for the leaders of Chinese enterprises to fully understand the intervention of job crafting and effectively interact with their subordinates. Details are as follows:

First, **leaders may avoid prevention focused strategies as much as possible**, to effectively reduce employee job crafting reduction. In the context of the overall lack of proactive behaviour of employees in Chinese enterprises, this study explores the reasons why employee job crafting is reduced from the perspective of regulatory focus theory (Brockner and Higgins,2001). It provides a useful perspective for leadership management practice: when interacting with employees, leaders should avoid prevention focused strategies, reflecting in the three aspects: role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback, as much as possible to reduce employee work regulatory focus

prevention, and finally to achieve effective avoidance of employee job crafting reduction.

Second, **leaders may show promotion focused strategies as much as possible**, to effectively improve employee job crafting improvement. In the context of China's current emphasis on the strategic role of human resources, especially creative talents, in maintaining the competitive advantage of enterprises, this study can help leaders obtain methods and paths to improve employee job crafting. That is to say, when interacting with subordinates, leaders should pay more attention to the aspects that can effectively improve employee job crafting, so that leaders can better replace unconscious experience behaviour with conscious rational behaviour to improve subordinates' job crafting in daily management. And it provides a useful perspective for leadership management practice: when interacting with employees, leaders should show promotion focused strategies, reflecting in the three aspects: role modelling, linguistic framing, and feedback, as much as possible, to improve employee work regulatory focus promotion, and finally to achieve effective intervention in the improvement of employee job crafting.

Third, **the organization or team can select as many employees with trait regulatory focus promotion as possible** for the improvement of the organization's or team's job crafting level. This is based on the relevant analysis and conclusions of this study on the role of employee trait regulatory focus: compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the improvement impact of leadership promotion focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is stronger; and compared with the employees with the trait regulatory focus prevention, the reduction impact of leadership prevention focused behaviour on employee job crafting for employees with trait regulatory focus promotion is weaker.

Finally, **the revelation of contextual factors guides leadership behaviour effectively.** The contextual factors derived in this study, like work complexity and organizational transformational atmosphere, can help managers realize under what organizational context their behaviour is more effective. Then these factors help leaders to constantly adjust their behaviours according to changes in the organizational context in future work, or consciously guide and build organizational contexts that are beneficial to employee job crafting development.

## 7.5 Research limitations

The author recognizes, fatalistically, that there will always be limitations within research (Haque, 2018, Anyuan, 2015). When a researcher prefers one option over another, there is always an opportunity cost because the alternative is sacrificed (Anyuan, 2015). Nevertheless, these limitations serve as a foundation for future researchers to consider and include in their future research. The exclusion of alternatives is not an error as every research project needs to have boundaries drawn around it for the inquiry to be researchable rather than sprawling (Haque, 2018)

Any research design involves limitations (Haque, 2018, Anyuan, 2015). Perhaps, the use of a mixed method research method might have been interesting, but it would have been beyond our available resources, especially time resources. The qualitative design was adequate for our research aim and objectives. Although less, the sample was drawn carefully enough to allow for generalizations. In grounded theory, sample selection obeys the theoretical sampling principle. The sampling principle is the "non-probability sampling" (Xiangming, 2000). Different from the "probability sampling" in quantitative research, the "non-probability sampling" uses theoretical sampling, that is, it judges whether the sampling can be ended according to the principle of theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 2017b, Glaser and Strauss, 2017c). Since qualitative research adopts the theoretical sampling



principles, the samples are usually fewer, and the results are difficult to carry out "generalization" in the sense of quantitative research (Xiangming and Xiaoying, 2004). However, if the reader gets an ideological resonance in reading the research report, it is a kind of identified generalization (or enlightenment or revelation); and if the theory established in this study is somewhat explanatory, it may also be the role of theoretical generalization (or theoretical influence or radiation) (Mays and Pope, 2020).

This study was self-funded and funding limits were mitigated through mixed use of face-to-face interviews and online interviews which served the purposes of the research. Where the participants' body language and facial expressions were noted, for example through a WeChat video call, the author conducted some interviews. Expert panels were not used because of the difficulty in gathering experts together and owing to constraints on the expert, although the author went to some experts for discussions and suggestions separately. Despite these limitations, obedience to ethical guidelines, methodological reviews and application of systematic procedures enabled the extraction of credible findings without compromising validity and reliability.

## 7.6 Suggestions for future research

Here are the suggestions for future research:

- (1) *Developing a leadership regulatory focused behaviour scale, based on the 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused behaviour”.*
- (2) *Conducting large-scale empirical tests on the overall model of this study.*
- (3) *Introducing more mediation variables based on this study.*
- (4) *Considering the contextual effect of external context factors.*
- (5) *Focusing on the bidirectional interaction of leadership behaviour.*

First, future researchers shall consider the option of developing a leadership regulatory focused behaviour **scale**, based on the 3D×2L stereoscopic conceptual structure of “leadership regulatory focused

behaviour” in Figure 5–1, thus carrying out some necessary theoretical and empirical basic work to promote a deeper understanding of the leadership regulatory focused behaviour.

Second, in future researchers could consider the conducting **large-scale empirical tests** on the overall model of this study in Figure 6-1, the 2L (2-line) model of the impact of leadership regulatory focused behaviour on employee job crafting, thus deepening the testing of the research results of this paper. This might include collecting quantitative empirical data using a questionnaire survey, conducting quantitative analysis on the data using regression analysis and structural equation model construction and testing the theoretical framework and research hypothesis.

Third, the author recommends that future studies consider introducing **more mediation variables** based on this study to more systematically explore the impact mechanism of leadership behaviour on employee job crafting, thus more completely opening the "black box" between leadership behaviour and employee job crafting. Some important variables that have been verified as mediation effects (such as self-efficacy, internal motivation, identity, etc.) can be considered.

Forth, Future studies should consider the contextual effect of **external context factors**, which may provide a new direction for the research on job crafting. There is no doubt that industry, politics, economy, and social environment are also very important to enterprises and their employees and these factors exert important influence on enterprises and employees through indirect or potential ways.

Finally, it will be interesting if future researchers focus on the **bidirectional interaction** of leadership behaviour and employee job crafting. Practically, the employee job crafting can not only be passively impacted by leadership behaviour as the result variable but also, in turn, could actively impact leadership behaviour as the antecedent variable. For example, an employee’s higher level of job crafting may lead to the leader’s higher level

of promotion focused behaviour. Theoretically, coping interaction process theory (Folkman and Lazarus,1985, Lazarus, 1985), as a relatively comprehensive coping theory, recognizes a dynamic model of coping affected by environmental factors and individual factors, thus overcoming the defects of "trait theory" and "situational theory" of coping to a certain extent (Zheng, et al., 2022).

Thus, theoretically, an employee's reaction (job crafting) is no longer only an end, but also shows the possibility and path to impact leadership behaviour; methodologically; terms of methods, the research on leadership behaviour and employee job crafting could enter the two-way causality research level from the single-way correlation research level; practically, faced with the influence of leadership behaviour, employees could no longer just act as passive and affected roles, but also active and affecting roles.

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# APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

## Appendix 1-1 English version of the interview guide

### Interview guide

Interviewee No:	_____	Date:	_____
Gender:	_____	Time:	_____
Position:	_____	Place:	_____

First, thank you for your participation. I am a doctoral student in UWTSU. And now I am conducting a Ph.D. research program about the job behaviour. The conversations will be kept confidential for you. Due to research needs, I will record our interviews in notebooks and audio recorders throughout our interview. And I needed my supervisors to guide the research methodology during the writing process, so all our conversations were known to me and my mentor. In the future, our communication content may be published as parts of my doctoral thesis, but in I will hide your name and all publications will request your consent. Is that clear? If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me. The whole visit takes about 30-45 minutes, so you see if we're to look for a comfortable place to sit down and have a chat. Now let's begin. And thank you very much again for your participation.

Q1(1): How would you describe the working atmosphere culture as empowerment? / What's the culture like? / Tell me about the culture?

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Q1(2): Is there much freedom of work? What skills do you need in your work? How do you often complete your work?

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Q1(3): Does your work need many revolution or changes? How does your organization support your transformational ideas?

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Q2(1): Tell me about your work responsibilities.

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Q2(2): Have you ever tried to make changes to coordinate your work and life?

If yes: what have you done? Focus on the following aspects.

If no: what have you done in the following aspects?

Things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources), seeking challenges (seeking challenges) and stress and strain relief (reducing demands).

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Q2(3): Did you like them? / Were you told to do them? / Did you volunteer? / Or were you always asked to do things?

What did you do there?

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Q3(1): Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't (promotion/prevention) make the changes?

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Q3(2): How about your manager's impact on your changes?

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Q4(1): When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to? / What results and aims does he care more about?

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Q4(2): How did his/her mood change during the work process?

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Q4(3): When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager?

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Q4(4): Were you given a clear understanding of the task?  
How were you given?

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Q4(5): How did you get feedback?

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Q5: What was your reaction? /What did you do? Why? How would you feel about the communications? Was it good? /Was it bad? Do you think it can be done better? How do you think it could be improved?

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Q6: When you are completing your task, what is the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result are you sensitive to? / What results and aims do you care more about?

How does your mood change during the work process?

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Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix 1-2 Mandarin version of the interview guide

访谈提纲

访谈编号: \_\_\_\_\_ 日期: \_\_\_\_\_  
性别: \_\_\_\_\_ 时间: \_\_\_\_\_  
职位: \_\_\_\_\_ 地点: \_\_\_\_\_

首先，感谢您的参与。我是威尔士三一圣大卫大学的一名博士生，现在我正在进行一个关于工作行为的博士研究项目。我将对我们的对话保密。由于研究需要，我会在整个采访过程中用笔记本和录音机记录我们的访谈内容。在写作过程中，我需要我的导师来指导研究方法，所以我和我的导师知道我们的对话。将来，我们的交流内容可能会作为我博士论文的一部分发表，但我会隐藏您的名字，所有出版物都会征得您的同意。如果您有任何问题，请随时问我。整个访问大约需要 30-45 分钟，您看看我们是否要找一个舒适的地方坐下来开始我们的聊天？我们现在开始吧。再次感谢您的参与。

问题 1(1): 请说说您们的工作氛围和文化氛围。奖惩制度，领导授权是怎样的？

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问题 1(2): 您的工作自由吗？一般需要什么技能？您如何完成工作？

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问题 1(3): 您的工作需要很多变革和改变吗？您的组织支持您的变革性想法吗？

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问题 2(1): 请说说您的工作职责。

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问题 2(2): 您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致?

如果是, 您在以下几方面做过些什么?

如果不是, 您在以下几方面表现如何?

寻求社交支持方面, 提高知识、技能、能力方面, 寻求挑战方面, 消除压力和紧张方面

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问题 2(3): 您喜欢吗? /您是被要求去做的还是自愿?

当时您做了什么?

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问题 3(1): 请谈谈您主动 (很少) 去做上述改变的原因?

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问题 3(2): 您直接上司在其中有没有影响, 如何影响?

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问题 4(1): 请说一说您的直接领导在完成任务时的行事风格。他在完成工作时, 奖励是什么, 惩罚是什么? 在完成任务时, 他对什么样的结果敏感? 他更关注什么样的结果和目标?

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问题 4(2): 在工作过程中, 他的情绪如何变化?

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问题 4(3): 当您尝试改变工作任务/关系/认知的时候, 您和领导的沟通如何?

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问题 4(4): 您可以很清晰的理解工作任务吗?  
您的直接上司是如何向您或部门成员来阐述这项工作或任务的?

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问题 4(5): 领导是怎样对您任务阶段性表现或结果进行反应或反馈的?

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问题 5: 您的反应是什么? /您做了什么? 为什么? 您觉得您们的沟通如何? 可以在哪些地方进行改进?

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问题 6: 请说一说您在完成任务时的行事风格。您在完成工作时, 奖励是什么, 惩罚是什么? 在完成任务时, 您对什么样的结果敏感? 您更关注什么样的结果和目标?

在工作过程中, 您的情绪如何变化?

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感谢您的参与!



