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# The Relationship between Job Demands and Subjective Well-Being: Mediating Role of Job Burnout and Moderating Role of Stress Mindset

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This study aimed to explore the relationship of the job demands and subjective well-being, mediated by job burnout and moderated by stress mindset, through descriptive-correlational research based on structural equations modeling. Four hundred and sixty-five elementary teachers (M age = 36.51, SD age = 7.04) participated in the study from public elementary schools in Tehran, chosen through cluster random sampling**.** Data were collected via job demand questionnaire created by the author of the research, along with Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI), and Stress Mindset Measure-General (SMM-G; Crum et al., 2013). Data were analyzed by Amos-26 and PROCESS Procedure for SPSS**.** According to the results, job demands directly and indirectly, through job burnout, lowered subjective well-being of the teachers. Moreover, the effect of the interaction of job demands and stress mindset on subjective well-being and job burnout was significant. A very suitable fit of the general model was



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confirmed. It can be concluded that the stress mindset of teachers can be effective on protecting teachers from a decline in subjective well-being in challenging situations. In addition, to prevent teachers from experiencing burnout while engaging with challenging tasks, they need more support.

***Keywords**:* job demands, job burnout, primary school teachers, stress mindset, subjective well-being.

Subjective well-being refers to the experience of individuals' quality of life. Optimal subjective well-being in employees is linked to higher productivity and positive behaviors (Field & Buitendach, 2011), as well as greater quality of work, high-level performance, and overall profitability of the organization (Bajorek, Gulliford, & Taskila, 2014). Nevertheless, job demands that teachers as a whole are always dealing with, including time pressure, work overload, disciplinary issues (or student misbehavior), low student motivation, student diversity, conflict with colleagues, lack of managerial support, value conflicts, and role ambiguity (Fernet, Guay, Senécal, & Austin, 2013; Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2015) would promote negative emotions, depression, psychosomatic reaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015), reduce well-being, and elevate levels of burnout (Betoret, 2009). In particular, elementary school teachers experience more burnout and fatigue than teachers at other levels since they deal with younger students. Indeed, instructing them basic literacy, learning, and thinking skills is a difficult task (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2013). Further, teaching conditions and demands for primary school children, such as teacher-student and student-student interaction, are not sufficiently provided in ERT teaching (Author, 2021). In turn, heavy responsibilities and duties of teachers at this level increase. Accordingly, teachers need to be



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aware of beneficial skills for healthy coping and be equipped with them.

Meanwhile, the study of research and theoretical background indicates that some people confront job demands in unpredictable and stressful situations in such a way that they prepare the demands for personal and professional development. Meanwhile, the pattern of teachers' behavior and response is different depending on their perception of the situation (Sokal et al., 2020b). According to Lazarus (2006), two individuals can have different perceptions and reactions to the same environment and the same stressful stimulus; this different perception and reaction is associated with the concept of stress mindset. Research background has indicated a relationship between stress mindset and effective coping with stressful conditions (Jiang, Zhang, Ming, Huang, & Lin, 2019). Accordingly, we focused on stress mindset which is a learnable ability (Crum, Corbin, Brownell, & Salovey, 2011; Crum, Salovey, & Achor, 2013), and involves the active role of individuals in coping with stress. Then, the question is "could stress mindset affect the negative relationship of job demands with job burnout as well as subjective wellbeing in elementary school teachers?" To the best of our knowledge, the stress mindset variable has not been researched in interaction with job demands and in the context of teaching; thus, we considered this variable in the present study. We proposed and examined a model which suggests stress mindset may influence the impact of job demands on the health experiences, including job burnout and subjective wellbeing.

Subjective wellbeing covers the cognitive-affective perception of individuals and their evaluation of life. The cognitive aspect of subjective well-being refers to an individual's thoughts about the



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level of satisfaction with life as a whole and with particular domains, such as employment and social relationships. This component plays an important role in people's well-being as it emphasizes the person's response to positive and negative life experiences. The affective aspect of subjective well-being refers to their emotions, mood, and feelings. A person's affect might be positive when they experience pleasant emotions and feelings, such as pleasure, happiness, and love. On the other hand, affect can be negative when the individual experiences unpleasant emotions and feelings, such as guilt, excitement, distress, and confusion (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2005). When teachers feel satisfied with life and satisfied in other areas, such as work or family, and frequently experience positive emotions, they are experiencing subjective well-being. In contrast, teachers may experience job burnout, which is a psychological response to conditions in which individuals have been subjected to occupational stressors for a long time (Maslach, Leiter, & Jackson, 2012).