## APPENDIX 2: PROCESS DOCUMENTS OF W8'S INITIAL CODING

### Appendix 2 Process documents of respondent W8's initial coding

#### Appendix 2-1-1 English version of interview for respondent W8

Interviewee No:	W8
Gender:	Female
Position:	Project manager in a social work organization
Date:	15/8/2022
Time:	7.00 pm
Place:	Online video interview
Interview question:	<p>Hi. Thank you for your participation. Now I'm studying for my doctor's degree at university of Wales Trinity Saint David. My doctoral thesis is about research on work behavior.</p> <p>Have you ever tried to make changes in order to coordinate your work and life? What have you done? Please focus on the following aspects. Things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources), seeking challenges (seeking challenges) and stress and strain relief (reducing demands).</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>In terms of seeking resources: first, I may read more work-related books in my own time [a8-1]. Second, our leaders will give training and lectures to other social organizations and government departments. I may seize every opportunity to carefully listen in and take notes [a8-2]. Third, because I am a person who asks questions when I don't know anything at work, I will be very modest to ask my predecessors to help me find problems [a8-3] and ask them to answer their own puzzles [a8-4]. I think it is mainly from these three aspects.</p> <p>In terms of seeking challenges, I feel that I am not setting limits, so I will keep learning and moving to a higher level [a8-5].</p> <p>I am also preparing to take the postgraduate examination in this field, so the books I read are closely related to my field of work. I think the process of preparing for the exam is also a process of constantly learning knowledge in the field of work. [a8-6]. At work, I am more practical. For the theory I lack, I mostly learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work [a8-7] [a8-8].</p> <p>In terms of stress and strain relief (reducing demands), first, I will ask my colleagues for advice on practical difficulties in work [a8-9].</p> <p>Second, because I am a person who likes to share my good and bad experiences with others, and talk to people close to me [a8-10]. I think it will be much better after I finish sharing. However, after sharing, I will continue to work hard, learn and solve problems. [a8-11] [a8-12]</p>

Interview question:	Tell me the reasons why you made the changes?How about your manager's impact on your changes?
Interviewee response:	<p>Yes, I think my leader's influence on me may be very important. Because he himself is a person with great personality charm. On the one hand, we will encounter many unexpected problems in our work. For example, sometimes when my leader preside over a meeting or mediate contradictions, he may encounter residents who are opposed and over emotional. Sometimes residents will fight, quarrel or abuse. But my leader always smiles calmly. Because he told us that in his mind, there is no trickster. The reason why they are so loud and emotional is that their voice is not heard through normal channels, so they choose such an extreme form [a8-13].</p> <p>Although the people he contacts are all government leaders, he treats residents and subordinates with special peace and gentleness. And regardless of our rank, he notices every little thing we do. In short, his eyes are filled with every one of us [a8-14].</p> <p>Another thing is that he always pays attention to our emotions and put himself in our shoes. He may tell me: "Just be relaxed and take your time. You must be unfamiliar with a thing at the beginning, and then you will get better after a period of time. Don't worry." [a8-15].</p> <p>Moreover, he treats his subordinates very equally and does not hold himself aloof just because he is a leader. He is the highest level leader in our office, but he is willing to clean up in the office [a8-16]. One day, I asked him to rest and leave the cleaning to me, he refused and finished the cleaning and he just told me to sit in sofa and rest. At noon, sometimes, he will take the initiative to steam rice and cook soup for us [a8-17], so I really feel that there is no leaders at all at work. Whenever he talks to me, he always speaks softly. From every detail of life, he is also taking care of us, which makes me feel like he really treats us as his family member [a8-18].</p>
Interview question:	What was your first reaction at that time?
Interviewee response:	<p>I was very moved, especially moved, and then I felt that he was very good. Then from another level, I felt that I wanted to do better [a8-19].</p> <p>That is, because he is so nice that I want to be better. Whether in work or in my personal ability, I wanted to be a warm person like him. I think that I want get better to match his dedication.</p>
Interview question:	What's your leader's attitude to risks at work?
Interviewee response:	Basically every time we encounter such an emergency, he is always the first to stand out and face the risk [a8-20]
Interview question:	How did you get feedback?
Interviewee response:	<p>I was impressed when I did an project at the first time.I was not confident at that time, because I had not tried it before, but I still did it. After it was done, I shew the results to the WeChat work group. Because it was my first time to do it, it was still fresh and exciting. However, this job is a routine one. It's normal to complete it for other</p>

	<p>colleagues. So they didn't respond in the WeChat group for a long time. But when it was very late that day, my leader sent three like smiley to me in the WeChat group, and praised me [a8-21], [a8-22], [a8-23]. Then in the next day, when we met, he praised me again. [a8-24].</p>
Interview question:	<p>When you or your colleagues made some mistakes, what was his feedback?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>One of my colleagues was rated as a serious critic at the project review meeting because of her previous habitual practice, thus losing a project of more than 200,000 yuan. Although it is not entirely her responsibility. After returning to the office, she tried to apologize to my leader. As a result, my leader first comforted him. He said that it was OK. He said that: "it was because we did not understand this operation before. It is important to learn from this experience and not to make similar mistakes next time." [a8-25] Then he comforted her all the time, telling her not to have a burden, letting him relax and not to have psychological pressure [a8-26].</p> <p>As for me, he won't pay attention to my small details at work at all, so I don't feel it's a problem [a8-27].</p> <p>And I feel that he pays more attention to our growth, protects everyone's psychological self-esteem, and attaches importance to guiding our growth. [a8-28]</p>
Interview question:	<p>After your leader gave your colleague feedback after your colleague lost the ¥200,000 project, what was your colleague's first reaction.</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>I felt that she was the same as me. At the beginning, she was very moved. On the other hand, she said that she would do better in the future [a8-29].</p>
Interview question:	<p>How busy is your work do you feel?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>I think it's very free. When there are activities, I may go earlier and come back later [a8-30]. But if there are no activities, the time is basically my own [a8-31]. I can learn, I can read work-related books in the office, and then I can read my own books, or I can find other materials to learn. These times are free [a8-32].</p>
Interview question:	<p>In your work, do you pay more attention to avoiding mistakes or what you want to achieve?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>I think I may pay more attention to what I want to do and what goals I want to achieve. [a8-33] Because it is impossible to completely avoid mistakes. No matter what we do, we will make mistakes. Making mistakes and correcting them is a necessary process. I think it's not terrible to have mistakes, but it's more important to sum up from mistakes and make yourself better [a8-34] [a8-35].</p>

Source: Drawn from transcription of indepth interview fieldwork, 2022

Appendix 2-1-2 Mandarin version of interview for respondent W8

访谈编号:	W8
性别:	女
职位:	社会工作组织-项目经理
日期:	15/8/2022
时间:	下午7.00
地点:	线上视频访谈
访谈问题:	<p>你好感谢您的参与。现在我正在威尔士圣大卫三一大学攻读博士学位。我的博士论文是关于工作行为的研究。</p> <p>您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致?</p> <p>如果是,您在以下几方面做过些什么?</p> <p>如果不是,您在以下几方面表现如何?</p> <p>寻求社交支持方面,提高知识、技能、能力方面,寻求挑战方面,消除压力和紧张方面</p>
回答:	<p>在寻求资源方面:第一,我会在自己的时间可能会多看工作相关的书[a8-1多看工作相关的书]。第二,我们的领导会去给其他的一些社会组织、政府部门培训授课,我会抓住一切机会认真旁听和做笔记[a8-2抓住一切机会认真旁听学习]。第三,因为我是一个在工作当中不懂就问的人,我会很谦虚地去请教前辈,请他们帮忙发现问题[a8-3请前辈帮忙发现问题]并且请他们解答自己的困惑[a8-4请前辈解答困惑]。我觉得主要就是从这三个方面吧。</p> <p>在寻求挑战方面,我觉得自己不仅局限于只做这些,所以我会自己不断学习,不断往更高层次走[a8-5主动向更高的事业层级发展]。</p> <p>我也在准备考这方面的研究生,所以我看书都跟自己的工作领域是密切相关的。我觉得从在备考的这个过程当中,也是一种在不断学习工作领域知识的过程。[a8-6通过提升学历,补充且加深理解工作相关专业知识]。工作上更多的是实践,对于缺乏的理论,我更多的是工作之余从书籍上面去学习更多的理论知识[a8-7思考工作中的实践与理论的关系][a8-8工作之余从书籍上面去学习更多的理论知识]。</p> <p>在减轻压力和紧张方面,第一,像工作中的实际的困难,我会去问同事,请教前辈[a8-9遇到困难,请教前辈]。第二,因为我是一个喜欢把自己好的不好的情绪跟别人分享,跟自己比较亲近的人讲[a8-10把自己好的不好的情绪跟别人分享]。我觉得讲完了之后可能就好很多。但,分享完了之后,我还是会不断的去努力,不断的去学习,去解决问题。[a8-11不怕困难,直面困难][a8-12遇到困难,提高能力]</p>
访谈问题:	请谈谈您主动去做上述改变的原因?您直接上司在其中有没有影响,如何影响?
回答:	<p>有,我觉得他对我可能更多的是人格方面的影响。因为他自己是一个很有人格魅力的人。一方面,我们在工作中会遇到很多突发情况。比如,有时领导主持一场会议或者进行调解矛盾的时候,会遇到反对和情绪过激的居民,有的时候他们会打架、吵架或者谩骂。但是领导永远都是镇定地微笑面对。因为他跟我们讲过,在他的心目当中就没有刁民。他们之所以声音那么大,情绪那么激动,是因为他们的心声通过正常的途径没有被听到,才会选择这样过激的形式[a8-13他们之所以声音那么大,情绪那么激动,是因为他们的心</p>

	<p>声通过正常的途径没有被听到，才会选择这样过激的形式]。</p> <p>虽然他接触的人都是政府领导，但他对待居民和下属都特别平和温柔。并且无论我们的职别高低，我们做的每一件小事都被他看在眼里。总之，他的眼里装着我们每一个人[a8-14无论我们的职别高低，我们做的每一件小事都被他看在眼里]。</p> <p>还有就是他会关注到你的情绪，设身处地地为你考虑，他会跟你说，你不要紧张，然后慢慢来，刚开始做一件事肯定不熟悉，然后过一段时间就慢慢好了，不要担心[a8-15刚开始做一件事肯定不熟悉，然后过一段时间就慢慢好了，不要担心]。</p> <p>且还有就是他完全没有领导的架子，他在我们办公室里面是级别最高的，但他在办公室里面，还要打扫卫生[a8-16在办公室里面，还要打扫卫生]。我们说我们来吧，他说不用不用，我自己来，他就说你们坐着。中午，有的时候，他还会主动给我们蒸米饭，煲汤这些[a8-17主动给我们蒸米饭，煲汤]，就完全没有领导的架子。任何时候他跟你说话永远都是轻言细语的。从生活的各个细节，他也在照顾我们，就感觉真的像对待家人那样[a8-18像对待家人那样对待员工]。</p>
访谈问题：	您的领导这样子做了之后，你的第一反应当时是什么。
回答：	我就很感动，就特别特别的感动，然后就觉得他很好，然后从另外一个层面我会觉得我想要做的更好[a8-19我想要做得更好]，就是觉得因为宋老师很好，所以我要变得更好，不管是工作上面，还是自己的个人能力方面，就是都想要成为他一样的那么一个温暖的人，然后还有就是要变得更好，觉得才对得起他的这份付出。
访谈问题：	就是说你我们工作会有一些风险了，您的领导对风险的态度如何？
回答：	基本上每次遇到这种突发情况，紧急情况，宋老师永远都是第一个站出来直面风险的[a8-20总是第一个站出来直面风险]
访谈问题：	领导是怎样对您任务阶段性表现或结果进行反应或反馈的？
回答：	我有一次印象挺深的.就因为是我第一次做那个项目，当时就我也挺没有信心的，因为我就之前没有做过，就还是做了，做出来了之后呢，我就把成果推送在工作群里。我因为是第一次做，还是很新鲜跟激动的。但这个工作是常规性的工作，对于其他同事习以为常了，其他同事他们就没有反应，然后很长一段时间都没有人回复。结果那天都很晚了，我的领导就他在群里发了三个点赞的表情，就是那种说你很棒对表情[a8-21领导阶段性积极反馈][a8-22领导认可任务结果][a8-23领导赞扬员工]。然后在第二天，见面时，领导还会跟我讲，你昨天的那个推文做的很好[a8-24领导赞扬员工]。
访谈问题：	那比如说宋老师他在面对有些小的问题，他他要提一些建议的时候，或者说面对你的这些小的问题的时候，他的反应是怎样的？
回答：	一位同事因为之前的惯性做法而在项目评审会上被评为严肃批评，从而丢失了一个20多万的项目，虽然不完全是她的责任，但是由她负责的。回到单位，她尝试就想跟宋老师道歉。结果宋老师首先就是先安慰他，他说没关系，他说因为以前一直都是这样的操作，是因为我们不懂。重要的是要从这一次经验当中去吸取教训，下一次就不要再犯类似的错误[a8-25重要的是要从这一次经验当中去吸取教训，下一次就不要再犯类似的错误]。然后还一直安慰她，让她不要有包袱，让他要放松，不要有心理压力[a8-26一直安慰她，让她不要有包袱，让他要放松，不要有心理压力]。
	你说至于我的话，我的那些在工作上的小细节问题，他根本就不会关注，就

	<p>觉得那就不是事儿[a8-27不关注工作上的小细节问题]。</p> <p>还有因为他自身是一个很注重细节的人，然后我觉得他更多的是关注我们的成长，保护每一个人的心理自尊心，看重对我们成长的引导。[a8-28保护每一个人的心理自尊心，看重对我们成长的引导]</p>
访谈问题：	那个姐姐当时把那个20万项目丢了之后，宋老师给那个姐姐那样子反馈了之后，那个姐姐的第一反应是怎样的？
回答：	就是我感觉那个姐姐跟我是一样的，就刚开始都会觉得很感动，然后另外一个方面，她就是说的是以后要做得更好[a8-29以后要做的更好]。
访谈问题：	那你工作忙不忙，自由度大不大？
回答：	就我觉得很自由，就是有活动的时候，那一天可能有的时候会去的早一点，回来的晚一点[a8-30有的时候会去的早一点，回来的晚一点]，但如果没有活动，那基本上那时间都是属于你自己的[a8-31如果没有活动，那基本上那时间都是属于你自己的]，你可以学习，你可以看在办公室里面看跟工作相关的书，然后你也可以看自己的书，或者是你也可以找其他的资料来学习，这这些时间都是自由的[a8-32空闲时间看书学习]。
访谈问题：	你一般在工作中，就是比如说会更关注就是就是避免出现错误呢，还是说会更关注我要我要去做哪些事情呢？就是我要达到什么样的目标呢？就是你你的性格的话。
回答：	我觉得我可能个人关注的是会更关注我自己要做哪些事情，然后要完成怎样的目标[a8-33会更关注我自己要做哪些事情]。因为不可能完全避免出现错误，无论做什么，都是从不会到会，犯错误纠正错误是一个必经的过程。我觉得有错不可怕，更重要的是要从错误中总结，让自己变得更好[a8-34我觉得有错不可怕][a8-35更重要的是要从错误中总结，让自己变得更好]。