Job burnout is an occupational phenomenon and was included in the eleventh edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) (WHO, 2019). The results of a study indicated that 54% of teachers experienced varying levels of burnout when they were using ERT (Amri et al., 2020). Job burnout syndrome is associated with severe physical and psychological exhaustion which extends to various aspects of personal life, work experience, and clients as personal burnout, work-related burnout, and student-related burnout, respectively (Shirom, 2005). Job burnout in the personal dimension refers to extreme exhaustion as well as lack of both physical and psychological energy which is felt in situations other than the workplace.



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Exhaustion in work experience is related to experiencing extreme exhaustion along with lack of energy physically and psychologically which is attributed to activities and the work context (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). In addition, burnout is experienced as excessive fatigue and lack of energy in the workplace owing to communication with clients (Kristensen, Hannerz, Høgh, & Borg, 2005). One of the risk factors for burnout is workload (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Excessive job demands such as workload and long-term teacher stress would increase negative emotions, depression, psychosomatic issues (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015), compromise well-being, and heighten levels of burnout (Betoret, 2009).

According to Job Demands- Resources Model (JD-Rs Model) (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011), one of the underlying psychological processes, the health impairment process, indicates that the job demands as a component of a job, deplete the physical and psychological resources of employees and may cause a state of exhaustion as well as loss of well-being (Hu, Schaufeli & Taris, 2011). Job demands include the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of a job requiring constant effort as well as physical and psychological investment (Van den Tooren & de Jong, 2014). Job demands could be challenging and hindering. Challenging demands would generate interest and motivation, develop skills, and promote future achievements, such as exciting and new projects for the individual. In contrast, job-hindering demands are the parts of the job that restrict employees and slow them down while leaving a negative impact on the individual as a whole, such as role conflict and ambiguity (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Vergel, 2015). Research has demonstrated the relationship between job demands and teacher well-being as well



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as job burnout (e.g. Betoret, 2009; Medzo-M'engone, 2021; Montgomery, Spânu, B˘aban & Panagopoulou, 2015; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015, 2017; Amri, Abidli, Elhamzaoui, Bouzaboul, Rabea, & Ahami, 2020; Baker et al., 2020; Sokal, Trudel, & Babb, 2020b).

Another association is a direct path from resources to job strain (Taris et al., 2017), meaning the protective role of resources in the health impairment process (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Personal resources refer to the psychological aspects or skills of oneself or one's self-beliefs in general, affecting an individual's perception of the ability to successfully control and participate in environmental events (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000). In general, in the process of health impairment, high levels of job demands and low levels of resources cause a gradual decline in mental energy, which is manifested in the form of burnout components. Burnout also causes health-related problems (Taris et al., 2017). In the course of health impairment, emotional exhaustion, which is the principal dimension of burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001), refers to the long-term lack of emotional resources owing to long-term exposure to job stressors (Jennett, Harris & Mesibov, 2003). In the current study, we considered these mentioned processes and studied stress mindset as a personal resource. According to studies, teachers who believed in the potential benefits of stress experienced less job stress and were less likely to leave the teaching profession (Kim, Shin, Tsukayama, & Park, 2020).

Theoretically, mindset is an implicit theory which might help people make predictions and judgments about the meaning of life through a unique way of understanding experiences (Dweck, 2008). The stress mindset model posits that the quality of an



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individual's experience with stress is influenced by their beliefs regarding both the beneficial and detrimental aspects of that experience. In other words, people with a stress-is-enhancing mindset believe that stress could promote learning, growth, health, and vitality. On the other hand, people with a stress-is-debilitating mindset agree that stress lowers their performance and productivity as well as weakens their health and vitality (Crum et al., 2013). This mindset is associated with negative effects on health, performance, and poor productivity (Keech, Hagger, O'Callaghan, & Hamilton, 2018). In this regard, individuals with a debilitating stress mindset are twice as likely to be diagnosed with heart disease compared to people with a stress-is-enhancing mindset (Nabi, Kivimäki, Batty, Shipley, Britton, Brunner, Jussi Vahtera, Lemogne, Elbaz, & Singh-Manoux, 2013). Stress mindset is a spectrum with debilitating and enhancing stress at both ends. Thus, it is possible for a person to have a combination of both (Crum et al., 2013). Research background has revealed the relationship of this variable and effective coping with stressful conditions (Jiang et al., 2019; Keech et al., 2018).

Presenting the stress mindset as a potential variable that may moderate the impact of job demands on burnout and subjective well-being, could enhance the current understanding, address existing gaps, and prove advantageous in practice, as it is a skill that can be learned and developed (Crum, Corbin, Brownell, & Salovey, 2011; Crum, Salovey, & Achor, 2013). Indeed, it is beneficial for promoting the well-being and health of teachers. Furthermore, since the appropriate position for personal resources in the JD-R theoretical framework requires further research (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011; Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Taris,



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Leisink, and Schaufeli, 2017), the findings could add to the existing knowledge.

Given the aforementioned issues, the present study decided to act within the framework of JD–Rs theory as a valuable tool in understanding teachers' work experiences (Desrumaux, Lapointe, Sima, Boudrias, Savoie, & Brunet, 2015) to propose the research model.

Based on the suggestions of Schaufeli and Taris (2014) about the situation of personal resources, as well as some studies (Brenninkmeijer et al., 2010; Tremblay & Messervey, 2011), the current study supposed the stress mindset as a moderator in the model. Eventually, the authors explored the relationships between job demands, job burnout, and stress mindset in a

In addition, the research question based on the model proposed in Figure 1 was examined:

Does the model of structural relationships between job demands and subjective well-being, mediated by job burnout and moderated by stress mindset, fits the research data?

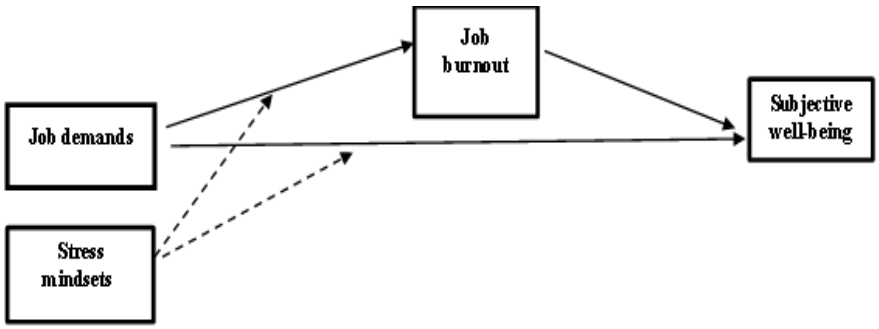


**Figure 1. Proposed theoretical model**



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## Method

This research was descriptive and correlational in terms of method, and it was based on structural equations modeling. Various methods have been proposed to determine the sample size in research that employs structural equations. In this study, according to the suggestion of Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller (2013), where for each variable index, between 10 and 50 subjects can be selected, the sample size of 500 people was determined based on the number of factors (4 factors), the type of model, and the probability of missing data. This means for each index related to variables (10 indices), 50 subjects were considered. Ultimately, based on the complete tests, data from 465 participants were included in the analysis. This number is theoretically suitable for testing the model with high power.

A total of 465 elementary teachers (M age = 36.51, SD age = 7.04) from public elementary schools in Tehran participated in the study through cluster random sampling with personal consent. The study was undertaken in March 2021. At this time, Iranian schools were completely closed, education was done through ERT; taking into account the last three months of the 2020-21 academic year, in which year-end education and exams were also done virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ERT was employed for a total of 6 months. Demographic characteristics of the sample were as follows: female=266(57.2), male=199(42.8) / age: 24-29=108(23.3), 30-35=108(23.3), 36-40=97(20.9),41-45=90(19.3),46-50=60(13)/degree: associate=1(.2),bachelor=269(57.8),master=187(40.2),doctoral=8(1.7) / experience years: 1-5=110(23.6), 6-10=77(16.5), 11-15=132(28.4), 16-20=74(15.9), 21-25=50(10.8), 26-30=22(4.8)/



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grade of teacher class: 1=82(17.6), 2=72(15.5), 3=73(15.7), 4=74(15.9), 5=78(16.8), 6=86(18.5).