**Appendix 2.2 Initial codes for respondent W8**

Interviewee	Initial coding
W8	<p>a8-1 Read more books related to work</p> <p>a8-2 Seize every opportunity to carefully observe and study</p> <p>a8-3 Ask my predecessors to help me find problems</p> <p>a8-4 Ask my predecessors to answer their puzzles</p> <p>a8-5 Takes the initiative to develop to a higher career level</p> <p>a8-6 Supplement and deepen understanding of work-related professional knowledge through improving academic qualifications</p> <p>a8-7 Think about the relationship between practice and theory at work</p> <p>a8-8 Learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work</p> <p>a8-9 When encounter difficulties, consult the seniors</p> <p>a8-10Share my good and bad emotions with others</p> <p>a8-11Face difficulties without fear</p> <p>a8-12Meet difficulties and improve ability</p> <p>a8-13The reason why they are so loud and emotional is that their voice is not heard through normal channels, so they choose such an extreme form</p> <p>a8-14No matter our rank, every little thing we do is seen by him</p> <p>a8-15You must be unfamiliar with a thing at first, and then it will get better after a period of time. Don't worry</p> <p>a8-16Is willing to clean up in the office</p> <p>a8-17Takes the initiative to steam rice and cook soup for us</p> <p>a8-18Treat employees like family</p> <p>a8-19I want to do better</p> <p>a8-20Always be the first to stand out and face the risk</p> <p>a8-21Leader's periodic positive feedback</p> <p>a8-22Leader's approval of task results</p> <p>a8-23Leader's online praise of employees</p> <p>a8-24Leader's face-to-face praise of employees</p> <p>a8-25It is important to learn from this experience and not to make similar mistakes next time</p> <p>a8-26Comfort her all the time, letting her not have a burden, letting him relax and not to have psychological pressure</p> <p>a8-27Select to ignore small mistakes at work</p> <p>a8-28Protect everyone's psychological self-esteem and attach importance to the guidance of our growth</p> <p>a8-29Will do better in the future</p> <p>a8-30Sometimes leave earlier and come back later</p> <p>a8-31If there is no activity, the time is basically your own</p> <p>a8-32Read and study in my spare time</p> <p>a8-33I will pay more attention to what I want to do</p> <p>a8-34I don't think it's terrible to make mistakes</p> <p>a8-35More importantly, we should learn from our mistakes and make ourselves better</p>

Source: Drawn from author's field work based on grounded theory,2022

## Appendix 2- 3 3-level coding in NVivo for respondent W8

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. On the left, a hierarchical tree shows the following structure:

- DATA
  - code book
    - Interview-英文
    - Interview-中文
    - File Classifications
      - Externals
      - CODES
        - Nodes
          - CASES
          - NOTES
          - SEARCH
          - MAPS

The main text area shows a document titled "W8-英文" with the following content:

Interview question: Hello! Thank you for your participation. Now I'm studying for my doctor's degree at university of Wales Trinity Saint David. My doctoral thesis is about research on work behavior. Have you ever tried to make changes in order to coordinate your work and life? what have you done? Focus on the following aspects : things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources ), seeking challenges (seeking challenges)and stress and strain relief (reducing demands ).

Interviewee response:  
 In terms of seeking resources: first, I may read more work-related books in my own time [a8-1 read more work-related books]. Second, our leaders will give training and lectures to other social organizations and government departments. I will seize every opportunity to carefully listen in and take notes [a8-2 seize every opportunity to carefully listen in and learn]. Third, because I am a person who asks questions when I don't know anything at work, I will be very modest to ask my predecessors to help me find problems [a8-3 ask my predecessors to help me find problems] and ask them to answer their own puzzles [a8-4 ask my predecessors to answer their puzzles]. I think it is mainly from these three aspects.

In terms of seeking challenges, I feel that I am not limited to doing this, so I will keep learning and moving to a higher level [a8-5 takes the initiative to develop to a higher career level].

I am also preparing to take the postgraduate examination in this field, so the books I read are closely related to my field of work. I think the process of preparing for the exam is also a process of constantly learning knowledge in the field of work. [a8-6 supplement and deepen understanding of work-related professional knowledge by improving academic qualifications]. At work, I am more practical. For the theory I lack, I mostly learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work [a8-7 think about the relationship between practice and theory at work] [a8-8 learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work].

In terms of stress and strain relief (reducing demands), first, I will ask my colleagues for advice on practical difficulties in work [a8-9 when encounter difficulties, consult the seniors]. Second, because I am a person who likes to share my good and bad emotions with others, and talk to people close to me [a8-10 share my good and bad emotions with others]. I think it will be much better after I finish speaking. However, after sharing, I will continue to work hard, learn and solve problems. [a8-11 a8-11 Face difficulties without fear] [a8-12 meet difficulties and improves ability]

Interview question: (1)Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't ( promotion/prevention) make the

The coding density chart at the bottom shows the following categories and their density:

- Offer myself proactively as project co-worker, when an interesting project comes along
- Leaders are tolerant of failure
- Seek changes and challenges
- Focus on the positive side
- Encouraging achievements
- Develop professionalism and capacities
- Reflection on problems from the perspective of guiding growth
- Coding Density

Source: Drawn from data analyzed in Nvivo, 2022



## APPENDIX 3: INITIAL CODE

### Appendix 3 Initial codes

Interviewee	Initial coding
R1	<p>a1-1 Reduce unnecessary tasks</p> <p>a1-2 Communicate with class leaders to improve work efficiency</p> <p>a1-3 Reduce the number of people to communicate and improve communication efficiency</p> <p>a1-4 Establish networks with leaders and colleagues to obtain some work-related useful information</p> <p>a1-5 Try to reduce unnecessary competition and relax yourself, so as not to be too nervous about mental and physical health.</p> <p>a1-6 As long as I think it is necessary to communicate, I will do it</p> <p>a1-7 Complete many tasks in advance</p> <p>a1-8 Complete the task ahead of time, and leave the free time for emergency tasks that occur temporarily during the semester</p> <p>a1-9 Don't like to push the work suddenly with high load</p> <p>a1-10 Complete tasks efficiently</p> <p>a1-11 After completing the task, I will display it through the WeChat moments to gain more support and recognition from my leader</p> <p>a1-12 Lengthen the time limit of the work with particularly large tasks, so as to reduce the pressure of employees</p> <p>a1-13 Start works in advance during term break</p> <p>a1-14 Reflect on problems and carry out work reform</p> <p>a1-15 Encourage such employees more. Besides doing their part well, they will also help the organization to undertake some additional work tasks</p> <p>a1-16 Help employees win rewards within the scope permitted by the policy</p> <p>a1-17 Leaders do not punish more, but reward those who do well</p> <p>a1-18 When assigning tasks, my leader will emphasize to their subordinates what rewards will be given after completing the tasks.</p> <p>a1-19 Do not force all employees to hold unnecessary meetings, and remembers the teachers who volunteer to attend the meeting deeply</p> <p>a1-20 I like my job better</p> <p>a1-21 I do the best job assigned by my leader</p> <p>a1-22 I will do more than my own duty</p> <p>.....</p>
L2	<p>a2-1 I can't relax at work</p> <p>a2-2 We have people on duty 24 hours a day, who work very hard</p> <p>a2-3 Not allowed to not participate in the training</p> <p>a2-4 Required to attend some job related training</p> <p>a2-5 How to report as required by the leader, I will report as required</p> <p>a2-6 I feel that my communication with the leader is insufficient</p> <p>a2-7 After I completed the task, I rarely report to the leader actively</p>

	<p>a2-8 For the tasks assigned by the leaders, I have been used to completing them all by myself first, if I can</p> <p>a2-9 In communication and cooperation with subordinates, I often pay attention to their imperfections and ignore their achievements</p> <p>a2-10 Only when we meet problems on site, will we analyze what technical conditions to improve, and then standardize the improvement</p> <p>a2-11 The pressure can only be endured</p> <p>a2-12 I accept that the workload is very high</p> <p>a2-13 Leaders are mainly sensitive to employees' mistakes.</p> <p>a2-14 When I was working, the first thing I thought about was that I don't want to be fined.</p> <p>a2-15 Thinking about reducing mistakes</p> <p>a2-16 I avoid doing things that are risky but beneficial to the organization, so that I can minimize mistakes</p> <p>a2-17 Leaders will lecture and criticize through the meeting, and then urge us to complete the task.</p> <p>a2-18 The leader reviews whether there are unfinished work indicators and work errors</p> <p>a2-19 Based on the problems, the leader emphasizes the next improvement measures and work precautions</p> <p>a2-20 When making arrangements, my leader often emphasize that we must be careful not to have problems, otherwise there will be very serious accident consequences</p> <p>a2-21 I don't belong to a person who likes taking risks. I have few ideas in my work and am not particularly sensitive to changings</p> <p>a2-22 I have my own ideas and views on work, and I will not change too much .....</p>
Z3	<p>a3-1 Continuously improve my professional level and hope to teach children in a very good way</p> <p>a3-2 Download software to learn knowledge</p> <p>a3-3 Download software to improve communication skills</p> <p>a3-4 Follow up and practice Mandarin</p> <p>a3-5 After taking part in the training, I came back to apply the methods and skills I learned to the classroom teaching in the process of teaching and actively try</p> <p>a3-6 Actively communicate with leaders after illness to reduce some workload</p> <p>a3-7 Actively seize the opportunity of project application and actively participate in project research</p> <p>a3-8 Actively participate in teaching skills competition</p> <p>a3-9 Try to convert pressure into power</p> <p>a3-10 Relieve stress through singing, listening to music, running, swimming and yoga</p> <p>a3-11 I don't like to look back and hesitate. I will pursue the goal of my work</p> <p>a3-12 My leader is very energetic and carries out various reforms in his work</p>

	<p>a3-13My leader will clearly list the goals we need to accomplish, and arrange tasks based on the goals</p> <p>a3-14My leaders will select teaching awards and give the whole school a notice of praise</p> <p>a3-15My leader will give performance rewards for our teaching plan</p> <p>a3-16After receiving encouragement, I will work harder because I want to get more rewards</p> <p>a3-17Compared with risk avoidance, I always pursue a good goal</p> <p>a3-18Although there are some regrets sometimes, I think I will feel great as long as I make efforts</p> <p>.....</p>
Z4	<p>a4-1 Generally, two classes are enough for teachers, but I'm basically overloaded</p> <p>a4-2 I work too hard, so I should say that I have been making contributions to the school</p> <p>a4-3 In order to evaluate higher professional titles, I will also write papers</p> <p>a4-4 I will allocate and arrange my home time and working time reasonably.</p> <p>a4-5 As long as I am in school, I rarely waste my time to do things unrelated to work</p> <p>a4-6 In addition, when working, I will constantly summarize and make full use of my time to kill two birds with one stone.</p> <p>a4-7 It may take one week for others to do a thing, but I may finish it in half an hour</p> <p>a4-8 Before I start to do something, I will think about what benefits I may bring to my future work, how I can do it better, and how I can save time.</p> <p>a4-9 After finishing tasks, I usually reflect on which materials may be used in the future, and how to sort them out to improve the overall work efficiency.</p> <p>a4-10Thinking about the relationship between family and work</p> <p>a4-11When there are new learning, competition and development opportunities, I must be the first to try</p> <p>a4-12Even if I fail, I know where my problems lie</p> <p>a4-13Because I am considerate of every detail, I will do my best, so I will not make any mistakes in general.</p> <p>a4-14In teaching, if I encounter a very difficult and urgent task, I will reduce the pressure by extending the time to complete the task.</p> <p>a4-15If the pressure is caused by the relationship between colleagues, if this person is not nice enough, I will choose to communicate as little as possible.</p> <p>a4-16When I do well, leaders often praise me: "You have done well, keep working hard, you are good, I support you!"</p> <p>a4-17When arranging tasks, my leader will tell me that you should work hard and don't worry. Let's work together.</p> <p>a4-18When arranging tasks, my leader will tell me that if this is not possible, we will try again next time.</p> <p>a4-19When leaders arrange tasks, they often leave enough time for me, and generally do not arrange tasks for me urgently</p>

	<p>a4-20 In this way, I have enough time to think and do well according to my own rhythm, without too much tension</p> <p>a4-21 I will spend some time thinking about what I should do first, and then I will try my best to complete the tasks assigned by my leader</p> <p>.....</p>
Y5	<p>a5-1 In the hospital, we work in shifts and are very busy</p> <p>a5-2 Hospital stipulates that in each department, leaders must regularly carry out some learning and training activities, and everyone must attend</p> <p>a5-3 We must attend training regularly, otherwise, we are not qualified for this position</p> <p>a5-4 I'm forced to improve my abilities due to work needs</p> <p>a5-5 After encountering problems, I will communicate with leaders and colleagues</p> <p>a5-6 I will try my best to participate in the first training. Because if I don't participate in the first training, I have to ask colleagues who participate in the first training for advice. Sometimes they don't tell me</p> <p>a5-7 Even if something big happens at home, my leader requires us to complete the task on time</p> <p>a5-8 My leader likes to order us to do things</p> <p>a5-9 When the cause of the problem cannot be determined, my leader will not ask me why or whether I have encountered any difficulties at home. He will directly criticize me, or even criticize me during the meeting and deduct my salary</p> <p>a5-10 In the future, no matter what I do, I will only regard it as completing the task and achieving the minimum standard</p> <p>.....</p>
L6	<p>a6-1 We are forced to participate in the weekly exchange meeting</p> <p>a6-2 We are forced to participate in the weekly exchange meeting to improve our ability</p> <p>a6-3 Our leaders will force each of us to ask him a question after asking everyone to say their own views. Even though our research direction is different from his, we still have to ask</p> <p>a6-4 We are forced to undertake some tasks that my leaders should undertake</p> <p>a6-5 My leader won't listen carefully, he will play with his mobile phone while listening, thus ignoring what we said</p> <p>a6-6 Our research projects are basically arranged by my leaders</p> <p>a6-7 There is almost no time to do other projects</p> <p>a6-8 Take striving for new projects as a responsibility</p> <p>a6-9 My leader only asks us to do what he thinks we should do</p> <p>a6-10 My leader likes to assign tasks by command</p> <p>a6-11 Cold Violence</p> <p>a6-12 Forced apology</p> <p>a6-13 Threat</p> <p>a6-14 Although I have done a lot, my leaders still think my progress is slow</p> <p>a6-15 If they fail to meet the standards of leaders, my leaders will insult me</p>

	<p>with words</p> <p>a6-16I try not to make mistakes every time I do things</p> <p>a6-17Every time I finish the task, let my leader see. He never praises, but only criticizes</p> <p>a6-18Exaggerate the mistake</p> <p>a6-19I don't have the courage to try new breakthroughs</p> <p>a6-20I don't have much energy to work hard. I just want to earn this money and do these tasks</p> <p>a6-21I am probably more concerned about avoiding punishment</p> <p>.....</p>
G7	<p>a7-1 I usually consciously learn to improve my ability, whether it is to follow some public accounts on WeChat (such as Ming President's Studio) or read books</p> <p>a7-2 Conscientiously consult education management experts</p> <p>a7-3 Consult psychology experts</p> <p>a7-4 Seize the opportunity to go out to study and exchange learning</p> <p>a7-5 When I go out to study, I will participate in some national excellent class teacher training, and when I come back, I will apply the relevant knowledge to my work</p> <p>a7-6 In my work, I will pay attention to what I need to learn. Then in my daily life, I will consciously observe and learn, and then apply it in my work</p> <p>a7-7 Like challenging work</p> <p>a7-8 When my leader recommends me to a new position or undertake a new task, I feel that the leader must trust me, and I will actively seize the opportunity</p> <p>a7-9 In my work, I will actively communicate with colleagues and leaders, and also actively communicate with subordinates to influence them.</p> <p>a7-10I will keep the people around me consistent in their behavior and ideological goals, so that we will all work together and our school will become better and better.</p> <p>a7-11 When I went to the national headmaster training, our head teacher asked me if I would like to be a study committee member. I thought this was a good opportunity to exercise myself, so I agreed at once.</p> <p>a7-12My leader often pays attention to what we do well</p> <p>a7-13If I make a mistake, he will also raise it, but he will not take the way of criticism, but guide us to do well next time</p> <p>a7-14My leader often tells me not to be afraid of encountering problems</p> <p>a7-15If there is any problem, he told me to insist on communication. There is no problem that cannot be solved through communication</p> <p>a7-16As a leader, you should be diligent and master first-hand information.</p> <p>a7-17During the break, we can take a walk in the corridor, so that we can understand the state of the students. We can also often take a walk in the teacher's office to learn about the teachers' emotions and thoughts, or whether there are any difficulties in life.</p> <p>a7-18If some teachers have difficulties, they can take the initiative to help</p>

	<p>them.</p> <p>a7-19When reform is needed, my leaders will resolutely make changes, even if the reform may harm the interests of some people.</p> <p>a7-20My leader dares to face challenges and difficulties</p> <p>a7-21 When arranging tasks, my leaders will communicate with me in advance to ensure that all of us have the same goals and promote work based on them.</p> <p>a7-22My leader, our headmaster, is very meticulous in his work. He is also very cautious when making suggestions, not criticizing us, but analyzing problems with reason and basis, and then making suggestions</p> <p>a7-23When giving feedback on problems, my leader will not take the form of criticism, but take facts as the basis</p> <p>a7-24When following up the improvement in the later stage of the error, my leader will not be very strong. He will tell us to advance step by step and solve the problem step by step.</p> <p>a7-25I think the leaders pointed out my problems reasonably. I am particularly willing to accept them and have made positive improvements in the future work.</p> <p>a7-26I am a person who likes to reflect. I think it is the fastest to grow in problems</p> <p>a7-27A7-27 But if someone puts forward my shortcomings, I will reflect on them and correct them if there are problems. I think listening to others' suggestions is a way to improve quickly.</p> <p>a7-28There is no idle time in working days</p> <p>.....</p>
W8	<p>a8-1 Read more books related to work</p> <p>a8-2 Seize every opportunity to carefully observe and study</p> <p>a8-3 Ask my predecessors to help me find problems</p> <p>a8-4 Ask my predecessors to answer their puzzles</p> <p>a8-5 Takes the initiative to develop to a higher career level</p> <p>a8-6 Supplement and deepen understanding of work-related professional knowledge through improving academic qualifications</p> <p>a8-7 Think about the relationship between practice and theory at work</p> <p>a8-8 Learn more theoretical knowledge from books after work</p> <p>a8-9 When encounter difficulties, consult the seniors</p> <p>a8-10Share my good and bad emotions with others</p> <p>a8-11Face difficulties without fear</p> <p>a8-12Meet difficulties and improve ability</p> <p>a8-13The reason why they are so loud and emotional is that their voice is not heard through normal channels, so they choose such an extreme form</p> <p>a8-14No matter our rank, every little thing we do is seen by him</p> <p>a8-15You must be unfamiliar with a thing at first, and then it will get better after a period of time. Don't worry</p> <p>a8-16Is willing to clean up in the office</p> <p>a8-17Takes the initiative to steam rice and cook soup for us</p> <p>a8-18Treat employees like family</p>



	<p>a8-19I want to do better</p> <p>a8-20Always be the first to stand out and face the risk</p> <p>a8-21Leader's periodic positive feedback</p> <p>a8-22Leader's approval of task results</p> <p>a8-23Leader's online praise of employees</p> <p>a8-24Leader's face-to-face praise of employees</p> <p>a8-25It is important to learn from this experience and not to make similar mistakes next time</p> <p>a8-26Comfort her all the time, letting her not have a burden, letting him relax and not to have psychological pressure</p> <p>a8-27Select to ignore small mistakes at work</p> <p>a8-28Protect everyone's psychological self-esteem and attach importance to the guidance of our growth</p> <p>a8-29Will do better in the future</p> <p>a8-30Sometimes leave earlier and come back later</p> <p>a8-31If there is no activity, the time is basically your own</p> <p>a8-32Read and study in my spare time</p> <p>a8-33I will pay more attention to what I want to do</p> <p>a8-34I don't think it's terrible to make mistakes</p> <p>a8-35More importantly, we should learn from our mistakes and make ourselves better</p> <p>.....</p>
L9	<p>a9-1 If I don't study or improve, I may not be able to handle business</p> <p>a9-2 I also need to communicate with colleagues and leaders, because this is necessary for work</p> <p>a9-3 He is only sensitive to my mistakes, and he doesn't care about other aspects</p> <p>a9-4 Leaders send me emails to assign tasks. And it always says that I only do what I need to do, and don't care about what I don't need to do</p> <p>a9-5 If there are no mistakes, my leader will not tell me anything</p> <p>a9-6 If I make a mistake, my leader will severely criticize me and impose a fine</p> <p>a9-7 My leader will remind me of the consequences if I make mistakes again</p> <p>a9-8 I remind myself that we must not make mistakes again, we must be cautious</p> <p>a9-9 I pay more attention to prevent mistakes</p> <p>.....</p>
K10	<p>a10-1My job requires me to have strong learning ability</p> <p>a10-2In my work, I seldom communicate with leaders and colleagues, but more about inquiry or work support</p> <p>a10-3My leader emphasizes not to omit some key points when arranging tasks</p> <p>a10-4I care more about not making mistakes</p> <p>a10-5I think my work is a task assigned by my leaders, so I can finish it quickly</p> <p>a10-6I don't have much expectation for him, because my leaders will criticize</p>

	<p>me no matter what I do</p> <p>a10-7Reduce expectations and revise goals</p> <p>a10-8Many people will feel aggrieved by criticism, but I will not, because I know what I am doing and I have my own goals in my work</p> <p>a10-9I have little free time in my work</p> <p>a10-10 My workflow is serious and rigorous</p> <p>.....</p>
Z11	<p>a11-1In my position, I need to have a good relationship with my colleagues</p> <p>a11-2I can't do all the business of our bank alone, so I have to cooperate with my colleagues</p> <p>a11-3Goal oriented task arrangement</p> <p>a11-4When encountering pressure, I will calm down and think about it to relax my mind, which can be regarded as decompression</p> <p>a11-5My leader's behavior is more inclined to fight for honor</p> <p>a11-6When assigning tasks, my leader will aim at a general goal, assign tasks according to the nature of our posts and personal abilities, and then lead us to achieve the goals</p> <p>a11-7My leadership encourages more work for more</p> <p>a11-8My leader pays attention to material and spiritual rewards</p> <p>a11-9I am very happy and think I must make greater efforts</p> <p>a11-10 Pays more attention to team harmony, which is conducive to achieving work goals</p> <p>a11-11 I pay more attention to the goal of our bank outlets to achieve</p> <p>a11-12 I pay more attention to my salary, and I pay more attention to earning this salary with a clear conscience</p> <p>.....</p>
Y12	<p>a12-1Work requires me to study</p> <p>a12-2Work requires me to manage social relations</p> <p>a12-3Passively improve ability and develop social relations</p> <p>a12-4The company requires us to do some additional things, which is our duty and our own work</p> <p>a12-5When encountering some pressure, I will be very anxious, and I don't like to share with others, so I always have a lot of things in my mind, with a lot of pressure</p> <p>a12-6I tend to solve most problems by myself</p> <p>a12-7Tend to prevent injuries</p> <p>a12-8I hope my leaders will actively encourage me, help me analyze problems and give me suggestions. I don't like to ask others to help me, but I hope others will come to me more actively</p> <p>a12-9My leader pays more attention to mistakes or deficiencies</p> <p>a12-10 Leaders' feedback is generally criticism</p> <p>a12-11 The premise of trying risks is that I should avoid losses under predictable circumstances</p> <p>a12-12 On the whole, I will be careful not to make mistakes, and even if there are mistakes, I will mind letting him know</p>



	<p>a12-13 The rest time shall be kept available/ready for work</p> <p>a12-14 I didn't think about the relationship of all aspects of work systematically or in a very strict framework</p> <p>.....</p>
L13	<p>a13-1 The seemingly voluntary training is actually forced to attend the training</p> <p>a13-2 We need to master the methods of relationship management, such as upward management and downward management</p> <p>a13-3 If a new project completely exceeds my comfort zone and the scope of my knowledge and experience, I will be very resistant to doing it</p> <p>a13-4 Take risks to undertake new tasks, the results are bad, and the leadership criticizes</p> <p>a13-5 I'm unwilling to take risks to undertake tasks that I am not sure of</p> <p>a13-6 When I encounter pressure, I rarely seek help from others. I will work hard and digest the pressure by myself, so I will lose sleep</p> <p>a13-7 I have to deal with tricky customers</p> <p>a13-8 My leaders rarely take risks to do projects they have never tried</p> <p>a13-9 My leaders are cautious in doing things</p> <p>a13-10 My leaders are afraid of making mistakes in doing things</p> <p>a13-11 My leaders generally follow the company's procedures in doing things</p> <p>a13-12 My leaders generally stress that we should not make mistakes when arranging tasks</p> <p>a13-13 When arranging tasks, my leader will emphasize the negative impact of task failure on the company</p> <p>a13-14 My leaders sometimes criticize me in public</p> <p>a13-15 I'm afraid to be criticized in public</p> <p>a13-16 Fear of making a fool</p> <p>a13-17 Be very careful</p> <p>a13-18 I will keep working after work</p> <p>.....</p>
H14	<p>a14-1 My leader will emphasize the potential positive impact on the company after the task is completed</p> <p>a14-2 My leaders often trust or support me, let me try many possibilities, and let me not be afraid of failure</p> <p>a14-3 My leaders give positive feedback on my phased achievements</p> <p>a14-4 My leaders recognize my task results</p> <p>a14-5 My leaders often praise employees</p> <p>a14-6 My leaders actively explore new areas in their work</p> <p>a14-7 I will take the initiative to think of ways to do my own work well</p> <p>a14-8 Don't be afraid/dare to take risks in order to do a good job</p> <p>a14-9 When I do things, I will think about who I need to help, and then I will usually pay attention to the accumulation of contacts</p> <p>a14-10 I will refer to many materials and collect a lot of information to inspire myself to complete the work more efficiently and better.</p> <p>.....</p>