For data collection, all of the questionnaires were prepared in an electronic form using the Google platform and then sent to the teachers in the public elementary school groups across various communication applications, mostly WhatsApp groups, of randomly chosen schools from all educational areas of Tehran. Attempts were made to assure teachers about their privacy.

We explained that the aim is to only conduct an academic study and there is no need to record their name. We also explained that they are under no obligation to participate in the research. We guided them on how to answer the questionnaires by attaching a voice message to the link of the questionnaires.

**Data Analysis Strategy**

The analysis method of the present study was structural equations modeling. Statistical analyses were undertaken using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 22, IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA) and AMOS (version 26, IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA). For testing the moderating role, the PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.2 (Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com, Documentation available in Hayes (2018) www.guilford.com/p/hayes3) was implemented. For the moderated mediation model, model 8 was selected. The level of confidence for all confidence intervals in the output was 95.0000. The number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals was 2000. The variables "stress mindset" and "job-demands" were mean centred prior to analysis. The "stress mindset" (the moderator) values in the conditional table are the mean and +/- standard deviation from the mean. Common



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Method Variance (CMV) may be problematic as this study has been based on a cross-sectional method and employed self-reported means (Conway, 2002). To control this error, Harman's one-way test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) has been applied. In this study, the first factor explained 49.65% (less than 50%) of the total variance. Thus, it can be concluded that CMV could not cause a problem in this study.

The data were analyzed after confirming the assumptions of structural equation modeling. Regarding the missing data, none of the questionnaires had an unanswered item. Additionally, box plots of the observed variables were examined to track univariate outliers. Multivariate outlier data were also evaluated using the Mahalanobis Distance Index through the analysis of torque structures. Based on Pvalues calculated for Mahalanobis Distance (>.001) there was not any outlier data. The skewness and kurtosis of variables were used to check the normality of the univariate (Table 1). Accordingly, there was no violation of data normality. In addition, the multicollinearity of the predictor variables was examined using tolerance statistics (T) and the variance inflation factor (VIF). For the predictor variables, namely, job demands, job burnout and stress mindset, the obtained T were (.17, 0.52, and .16, respectively), and the VIF values were (5.08, 1.92, and 5.88, respectively). According to Field (2013) values above .10 for T and values between 5 and 10 for VIF are acceptable. Consequently, results indicated the absence of multicollinearity of the predictor variables.

**Instruments**

All measurements were performed in the Iranian version and in Persian. The psychometric properties of all measures were desirable.



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**Job Demands**

Job demands were measured using a questionnaire made by the author of the research. Questions were formulated after surveying the teachers and examining the research literature (e.g. Author, 2021). This measure has 16 items and is set on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). For determining the underlying dimensions of the 16-item scale, exploratory factor analysis was conducted among 30 teachers similar to the sample. The principal component analysis and varimax rotation method were performed as a part of EFA. To define factors, .30 was taken as the cutoff point for loadings and eigenvalues retained that were greater than 1.

Based on the results, sampling adequacy tests were found to be satisfactory for conducting CFA: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) = .924; BTS (Chi-Square = 5844.558, df = 120, P = .000 < .001). Accordingly, EFA was supported by the data for this study. The results of EFA and Scree Plot identified two factors with an eigenvalue equal to 8.810 and 1.754, with loading exceeding .30. These two factors were retained with 66.026% of the total variance. The first and second factors accounted for 55.065 and 10.961 of variances, respectively. The results of the rotated component matrix for the factors were as follows: (factor 1, items 7 to 16 = .759, .801, .848, .807), (factor 2, items 1 to 6 = .738, .754, .770, .752, .803, .760), and (factor 3, items 7 to 12 = .529, .609, .605, .611, .800, .811, .794, .807, .855, .794). Subsequently, considering the questionnaire of Karasek (1979) and based on the content, the factors were named as follows: Factor 1: time pressure (e.g. item 5: "There is always the worry of not being able to finish the lessons on time"), Factor 2: work load (e.g. item 10: "Work pressure and expectations from the teacher are very high



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in online education"). Thereafter, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed for the construct validity test. All factor loads were greater than .30 and the coefficient of determination of each dimension by the relevant items was desirable. In total, both the construct validity of the questionnaire and the fit of the model of the questionnaire were confirmed (CMIN=214.382, DF=87.000, CMIN/DF=2.464, CFI=.978, SRMR=.046, RMSEA=.056, PClose= .137, NFI=964, GFI=943, AGFI= .910). The results also indicated that the composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and convergent validity as well as discriminant validity were desirable (AVE=.555, CR=.949, Cronbach's alpha=.942).