W15 and others	<p>a15-1I will not seek resources to improve efficiency</p> <p>a15-2I will not try new projects bravely</p> <p>a15-3My leader is very cautious about new attempts</p> <p>a15-4My leader attaches great importance to doing things according to the process and rules</p> <p>a15-5My leader strictly executes the instructions of the superior and the group company at ordinary times</p> <p>a15-6My leader believes that this work is the task assigned above, and we should do it well</p> <p>a15-7My leader emphasizes that we must complete it carefully, otherwise if we make mistakes, we will lose our reputation. I don't want our department's reputation to be damaged because of this project.</p> <p>a15-8My leader stressed that every one of us should take responsibility for the mistakes made in this project.</p> <p>a15-9I must not make mistakes</p> <p>a15-10 Because if I make mistakes, I will hardly have the opportunity to take charge of such projects in the future</p> <p>a15-11 I am afraid of taking risks and making mistakes</p> <p>a15-12 In order to avoid small risks, I will not improve efficiency to complete the task</p> <p>a15-13 I successfully completed this project, and my leader did not criticize or reward me, he just thought I completed the task normatively</p> <p>a15-14 My leaders will remember what I did badly. After I made mistakes, it is hard for me to have a chance to turn around</p> <p>.....</p>
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Source: Sorted from data analyzed in NVivo, 2022

## APPENDIX 4: FOCUS CODES

Appendix 4 Focus codes

Core category	Focus code	Category	Initial code (Partial)
Leader's promotion focused feedback	A1 positive feedback	aa1	a7-22,a8-25,a8-28,
		aa2	a1-16,a3-15
		aa3	a14-3,a1-15,a8-21,a8-24
		aa4	a7-21
		aa5	a14-2,a4-17
Leader's promotion focused linguistic framing	A2 guide growth	aa6	a7-24
		aa7	a1-18,a11-7
		aa8	a14-1,a11-6
		aa9	a11-6,a3-13
Leader's promotion focused role modeling	A3 Emphasize acquisition	aa10	a7-21,a11-3,a11-6
		aa11	a7-14,a8-20,a3-12
		aa12	a7-18,a1-12,a8-16
		aa13	a7-15,a1-14
		aa14	a8-14
Leader's promotion focused role modeling	A4 change-motivation	aa15	a7-12,a8-13
		A5 wish,achievement,reward-focus	

			aa16	Goal orientation	a7-13,a11-5
			aa17		
	A6	Realize the ideal	aa18	Goal oriented to solve problems	a11-10
			aa19	Focus on realizing mission and ideal	a11-10
Employee's work regulatory focus promotion	A7	Seek to obtain	aa20	pay attention to that I can get more salary after working hard	a3-16
			aa21	Love work more	a1-20
			aa22	In order to do this task well, I am willing to take risks	a14-8
			aa23	Do something beyond duty	a1-22, a11-10
	A8	Improve myself	aa24	Improve working style and improve ability	a7-25, a8-19, a11-10
			aa25	Try my best	a1-21,a11- 9,a4-21
			aa26	Develop professionalism and capacities	a7-1, a14-10, a8-6
			aa27	Make sure that I use my capacities to the fullest	a4-1, a4-6
Job crafting is stimulated	A9	seeking resources	aa28	Communicate with my leader or ask for help	a7-9, a1-6, a11-2
			aa29	Communicate with colleagues or others or ask for their help	a8-3,a8-4, a14-9
	A10	seeking challenges	aa30	Offer myself proactively as project co-worker, when an interesting project comes along	a8-5, a7-8, a3- 7

			aa31	See it as a chance to start new projects, when there is not much to do at work	a1-8, a8-32
			aa32	Regularly take on extra tasks even though there isn't extra salary	a4-2
			aa33	Try to make my work more challenging by examining the underlying relationships between aspects of the job	a8-7, a4-4
A11	reducing demands	aa34	Make sure that my work is mentally less intense	a8-9, a1-1, a11-4	
		aa35	Manage my work so that I try to minimize contact with people whose problems affect me emotionally	a1-5	
				a4-15	
Leader's prevention focused feedback	A12	negative feedback	aa36	Mainly take the way of criticism to feed back problems	a2-19, a10-6, a13-14
			aa37	Neglect achievements	a6-5, a15-13
			aa38	Pay more attention to what is not well done than what is well done	a2-18, a6-17, a15-14
Leader's promotion focused linguistic framing	A13	Evoke duty	aa39	Focus on the minimum objectives of job requirements	a9-4
			aa40	a commanding tone	a2-17, a6-3
			aa41	Emphasize not making mistakes	a10-3, a2-17, a15-7
Leader's promotion focused linguistic framing	A14	Guide security needs	aa42	Emphasize the importance of tasks for organizational security	a13-13, a15-6
			aa43	Explain potential losses after mission failure	a2-17, a15-8
			aa44	Emphasis on reducing negative impacts	a13-13, a15-7
Leader's promotion focused role modeling	A15	Emphasize loss	aa45	Be sensitive to making mistakes	a13-10, a2-13, a9-3
			aa46	Do things in strict accordance with organizational rules	a13-11, a15-4
			aa47	Leaders are unwilling to take risks	a13-8, a15-3
Leader's promotion focused role modeling	A16	responsible, obligation, punishment-focus			
			A17	stability-motivation	

Employee's work regulatory focus prevention	A18	Avoid losses	aa48	Leaders are cautious in doing things	a13-9	
			aa49	Avoid fines	a2-14, a15-10, a5-10	
			aa50	Avoid criticism	a13-16, a12-12, a5-10	
	A19	Ensure safety	aa51	The consideration is to avoid risks as much as possible	a13-5, a6-16	
			aa52	Make sure nothing goes wrong	a10-4, a13-16, a9-8	
			aa53	I think it's a task assigned by the leader, and I should do it well	a10-5	
	A20	Performance of obligations	aa54	I think this is my duty	a6-20, a5-10	
			aa55	Don't/passively develop my professionalism and capacities	a10-1, a2-3, a6-1	
			aa56	Don't/passively use my capacities to the fullest	a15-1, a15-12	
	A21	Refusing (or passively) seeking resources	aa57	Seldom/passively communicate with my leader or ask for help	a10-2, a13-2, a6-2	
aa58			Seldom/passively communicate with colleagues or others or ask for their help	a10-2, a13-2, a2-9		
aa59			When an interesting project comes along, I seldom/passively offer myself as project co-worker	a13-3		
				a2-10		
A22	refusing (or passively) seeking challenges	aa60	I seldom/passively take on extra tasks even though I do not receive extra salary for them	a6-4, a12-4		
		aa61	Seldom examine the underlying relationships between aspects of job	a12-14		
				a13-6, a2-11, a62		
A23	Refusing (or passively) reducing					



		demands					a12-5
			aa63	I manage my work so that I try to minimize contact with people whose problems affect me emotionally and whose expectations are unrealistic			a13-7
				My work has high degree of freedom			a7-29,a8-36
	A24	High work complexity	aa64	My work has high degree of diversity for skills, results and potential paths			a2-24,a5-12
Work complexity				My work has low degree of freedom			a1-24,a3-21
	A25	Low work complexity	aa65	My work has low degree of diversity for skills, results and potential paths			a6-22,a9-10
				My organization is willing to support for employees' transformational work			a7-31,a8-37
Organizational transformational atmosphere	A26	High organizational transformational atmosphere	aa66	My organization is tolerant for employees' diversity,			a12-15,a13-20
				My organization is unwilling to support for employees' transformational work			a11-13
	A27	Low organizational transformational atmosphere	aa67	My organization is not tolerant for employees' diversity,			a2-26,a5-15,a15-16
				I always focus on wish, achievement, reward			a7-30,a8-36
	A28	Portrait regulatory focus promotion	aa68	I always willing to make change			a10-11,a20-21
Portrait regulatory focus				I always focus on responsible, obligation, punishment			a16-18,a19-19
	A29	Portrait regulatory focus prevention	aa69	I am more prefer to stability			a2-25,a5-13,a15-17

Source: Sorted from data analyzed in NVivo, 2022

## APPENDIX 5: THEORY CODING

### Appendix 5 Theory coding (process of inter generic relationship construction)

Through the further investigation and in-depth analysis of these 11 focus codes ("positive feedback"; "guide growth"; "emphasis acquisition"; "change movement"; "wish, achievement, reward focus"; "negative feedback"; "evoke duty"; "guide security needs"; "emphasis loss"; "responsible, objective, promotion focus"; "stability mobility") that reflect leadership behaviour, at the same time, through interactive comparison with the original data records, it is found that the data of leadership behaviour can be explained by the three categories of "role modelling", "linguistic framing" and "feedback".

- (6) *Role modelling refers to that leaders influence their subordinates through the modelling behaviours. And the modelling of leader's "wish, achievement, reward-focus; change motivation" can effectively improve employees to job crafting; however, the modelling of their "responsibility, objectification, punishment-focus; stability motivation" may reduce the job crafting level of employees.*
- (7) *Linguistic framing refers to the language description method used by leaders to arrange jobs or tasks for subordinate employees. Linguistic framing in the form of "guide growth" and "empire acquisition" by leaders is more likely to improve employee job crafting; and "evoke duty"; the "guide security needs" and "emphasize loss" task descriptions of leaders may reduce the generation of job crafting.*
- (8) *Feedback refers to the relevant reaction and evaluation of leaders on the results of employee tasks. Related to job crafting improvement is positive feedback (such as praise, reward, etc.), which is used when employees succeed and detained when they fail; oppositely, related to job crafting reduction is negative feedback (such as criticism, punishment, etc.) which is used when employees fail and detained when they succeed.*

From the aspects of job crafting improvement and reduction:



- (9) *The codes (“guide growth”, “emphasize acquisition”, “change-motivation”, “wish, achievement, reward focus” and “positive feedback”) reflect the leadership behaviour data related to employee job crafting improvement. It can be seen that the above behaviours of leaders convey such a message to employees: the leaders expect employees to complete the work or task well, and the leaders expect ideal goals and better results.*
- (10) *While the codes (“evoke duty”, “guide security needs”, “emphasis loss”, “responsible, opposition, publicity focus”, “stability motivation” and “negative feedback”) reflect the data of leadership behaviour related to employee job crafting reduction. Similarly, it can be seen that leadership behaviour conveys another message to employees: this task is what employees should do. What leaders require is the performance of duties and the avoidance of risks.*
- (11) *“Realize the ideal”, “seek to obtain”, and “improve myself” codes reflect the data on employee reactions and status related to job crafting improvement. At this time, the need for growth and development encourages employees to try to achieve their ideal selves and improve their sensitivity to positive results.*
- (12) *On the contrary, “avoid losses”, “ensure safety”, and “performance of interruptions” codes reflect the data of employee reactions and states related to job crafting reduction. At this time, security needs to urge employees to try to achieve their own goals and improve their sensitivity to negative results.*

According to the theory of regulatory focus, individuals have two sets of basic self-regulation systems. The performance of regulatory focus promotion is to pursue “ideal self”, care about hope and desire, and be more sensitive to positive results; the regulatory focus prevention is characterized by sticking to “obligatory self”, caring about duties, obligations and responsibilities, and being more sensitive to negative results. According to the explanation of regulatory focus theory, the focus codes of the above two types of leadership behaviour essentially contain different regulatory focus tendencies.

(13) *“Positive feedback”, “guide growth”, “emphasize acquisition”, “change-motivation”; “wish, achievement, reward focus” these focus codes can be promoted to the category of “leadership promotion focused behaviour”.*

(14) *“Negative feedback”, “evoke duty”, “guide security needs”, “emphasize loss”, “responsible, obligation, punishment-focus”; “stability motivation” can be promoted to the category of “leadership prevention focused behaviour”.*

(15) *And “leadership regulatory focused behaviour” exists as a higher-level concept category.*

The focus code of employee response also shows different regulatory focus improvement.

(16) *The focus codes (“realize the ideal”, “seek to obtain”, “improve myself”) can be promoted to the category of “employee work regulatory focus promotion”.*

(17) *While the focus codes (“avoid losses”, “ensure safety” and “performance of obligations”) can be promoted to the category of “employee work regulatory focus prevention”.*

(18) *“Employee work regulatory focus” exists as a higher-level concept category.*

“Leadership regulatory focused behaviour” and “employee work regulatory focus” can properly represent what is reflected in the data, so they will be the core concept categories of results, and the author will elaborate in the research findings and conclusion.

## APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEWS RELATED TO IMPROVEMENT PROCESS OF LEADERSHIP PROMOTION FOCUSED BEHAVIOUR ON EMPLOYEE JOB CRAFTING

**Appendix 6-1-1 English version of interview for Z3**

Interviewee No.:	Z3
Gender:	Female
Position:	Subject leader in a primary school
Date:	14/7/2022
Time:	3.00pm
Place:	Yuncheng city, Shanxi province, China (formal face-to-face interview)
Interview question:	<p>Tell me about your work responsibilities, is there much freedom of work?</p> <p>Have you ever tried to make changes in order to coordinate your work and life?</p> <p>What have you done? Focus on the following aspects: things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources), seeking challenges (seeking challenges)and stress and strain relief (reducing demands ).</p> <p>Did you like them? / were you told to do them? / did you volunteer? / or were you always asked to do things?</p> <p>What did you do there?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>I like my work very much. When I was young, I dreamed of being a host. But for various reasons, I became a primary school teacher. But the two professions are very similar in many ways. In this process, I constantly improve my professional level and hope to teach children in a very good way. So, I can do the work I like, and I'm really happy.</p> <p>In order to improve my work, I always download relevant software on the internet and learn relevant courses. For example, I downloaded Jane Zhi app, and there are many famous teachers such as Yu Dan in this software. I can learn relevant knowledge and how to communicate with others. In this app I can also follow the host to read and contact mandarin.</p> <p>The year before last, the education bureau of Yuncheng district organized training for primary school teachers. In the training, I saw the teaching methods of teachers from more advanced regions. For example, how to teach children to read the whole book, how to organize morning recitation teaching, etc. After the training, when I came back, I applied the methods and skills I learned to teaching actively.</p>

	<p>My leader is still humanistic. Last year I got sick and got tenosynovitis and herpes zoster. I went to communicate with the leaders and hoped that the workload could be adjusted temporarily. In my regular work, I usually have some managing teacher task, some teaching students task and taking over class. I applied to the leader, who agreed that I would not be a class teacher to take over task that semester.</p> <p>When the school announces the opportunity to apply for a research project, I take the initiative to apply. This year alone, I applied for two projects and actively participated in the research.</p> <p>If the school organizes teaching competitions, I may not hesitate to participate. Because I think the competition is a good opportunity to communicate, learn and improve my skills.</p> <p>There is always pressure, but I try to turn it into motivation and urge myself to push forward slowly. When there is periodic progress, the pressure may naturally decrease or disappear.</p> <p>Sometimes, I can relieve the pressure by singing, listening to music, running, swimming and yoga.</p> <p>I don't like to be indecisive. The goal of my work is to think about how to do a good job and let my students learn and grow happily.</p>
Interview question:	<p>Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't ( promotion/prevention) make the changes?</p> <p>How about your manager's impact on your changes?</p> <p>When your manager is completing his/her task, what is the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result is he/she sensitive to?/ what results and aims does he care more about?</p> <p>How does his/her mood change during the work process?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>My leader is young and very energetic. He has just arrived at our school and carried out various reforms. These reforms include the management of teachers, the construction of school spirit and the governance of the campus environment. He also led his own team to weed and plant trees.</p>
Interview question:	<p>When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager?</p> <p>Were you given a clear understanding of the task?</p> <p>How were you given?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>My leader often clearly lists the goals that we need to accomplish, and arranges tasks according to the goals. For example, he will list goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 one by one.</p>
Interview question:	<p>How did you get feedback? Was it documented or a word? Was it very formal?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>Every semester, my leaders may select the best teachers with teaching awards and give a notice of praise to the whole school. The leader may also give performance awards for our teaching plans.</p>
Interview question:	<p>What was your reaction?</p>
Interviewee	<p>After receiving encouragement, I always think that I may work harder, because I</p>

response:	want to get more rewards.
Interview question:	When you are completing your task, what is the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result are you sensitive to?/ what results and aims do you care more about? How did your mood change during the work process?
Interviewee response:	I feel that if I do my best, I may not regret it. Compared with avoiding risks, I always pursue a good goal. But although there are some regrets sometimes, I think it is good to work hard. For example, I only won the third-level prize in a teaching skills competition, but I still think I am good. As long as I give full play to my ability, I feel good.

Source: Drawn from transcription of indepth interview fieldwork, 2022

Appendix 6-1-2 Mandarin version of interview for respondent Z3

访谈编号:	Z3
性别:	女
职位:	小学-教研室主任
日期:	14/7/2022
时间:	下午3.00
地点:	中国山西省运城市（面对面访谈）
访谈问题:	<p>你好感谢您的参与。现在我正在威尔士圣大卫三一大学攻读博士学位。我的博士论文是关于工作行为的研究。</p> <p>请说说您的工作职责。您的工作自由吗？一般需要什么技能？您如何完成工作？</p> <p>您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致？</p> <p>如果是，您在以下几方面做过些什么？</p> <p>如果不是，您在以下几方面表现如何？</p> <p>寻求社交支持方面，提高知识、技能、能力方面，寻求挑战方面，消除压力和紧张方面</p> <p>您喜欢吗？/您是被要求去做的还是自愿？</p> <p>当时您做了什么？</p>
回答:	<p>我很喜欢我的工作。在我年轻的时候，梦想当一位主持人。但是因为种种原因，我当了一位小学老师。但这两种职业很多方面非常相似。在这个过程中，我不断提高我的业务水平，希望可以以非常好的样子给孩子们上课。所以，自己可以做自己喜欢的工作，真的非常开心。[a3-1不断提高我的业务水平，希望可以以非常好的样子给孩子们上课]</p> <p>为了提高我这个业务水平，我会在网上下载相关软件，学习相关课程。比如简知，这个软件里面还有于丹老师等非常多的有名的老师。我可以学相关知识，还有如何与人沟通等等。还会跟着主持人主播跟读，联系普通话。[a3-2下载软件，学习知识][a3-3下载软件，提升沟通技能][a3-4跟读，练习普通话]</p> <p>前年，运城地区教育局组织小学老师进行培训。在培训中，我看到更加先进的地区的老师们的教学方法。比如如何教孩子们读整本书，怎么组织晨诵课教学等等。参加完培训以后，我回来在教的过程中，就把学到的方法和技能运用在课堂教学中，积极地去尝试。[a3-5参加完培训以后，我回来在教的过程中，就把学到的方法和技能运用在课堂教学中，积极地去尝试]</p> <p>我们的领导还是比较人性化，去年我生病了，得了腱鞘炎和带状疱疹。我就跑去跟领导沟通希望可以暂时调整一下工作量。比如我平时边代课，边承担一些管理老师的职务和班主任的职务，我跟领导申请，领导同意我那一学期不做班主任了。[a3-6生病以后主动与领导沟通，以减少一些工作量]</p> <p>学校公布课题申请的机会时，我主动申请。仅仅在今年，我就申请了两个课题，积极参与课题研究。[a3-7主动抓住课题申请的机会，积极参与课题研究。]</p> <p>如果学校组织教学比赛，我会毫不犹豫的参加。因为我觉得比赛是一个很好的交流、学习和提高自己技能的机会。[a3-8积极参加教学技能比赛]</p> <p>压力常常都有，但我会尝试把它转化成动力，督促自己慢慢推进。当有阶段性的进展的时候，压力自然就会变小或者消失。[a3-9尝试把压力转化成动力]</p> <p>有时候，我还会通过唱歌、听音乐、跑步、游泳、联系瑜伽来缓解压力。</p>

	<p>[a3-10通过唱歌、听音乐、跑步、游泳、联系瑜伽来缓解压力]</p> <p>我不喜欢做事瞻前顾后，犹豫不决。我工作的目标就是：想着怎样把工作做好，让我的学生们开心快乐地学习成长。[a3-11我不喜欢做事瞻前顾后，犹豫不决。我会追逐着工作的目标进行努力]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>请谈谈您主动去做上述改变的原因？您直接上司在其中有没有影响,如何影响？</p> <p>请说一说您的直接领导在完成工作时的行事风格。他在完成工作时，奖励是什么，惩罚是什么？在完成工作时，他对什么样的结果敏感？他更关注什么样的结果和目标？在工作过程中，他的情绪如何变化？</p>
回答：	<p>我的领导年龄不大，做事非常有冲劲，刚到我们学校，就进行了多方面的改革。这些改革包括教师管理、校风建设还包括校园环境的治理。他还亲自带队除草、种树。[a3-12领导做事非常有冲劲，在工作中进行多方面的改革]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>当您尝试改变工作任务/关系/认知的时候，您和领导的沟通如何？</p> <p>您可以很清晰的理解工作任务吗？</p> <p>您的直接上司是如何向您或部门成员来阐述这项工作或任务的？</p>
回答：	<p>我的领导会清晰罗列我们需要完成的目标，结合目标来进行任务安排。比如：他会把目标1、2、3、4、5逐一列出来。[a3-13我的领导会清晰罗列我们需要完成的目标，结合目标来进行任务安排]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>领导是怎样对您任务阶段性表现或结果进行反应或反馈的？</p>
回答：	<p>每学期，领导都会评选出教学奖，同时进行全校通知表扬。[a3-14领导评选出教学奖，并进行全校通知表扬]领导还会针对我们的教案进行绩效奖励。[a3-15领导会针对我们的教案进行绩效奖励]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>您的反应是什么？</p>
回答：	<p>收到鼓励之后，我会更加努力，因为我想多拿一些奖励。[a3-16收到鼓励之后，我会更加努力，因为我想多拿一些奖励]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>请说一说您在完成任务时的行事风格。您在完成工作时，奖励是什么，惩罚是什么？在完成工作时，您对什么样的结果敏感？您更关注什么样的结果和目标？</p> <p>在工作过程中，您的情绪如何变化？</p>
回答：	<p>我觉得尽力而为，就不后悔。相对于规避风险，我总是追求一个很好的目标。[a3-17相对于规避风险，我总是追求一个很好的目标]但是虽然有时候会有一些遗憾，但我觉得只要努力了就很好了。比如，有一次教学技能比赛，我只得了三等奖，但我还是觉得自己不错的。我只要把我的能力尽力发挥出来了，我就觉得挺好的。[a3-18虽然有时候会有一些遗憾，但我觉得只要努力了就很好了]</p>

**Appendix 6-2-1 English version of interview for respondent G7**

Interviewee No.:	G7
Gender:	Female
Position:	The vice principal in a Chinese high school
Date:	14/8/2022
Time:	4.00 pm
Place:	Yuncheng city, Shanxi province, China (formal face-to-face interview)
Interview question:	<p>Have you ever tried to make changes in order to coordinate your work and life? What have you done? Focus on the following aspects: things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources ), seeking challenges (seeking challenges)and stress and strain relief (reducing demands ).</p> <p>Did you like them? / were you told to do them? / did you volunteer? / or were you always asked to do things?</p> <p>What did you do there?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>I usually consciously learn to improve my ability, whether it is to follow some public accounts on WeChat (such as ming principal's studio) or read books. I also consciously consult with educational management experts, psychological experts and seize the opportunity to go out to learn. For example, before I go out to study, I participate in some national excellent class teacher training, and after I come back, I apply the relevant knowledge to my work. I think it's very good.</p> <p>I think we should work hard. In my work, I pay attention to what I need to learn, and then in my daily life, I consciously observe and learn, and then apply it in my work.</p> <p>In the past, the work of the head teacher was not challenging for me. At that time, I wanted to find a challenging job, so I went to my current position step by step.</p> <p>In the process of my career development, the leaders have recommended me to a new position or undertake new tasks. I feel that the leaders must trust on me when they encourage me to a new position , and I actively seize the opportunity and work hard to catch up to their trust in me.</p> <p>In my work, I actively communicate with colleagues and leaders, and also actively communicate with subordinates to influence them. I keep people around me consistent in their behavior and ideological goals, so that we all work together and our school will become better and better. So I often tell our teachers that we should not complain about our school. We should always ask ourselves: as a member of our school, what contributions have we made to our school, and what should we do to make our school better?</p> <p>When I went to a national headmaster training, our head teacher asked me if I would like to be a study committee member. I thought this was a good opportunity to exercise myself, so I agreed at once.</p>
Interview question:	<p>Tell me the reasons why you did make the changes? How about your manager's impact on your changes?</p> <p>When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to?/ what results and</p>



	aims does he care more about?How did his/her mood change during the work process?
Interviewee response:	<p>This is the working style of my leader, our headmaster. He often pays attention to what we do well. He also put forward mistakes, but he may not criticize, but guide us to do well next time. So he is mainly praise-oriented.</p> <p>My leaders often tell me not to be afraid of encountering problems. If there are any problems, he tells me to insist on communication. There is no problem that communication cannot solve.</p> <p>My leader also said: "as a leader, we should be diligent and master first-hand information. For example, during the break, we can go to the corridor to have a look, so that we can understand the state of the students. We can also often go to the teacher's office to have a look, to learn about the feelings and thoughts of teachers, or whether there are any difficulties in life. If some teachers have difficulties, we can take the initiative to help them." Moreover, my leaders are not afraid of contradictions or problems. When reform is needed, my leader resolutely makes changes, even if the reform may harm the interests of some people. I think he has done a good job in this respect. He dares to face challenges and difficulties.</p>
Interview question:	<p>When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager?</p> <p>Were you given a clear understanding of the task? How were you given?</p>
Interviewee response:	When arranging tasks, my leader communicates with me in advance to ensure that all of us have the same goals and promote work based on goals.
Interview question:	How did you get feedback?
Interviewee response:	<p>My leader, our headmaster, works very carefully. He is also very cautious when making suggestions, and may not criticize us. Instead, he analyzes the problems in a reasonable way and put forward suggestions. For example, he goes to the field to investigate my work, not just listen to me. For example, as the principal in charge of teaching, it is one of my duties to supervise whether the teacher left early in the last class. Several times, when I didn't check, he went to check, and found that many teachers left early. After several consecutive observations, he pointed out the problem reasonably, and then we discussed the solutions.</p> <p>When my leader gives feedback, he may not be very forceful and take the form of criticism, but take the facts as the basis. When following up the improvement in the later stage of the error, my leader may not be very strong. He tells us to advance step by step and solve the problem step by step.</p>
Interview question:	What was your reaction? What did you do
Interviewee response:	I think my leaders pointed out my problems reasonably. I am particularly willing to accept them and have made positive improvements in the future work. After that, I may also reflect on whether there are similar problems. I am a person who likes to reflect. I think it is the fastest to grow up when solving mistakes and problems.
Interview	In your work, do you pay more attention to avoiding mistakes or what you want to

question:	achieve?
Interviewee response:	I think I personally prefer reflection. Although everyone likes to listen to praise and nice words, I also like to listen to them. But if someone puts forward my shortcomings, I will reflect on them and correct them if there are problems. I think listening to others' suggestions is a way to improve quickly.
Interview question:	How busy is your work, do you feel?
Interviewee response:	To tell the truth, I have little free time to arrive at school from monday to friday, that is, working days. In addition to managing the teaching work of the whole school, I also need to prepare and give lectures.