**Subjective Wellbeing**

Subjective wellbeing was measured using the 5-item Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) in a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) which was designed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). In the studies by Gungor & Avci (2017), life satisfaction reliability was .83 according to Cronbach's Alpha method. In the research by Hamid (2020), the reliability of this scale by alpha coefficient was .68. CFA was employed to evaluate the construct validity (CMIN=33.621, DF=12.000, CMIN/DF=.828, CFI=.95, SRMR=.08, RMSEA=.06, PClose=.904, NFI=.998, GFI=.997, AGFI=.990). The results also indicated that the CR (.970), Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.961), and AVE (.866) together with discriminant validity were desirable.

**Job Burnout**

Job burnout was measured using the Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen (2005) Copenhagen Burnout Inventory



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(CBI). This questionnaire has 19 items covering three dimensions of personal burnout (6 questions), work-related burnout (7 questions), and client/student burnout (6 questions), all in a 5-point Likert scale (100, 75, 50, 25, & 0, the more agreement, the higher the score) (Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005). In another study, the composite reliability (CR) and the standardized Cronbach's α of the CBI-Br domains were adequate (CR = .91–.94 and α = .91–.95), revealing sufficient reliability of the instrument among the samples (Rocha, Jesus, Marziale, Henriques, Marôco, & Campos, 2020). The results of CFA indicated structural validity (CMIN=238.800, DF=141.000, CMIN/DF=1.694, CFI=.990, SRMR=.020, RMSEA=.039, PClose= .988, NFI=.977). Further, according to the results, the CR (.961), Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.957), AVE (.570), and discriminant validity were desirable.

**Stress Mindset**

Stress mindset was measured using the Stress Mindset Measure-General (SMM-G; Crum et al., 2013). The participants agreed with eight statements expressing their beliefs about stress on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (4). A higher score indicates the stress-is-enhancing mindset as well as the relationship between mindset and positive beliefs, and vice versa (Crum et al., 2013). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was reported as .67 (Jiang et al., 2019). Acceptable item reliability was acquired in the study by Kilby & Sherman (2016) for both pre- (α = .85) and post- (α = .86) manipulation stress mindset. According to Crum et al. (2013), this relatively new scale has one factor and one general score, though some researchers have obtained varying results (Karampas, Pezirkianidis, & Stalikas, 2020).



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For determining the underlying dimensions of the 8-item scale, the principal component analysis and varimax rotation method were performed as a part of EFA. To define factors, 0.30 was taken as the cutoff point for loadings with eigenvalues retained if they were greater than 1. The results demonstrated that sampling adequacy tests were found to be satisfactory for conducting CFA: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)= .934; BTS (Chi-Square= 3583.929, df = 28, P < .001). Accordingly, EFA was supported by the data for this study. The results of EFA, and Scree Plot identified one factor with eigenvalue equal to 6.075, with loading exceeding .30 (from .852 to .893). This factor accounted for 75.939% of variance. In order to confirm the construct validity, CFA was utilized which revealed the desired fit of the measurement model (CMIN = 33.621, DF = 12.000, CMIN/DF = 2.802, CFI = .994, SRMR =.015, RMSEA = .062, PClose = .186, NFI = .991, GFI = .982, AGFI = .947). The results also demonstrated that the CR (.961), Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.954), AVE (.759), and discriminant validity were desirable.

## Results

Descriptive findings are reported in Table 1.