Source: Drawn from transcription of indepth interview fieldwork, 2022

Appendix 6-2-2 Mandarin version of interview for respondent G7

访谈编号:	G7
性别:	女
职位:	高中-副校长
日期:	14/782022
时间:	下午4.00
地点:	中国山西省运城市（面对面访谈）
访谈问题:	<p>您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致？</p> <p>如果是，您在以下几方面做过些什么？</p> <p>如果不是，您在以下几方面表现如何？</p> <p>寻求社交支持方面，提高知识、技能、能力方面，寻求挑战方面，消除压力和紧张方面</p> <p>您喜欢吗？/您是被要求去做的还是自愿？</p> <p>当时您做了什么？</p>
回答:	<p>我自己平常会有意识地学习提高能力，无论是在微信上关注一些公众号（如：明校长工作室），还是看书。[a7-1我自己平常会有意识地学习提高能力，无论是在微信上关注一些公众号（如：明校长工作室），还是看书]</p> <p>我还会有意识地去请教教育管理专家，咨询心理学专家并且抓住外出学习的机会交流学习。[a7-2有意识地去请教教育管理专家][a7-3咨询心理学专家][a7-4抓住外出学习的机会交流学习]比如，之前，在外出学习的时候，我会参加一些全国的优秀班主任培训，回来之后，我就把相关知识运用在工作中。我觉得很好。[a7-5在外出学习的时候，我会参加一些全国的优秀班主任培训，回来之后，我就把相关知识运用在工作中]</p> <p>我觉得干工作，得用心。在工作中，我会留意我需要学习什么，然后在平时的生活中，我会有意识地观察学习，然后在工作中应用起来。[a7-6在工作中，我会留意我需要学习什么，然后在平时的生活中，我会有意识地观察学习，然后在工作中应用起来。]</p> <p>原来班主任的工作对于我来说没有挑战性了，当时我就会想着去寻找有挑战性的工作，所以就一步一步走到现在的岗位。[a7-7喜欢有挑战性的工作]</p> <p>在我的职业发展过程中，领导会推荐我到新的岗位或者承担新的任务，我就觉得领导找我一定是信任我，我就会积极去抓住机会，并且努力干好，觉得不能辜负领导对我的信任。[a7-8领导会推荐我到新的岗位或者承担新的任务，我就觉得领导找我一定是信任我，我就会积极去抓住机会]</p> <p>我在工作中，会积极与同事和领导沟通，也会积极地去和下属沟通，影响下属。我会让周围的人与我在行为和思想目标上保持一致，这样的话我们大家就会一起拼搏，我们的学校才会越来越好。[a7-9我在工作中，会积极与同事和领导沟通，也会积极地去和下属沟通，影响下属。][a7-10我会让周围的人与我在行为和思想目标上保持一致，这样的话我们大家就会一起拼搏，我们的学校才会越来越好。]所以我就经常跟我们学校的老师们讲，我们不要埋怨咱们学校不好，我们应该经常问问自己：作为我们学校的一份子，我们为我们学校做出了哪些贡献，应该做什么能让我们学校变得更好？</p> <p>我去参加全国校长培训，我们的班主任问我愿不愿意做学习委员，我觉得这是锻炼自己的好机会，就一口答应下来了。[a7-11我去参加全国校长培训，我们的班主任问我愿不愿意做学习委员，我觉得这是锻炼自己的好机会，就一口答应下来了。]</p>

访谈问题:	请谈谈您主动去做上述改变的原因? 您直接上司在其中有没有影响,如何影响?
回答:	<p>我的领导也就是我们的校长的工作风格就是这样的。他常常关注我们做的好的地方。[a7-12我的领导常常关注我们做的好的地方]犯了错误了他也会提出来,但他不会批评,而是引导我们下次做好就可以了。[a7-13如果我犯了错误了,他也会提出来,但他不会采取批评的方式,而是引导我们下次做好就可以了]所以他总体上是以表扬为主的。</p> <p>我的领导经常告诉我,不要怕遇到问题。[a7-14我的领导经常告诉我,不要怕遇到问题]如果遇到什么问题,他告诉我一定要坚持沟通,没有沟通解决不了的问题。[a7-15如果遇到什么问题,他告诉我一定要坚持沟通,没有沟通解决不了的问题。]</p> <p>我的领导还说:“作为领导,要勤快,要去掌握第一手资料。比如,课间,我们可以到楼道转一转,这样我们可以了解学生的状态。也可以经常到老师办公室转一转,了解一下老师们的情绪和思想状况,或者生活中有没有什么困难。如果有些老师有困难,就可以主动帮助他们。”[a7-16作为领导,要勤快,要去掌握第一手资料。][a7-17课间,我们可以到楼道转一转,这样我们可以了解学生的状态。也可以经常到老师办公室转一转,了解一下老师们的情绪和思想状况,或者生活中有没有什么困难。][a7-18如果有些老师有困难,就可以主动帮助他们。]而且,我的领导也不怕有矛盾,不怕出现问题。我的领导在需要改革的时候,会坚决地做出改变,即使这个改革可能会伤害到某一部分人的利益。[a7-19我的领导在需要改革的时候,会坚决地做出改变,即使这个改革可能会伤害到某一部分人的利益。]我觉得他这方面做的很好,他敢于直面挑战和困难。[a7-20我的领导敢于直面挑战和困难]</p>
访谈问题:	<p>当您尝试改变工作任务/关系/认知的时候,您和领导的沟通如何?</p> <p>您可以很清晰的理解工作任务吗?</p> <p>您的直接上司是如何向您或部门成员来阐述这项工作或任务的?</p>
回答:	<p>我的领导在安排任务的时候,会提前与我沟通,确保我们大家的目标一致的前提下,基于目标推进工作。[a7-21我的领导在安排任务的时候,会提前与我沟通,确保我们大家的目标一致的前提下,基于目标推进工作。]</p>
访谈问题:	领导是怎样对您任务阶段性表现或结果进行反应或反馈的?
回答:	<p>我的领导也就是我们的校长,他工作非常细致。在提意见的时候也非常谨慎,不会批评我们,而是有理有据地分析问题,然后提出建议。[a7-22我的领导也就是我们的校长,他工作非常细致。在提意见的时候也非常谨慎,不会批评我们,而是有理有据地分析问题,然后提出建议]比如,他会实地去考察我的工作情况,不只是听我说。比如,我是负责教学的校长,监督老师在最后一节课有没有早退是我的职责之一。有几次,我没有检查的时候,他去检查了,发现很多老师早退了。在连续观察了几次之后,他有理有据地指出问题,之后我们商议了解决方案。</p> <p>我的领导在反馈问题的时候,不会很强势,不会采取批评的方式,而是拿事实作为依据。[a7-23我的领导在反馈问题的时候,不会采取批评的方式,而是拿事实作为依据]在跟进错误后期的改进时,我的领导不会很强势,他会告诉我们一步一步推进,循序渐进地解决问题。[a7-24在跟进错误后期的改进时,我的领导不会很强势,他会告诉我们一步一步推进,循序渐进地解决问题。]</p>
访谈问题:	您的反应是什么?

回答:	我觉得领导是有理有据地指出我的问题的,我特别愿意接受,也在未来的工作中做出了积极的改进。[a7-25我觉得领导是有理有据地指出我的问题的,我特别愿意接受,也在未来的工作中做出了积极的改进。]之后我也会反思,有没有同类型的问题,我是一个特别喜欢反思的人。我觉得在问题中成长是最快的。[a7-26我是一个特别喜欢反思的人。我觉得在问题中成长是最快的]
访谈问题:	请说一说您在完成任务时的行事风格。您在完成工作时,奖励是什么,惩罚是什么?在完成任务时,您对什么样的结果敏感?您更关注什么样的结果和目标?
回答:	我觉得我个人还是比较喜欢反思的。虽然每个人都喜欢听表扬的话,听好听的话,我也喜欢听。但如果有人提出我的缺点了,我就会反思,如果有问题就改。我觉得听取别人的建议是提升很快的一个途径。[a7-27但如果有人提出我的缺点了,我就会反思,如果有问题就改。我觉得听取别人的建议是提升很快的一个途径。]
访谈问题:	您的工作忙吗?
回答:	说实话,周一到周五,也就是工作日,在学校里面,我几乎没有什么空闲时间到。我除了管理全校的教学工作,还要备课和讲课。[a7-28工作日没有空闲时间]

**APPENDIX 7: INTERVIEWS RELATED TO REDUCTION  
PROCESS OF LEADERSHIP PREVENTION FOCUSED  
BEHAVIOUR ON EMPLOYEE JOB CRAFTING**

**Appendix 7-1-1 English version of interview for respondent L2**

Interviewee No.:	L2
Gender:	Male
Position:	Section chief of a Chinese state-owned enterprise
Date:	9/7/2022
Time:	10.00am
Place:	Yuncheng city, shanxi province, China (formal face-to-face interview)
Interview question:	Tell me about your work responsibilities. How busy is your work do you feel?
Interviewee response:	<p>Our work is an assembly line operation, from raw materials to finished products is an assembly line operation. This job can't be stopped for a moment. It runs 24 hours a day. My work is mainly responsible for organizing and coordinating various processes in all aspects, keeping an eye on the work at all times, and can't relax.</p> <p>We are in a large department. Different from other departments, there are people on duty for 24 hours a day. workers here work very hard.</p>
Interview question:	<p>To align your job with your own preferences, motives, and passions what did you do? Things related to knowledge/abilities/skills, relationship (seeking resources ), seeking challenges (seeking challenges), and stress and strain relief (reducing demands ).</p> <p>Did you like them? / were you told to do them? / did you volunteer? / or were you always asked to do things? What did you do there?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>These have been going on since I started working, but they are all small aspects. For example, state-owned enterprises still have requirements for training, and I have to participate in the trainings. For example, I have to attend some management related training .</p> <p>There are many changes in personnel and leaders in our unit. I report as required by leaders. Some leaders require that everything should be reported to them, and some leaders just leave the work totally for me to handle, and then just ask me to report some major production changes. I feel that my communication with the leader is insufficient . Sometimes, when I completed the task, I rarely report to the leader actively, so the leader is not very clear about some situations .</p> <p>For the tasks assigned by the leaders, I used to finishing the tasks by myself first if</p>

	<p>I can finish them. If I let my subordinates complete or share some of my work, I feel that my efficiency is very low. On the one hand, I don't think it's easy to communicate with my subordinates. On the other hand, I think they don't do well and they always don't do well and I have to spend a lot of time to modify their work and complete the work finally. So I feel it's better for me to do the tasks by myself as possible as I can. But I think this is a disadvantage of my work as a manager.</p> <p>Our company's production technology has been relatively mature, and there are relatively few large process improvements, all of which are minor improvements. What's more, we should analyze the technical conditions to be improved, and then standardize the improvement.</p> <p>The pressure can only be endured. No matter how heavy the task assigned by the leader is, I can only do it. There is no other way.</p> <p>The staff loss in our enterprise is very serious, and there is a lot of backlog of work, so the tasks arranged by leaders can only be completed by working overtime. This is the state now.</p>
Interview question:	<p>Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't ( promotion/prevention) make the changes?How about your manager's impact on your changes?</p> <p>When your manager was completing his/her task, what kind of result was he/she sensitive to?How did his/her mood change during the work process? What was the reward and what is the punishment? What results and aims does he care more about?</p> <p>How would you describe the communication with your manager?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>Leaders are very sensitive to our mistakes.</p>
Interview question:	<p>What was your reaction? /what did you do? Why?</p> <p>How would you feel about the communications? Was it good? /was it bad?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>When I am working, the first thing I think about is that I don't want to be fined. So, first of all, I think about reducing mistakes and not making mistakes. Then, I think I may avoid doing something which may be risky to make mistakes. For example, I avoid doing things that are risky but beneficial to the organization, so that I can minimize mistakes.</p>
Interview question:	<p>Were you given a clear understanding of the task? How were you given?</p> <p>How did you get feedback? Was it documented or a word? Was it very formal?</p>
Interviewee response:	<p>My leader gives lectures and criticizes through the meeting, and then urges us to complete the tasks.</p> <p>At 8.40 every morning, our factory director, my leader, holds a morning meeting for us. At the morning meeting, he summarizes the work of the previous day and check whether there are work errors, unfinished indicators, production problems, and unfinished production indicators. Then, we explain reasons for mistakes. And then, based on the problems, my leader emphasizes the next step of improvement measures and work precautions.</p> <p>Each process of our work has specified process conditions, technical indicators, consumption costs, etc. That is to say, our work basically has no flexible space to conduct. When making arrangements, my leader often emphasizes that we must be careful not to have problems, otherwise there may be very serious accident</p>

	consequences.
Interview question:	In your work, do you pay more attention to avoiding mistakes or what you want to achieve?
Interviewee response:	I think I am not a person who likes taking risks. I have few ideas in my work and am not particularly sensitive to changes. I have my own ideas and views on work. The people and things around me have relatively little influence on me. I may not change too much.

Source: Drawn from transcription of indepth interview fieldwork, 2022



Appendix 7-1-2 Mandarin version of interview for respondent L2

访谈编号:	L2
性别:	男
职位:	国企-科长
日期:	9/7/2022
时间:	上午10.00
地点:	中国山西省运城市（面对面访谈）
访谈问题:	请说说您的工作职责。忙不忙？
回答:	<p>我们的工作是一个流水线作业，从原料到成品是一个流水线的作业。这个作业一刻都不能停，一天24小时一直在运转。我的工作主要是负责组织协调各方面的各个工序，时刻盯着工作，不能放松。[我的工作时刻都不能放松]</p> <p>我们这是一个大科室，不同于其他部门，24小时都有人在班上，非常辛苦。[我们的工作24小时都有人在班上，非常辛苦]</p>
访谈问题:	<p>您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致？</p> <p>如果是，您在以下几方面做过些什么？</p> <p>如果不是，您在以下几方面表现如何？</p> <p>寻求社交支持方面，提高知识、技能、能力方面，寻求挑战方面，消除压力和紧张方面</p> <p>您喜欢吗？/您是被要求去做的还是自愿？</p> <p>当时您做了什么？</p>
回答:	<p>从参加工作以来这些也在进行着，只不过就是说都是一些小的方面，比如，国有企业对培训还是有要求的，我不参加也不行[不参加培训也不行]。比如一些管理相关的培训，我也必须得参加[被要求必须参加一些工作相关培训]。</p> <p>我们这个单位人员变化比较多，领导变化也比较多，领导要求怎样汇报，我再按要求汇报。有的领导要求事无巨细都必须给他汇报，有的领导就是直接就交给我，我去办，然后一些大的生产的变化报给他就行了。[领导要求怎样汇报，我再按要求汇报]我觉得我跟领导的沟通不够[我觉得我跟领导的沟通不够]。有时候，我把任务完成了，我还是很少主动跟领导汇报，这样领导对一些情况也不是特别清楚[我把任务完成了，我还是很少主动跟领导汇报]。</p> <p>对于领导布置的任务，我这么多年习惯自己能完成的自己先完成。[对于领导布置的任务，我这么多年习惯自己能完成的自己先完成]让下属完成或者分担一些我的工作的话，我感觉效率非常低，我做的很不好。一方面我觉得不好沟通，另一方面，觉得他们做的不好[在与下属沟通和合作中，常常关注他们做的不完善的地方，忽视他们的成果]，我还得改半天。我觉得这是我作为管理者在工作上的一个缺点。另一方面，在个人这块就是这也是也是这么多年已经形成了这么一个东西了，就是说个人方面就是在领导布置的任务，能自己完成的，老师先自己就完成了，就是说就是你说的利用抵押的资源利用率也不是太好，不是太好，这样的话，自己感自己比较累，但是这种性格就是说有些事情想老想自己去做，把它做了做了，然后因为底下做的东西，有时候做上来还得修改半天，修改半天，这块地这也是一个管理上的欠缺吧，我们企业的生产技术已经比较成熟了，大的流程工艺改造比较少，都是一些小的改进。而且我们主要是现场碰到什么问题，再分析改进什么技术条件，然后再将改进规范下来。[现场碰到什么问题，再分析改进什么技术条件，然后再将改进规范下来]</p>

	<p>压力这块只能忍着。[压力这块只能忍着]领导安排下来的任务再重，我都只能去做去完成，没有其他办法了。</p> <p>我们企业人员流失非常严重，积压的工作很多，所以领导安排的任务，只能加班去完成。现在就是这样的状态。[虽然企业人员流失严重，仍旧高负荷工作]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>请谈谈您主动去做上述改变的原因？您直接上司在其中有没有影响,如何影响？</p> <p>请说一说您的直接领导在完成工作时的行事风格。他在完成工作时，奖励是什么，惩罚是什么？在完成工作时，他对什么样的结果敏感？他更关注什么样的结果和目标？在工作过程中，他的情绪如何变化？</p>
回答：	<p>领导主要对做的不好的地方非常敏感。[领导主要对做的不好的地方比较敏感。]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>您的反应是什么？</p>
回答：	<p>我在工作的时候，首先想着不能被扣钱，谁都不愿意被扣钱。[首先想着不能被扣钱]所以，我首先就会想着减少出错，不要出错。[想着减少出错]另一方面，我觉得我会在有些事情上我就不做了。比如一些有风险但对组织有利的东西我就避免去做，这样我可以尽量地减少失误。[一些有风险但对组织有利的东西我就避免去做，这样我可以尽量地减少失误]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>当您尝试改变工作任务/关系/认知的时候，您和领导的沟通如何？</p> <p>您可以很清晰的理解工作任务吗？</p> <p>您的直接上司是如何向您或部门成员来阐述这项工作或任务的？</p>
回答：	<p>他会通过会议进行训话批评，然后去督促完成任务。[领导会通过会议进行训话批评，然后去督促我们去完成任务。]</p> <p>每天早上8.40，我们的分厂厂长，也就是我的领导，会给我们开晨会。在晨会上，他会前一天的工作进行总结。审核一下有没有工作失误、没有完成的指标、生产问题，和未完成的生产指标等。[审核有无未完成的工作指标和工作失误等]然后，我们都要解释为什么没有完成，然后基于问题，强调下一步的改进措施和工作注意事项。[基于问题，强调下一步的改进措施和工作注意事项]</p> <p>我们的工作的每个工序都有规定的工艺条件，技术指标，消耗成本等，也就是说，我们的工作基本上没有灵活的空间去自由发挥。领导在安排的时候，常常会强调，一定要注意不要出问题，否则会有很严重的事故后果。[领导在安排的时候，常常会强调，一定要注意不要出问题，否则会有很严重的事故后果]</p>
访谈问题：	<p>请说一说您在完成任务时的行事风格。您在完成工作时，奖励是什么，惩罚是什么？在完成工作时，您对什么样的结果敏感？您更关注什么样的结果和目标？</p>
回答：	<p>我觉得我是那种比较专注的类型，我自己不属于喜欢冒险的人。在工作上，想法比较少，对改变这些不是特别敏感。[我自己不属于喜欢冒险的人。在工作上，想法比较少，对改变这些不是特别敏感]</p> <p>我对工作有我自己的想法和看法，周围的人和事对我的影响相对来说比较小，我自己轻易不会有太多改变。[我对工作有我自己的想法和看法，我自己轻易不会有太多改变]</p>

Appendix 7.2.1 English version of interview for respondent W15

Interviewee No.:	W15
Gender:	Male
Position:	Section chief of a Chinese power plant
Date:	26/8/2022
Time:	4.00 pm
Place:	Online video interview
Interview question:	Have you ever tried to seeking challenges at work? Did you like them?
Interviewee response:	In my daily work, although I can seek resources to do my work better and more efficiently, I generally do not do it, nor do I make some brave attempts.
Interview question:	Tell me the reasons why you did/didn't ( promotion/prevention) make the changes? How about your manager's impact on your changes? When your manager was completing his/her task, what was the reward and what is the punishment? What kind of result was he/she sensitive to?/ what results and aims does he care more about?How did his/her mood change during the work process? When taking the changes, how would you describe the communication with your manager? Were you given a clear understanding of the task? How were you given? How did you get feedback? Was it documented or a word? Was it very formal?
Interviewee response:	In China, PRC (programmable logic controller) is widely used in power plant systems. Once my leader assigned me a task, and he hoped that I would be responsible for introducing a more convenient control system, DSP (digital centralized control system). My leader tends to be very cautious about such attempts. This time, my leader also received the arrangements and requirements of the group company before he took over the pilot project. In fact, when my leader is working, he always thinks about how to cater to their superiors and the group company, and dares not go against their wishes. At the same time, he also attaches great importance to doing things according to procedures and rules. So when assigning tasks to us, my leader said this: "the superior leader has arranged this pilot project for us, and we should do it well. We should do it according to the requirements of the superior leader. We must conscientiously complete it, otherwise if there is a mistake, we will lose our reputation. I don't want our department's reputation to be damaged because of this project. If there is a mistake in this project, everyone of us should take responsibility.
Interview question:	What was your reaction? /what did you do?
Interviewee response:	My first reaction was: I must not make mistakes. Because if I make a mistake, I will hardly have the opportunity to assume the person in charge of this project in the future. At the same time, I also had a negative impact on our power plant. Because my leader has such a style, I may not improve efficiency to complete



	<p>tasks, because I am afraid of taking risks and making mistakes. For example, at that time, our superior unit arranged an implementation plan for us. If I completely followed the instructions, it would take about 5 days to complete the task. But according to my experience, this task can be completed in 2 days at most.</p> <p>However, considering that my leader did not want to make mistakes, I finally did the programming completely according to the instructed scheme, and I still spent 5 days to complete the task, although the risk of making mistakes was minimal according to my own scheme.</p> <p>Finally, I successfully completed the project without any problems. Of course, my leader did not criticize or reward me. He just thought I had fulfilled the task in a standardized way. If I made any mistakes, according to my leadership personality, he would certainly criticize me and punish me, and he would remember what I did badly. I guessed it's hard for me to turn around after making mistakes.</p>
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Source: Drawn from transcription of indepth interview fieldwork, 2022

Appendix 7-2-2 Mandarin version of interview for respondent W15

访谈编号:	W15
性别:	男
职位:	电厂-科长
日期:	26/8/2022
时间:	下午4.00
地点:	线上视频访谈
访谈问题:	请说说您的工作职责。忙不忙?
回答:	<p>我们的工作是一个流水线作业，从原料到成品是一个流水线的作业。这个作业一刻都不能停，一天24小时一直在运转。我的工作主要是负责组织协调各方面的各个工序，时刻盯着工作，不能放松。[我的工作时刻都不能放松]</p> <p>我们这是一个大科室，不同于其他部门，24小时都有人在班上，非常辛苦。[我们的工作24小时都有人在班上，非常辛苦]</p>
访谈问题:	<p>您是否尝试为了让自己的喜好、动机、热情和工作相一致?</p> <p>如果是，您在以下几方面做过些什么?</p> <p>如果不是，您在以下几方面表现如何?</p> <p>寻求社交支持方面，提高知识、技能、能力方面，寻求挑战方面，消除压力和紧张方面</p> <p>您喜欢吗? /您是被要求去做的还是自愿?</p> <p>当时您做了什么?</p> <p>领导是怎样对您任务阶段性表现或结果进行反应或反馈的?</p>
回答:	<p>中国的电厂系统普遍应用PRC（可编程逻辑控制器）。有一次我的领导给我安排任务，他希望我负责引进一个更加便捷的控制系統DSP(数字集中控制系统)。我的领导对于这种尝试往往非常谨慎。[a15-3我的领导对新的尝试非常谨慎]这次我的领导也是由于接到集团公司的安排和要求，他才接下了这个试点项目。其实，我的领导平时在工作的时候，就总是想着如何迎合上级领导和集团公司，不敢违背上级的意思。同时，他也很注重按流程和规则做事。[a15-4我的领导很注重按流程和规则做事][a15-5我的领导平时严格执行上级和集团公司的指令]</p> <p>所以当时布置任务的时候，我的领导是这么说的：“上级领导给咱们安排了试点项目，我们就应该要做好的。咱们就按照上级领导的要求来做。我们一定要认真完成，不然如果出了错误，我们都会丢人。我不希望因为这个项目，我们的部门的名誉受损。这个项目出了错误，我们每个人都要承担责任。[a15-6我的领导认为：这项工作是上面指派的任务，我们应该做好][a15-7我的领导强调我们一定要认真完成，不然如果出了错误，我们都会丢人。我不希望因为这个项目，我们的部门的名誉受损。][a15-8我的领导强调这个项目出了错误，我们每个人都要承担责任。]</p>
访谈问题:	您的反应是什么? 您做了什么?
回答:	<p>我当时的第一反应就是：我一定不能出错。因为我如果做错了，以后我很难有机会承担这种项目的负责人了。同时，我还会给我们电厂带来不好的影响。[a15-9我一定不能出错][a15-10因为我如果做错了，以后我很难有机会承担这种项目的负责人了]</p> <p>因为我的领导是这样的行事风格，我不会提高效率去完成任务，因为我害怕冒风险出错。[a15-11我害怕冒风险出错][a15-12为了规避很小的风险，我不会提高效率去完成任务]比如，当时，我们的上级单位给我们安排了实施方</p>

	<p>案，如果我完全按照指示去做需要5天左右的时间才能完成任务。但按照我的经验，这个任务最多只需要2天时间就可以完成。但是考虑到我的领导不想犯错误这个事，我最后还是完全按照指示方案进行的编程，我还是花了5天时间完成任务，尽管，按照我的方案进行，我出错的风险微乎其微。</p> <p>最终，我很顺利地完成了这个项目，中间也没有出任何问题。当然我的领导对我也没有任何批评和奖励，他只是认为我规范地完成了任务。[a15-13我很顺利地完成了这个项目，我的领导对我也没有任何批评和奖励，他只是认为我规范地完成了任务]如果我犯了什么错误，按照我的领导的个性，他肯定要批评我惩罚我，他会记着我做得不好的地方。我估计我犯错以后很难有翻身的机会了。[a15-14我的领导会记着我做得不好的地方。我犯错以后很难有翻身的机会了。]</p>
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## APPENDIX 8: EVIDENCE OF NATIVE SPEAKER PROOFREADING



### CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH EDITING

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*Gang Zhang*

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Founder & CEO of MogoEdit

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