**Table 1**
**Descriptive Indices, Pearson Correlations, and Normality Reports**

| Variable | Job demands | Job burnout | Stress Mindset | Subjective well-being |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Job demands | 1 | | | |
| Job burnout | .716** | 1 | | |
| Stress mindset | -.869** | -.738** | 1 | |
| Subjective well-being | -.659** | -.684** | .675** | 1 |
| **Mean (SD)** | 3.302 (.735) | 3.184 (.824) | 2.462 (.937) | 4.376 (1.48) |



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Skewness | -.68 | -.37 | -.22 | -.29 |
| Kurtosis | .23 | -.31 | -.65 | -.30 |

*Note***. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

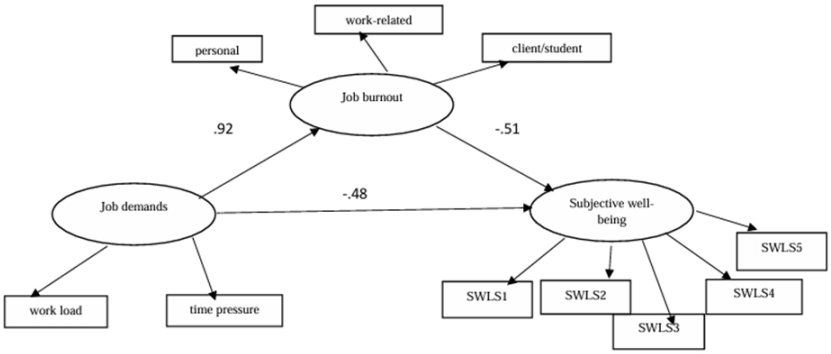


**Figure 2. Analyzed structural model by Amos; standardized regression coefficients**

For sample size n>300, normality of the data depends on the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis. Either an absolute skewness value ≤2 or an absolute kurtosis (excess) ≤4 may be utilized as reference values for determining considerable normality (Kim, 2013). Hence, according to Table 1, distribution of the variables is considered normal.

**Table 2**
**Direct/Indirect effects and multiple correlation coefficient of job burnout and subjective wellbeing and fit indices in the model without moderator**

| | Estimate | S.E. | C.R./t | P | $R^2$ | Lower Bounds | Upper Bounds | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Job burnout<--- Job demands | .919 | .100 | 15.502 | *** | .844 | .727 | .963 | .001 |
| Subjective wellbeing<---Job burnout | -.514 | .062 | -2.695 | .007 | .958 | .925 | 1.010 | .002 |



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| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subjective wellbeing<---Job demands | -.485 | .099 | -2.687 | .007 | | | | | | | | |
| Subjective wellbeing<--- Job burnout<--- Job demands | -.473 | - | - | - | | | -1.483 | | -.250 | | .002 | |
| **Indices** | **CMIN** | **df** | **P** | **CMIN/DF** | **RMSEA** | **CFI** | **GFI** | **AGFI** | **IFI** | **NFI** | **SRMR** | **PClose** |
| **Criterian** | - | - | - | 3> | .08> | .90< | .90< | .90< | 0-1 | >.50 | <.08 | >.05 |
| **Model** | 37.563 | 30 | .000 | 1.252 | .023 | .998 | .984 | .970 | .998 | .992 | .015 | .985 |

The results in Table 2, (according to Figure 2), indicate that all of the direct pathways in the model have been significant. Upon increasing one unit of job demands caused by ERT, subjective well-being has diminished by .48 (β = -.485, t=-2.687, P<.01). Hypothesis 1 was, therefore, confirmed. Further, job demands have a significant positive effect on job burnout. It means that by increasing one unit of job demands caused by ERT, job burnout has grown by .92 (β = .919, t=15.502, P<.001). Job burnout has a significant negative effect on subjective well-being. It means that by elevating one unit of job burnout, subjective well-being has dropped by .51 (β = -.514, t=-2.695, P<.001). The results are also in line with hypothesis 2. This means that the indirect effect of job demands on subjective well-being owing to burnout is also significant (-1.483 < β =- .473<-.250, P<.01). Further, .958% of the variance of subjective well-being is accounted for by job demands and job burnout in the mediated model ($R^2$ = .958, P<.01). According to Table 2, all of the indices are at an excellent level, and the fit of the mediated model is desirable.

Tables 3 and 4 provide the results of the moderated mediated regression using Process macro version 3.2 for SPSS.



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**Table 3**
**Effects and Determinant Coefficients in the Model Considering Stress Mindset as the Moderator**

| | *coefficient* | *SE* | *t* | *P* | *LLCI* | *ULCI* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| constant | 61.9118 | .5222 | 118.5644 | .0000 | 60.8856 | 62.9379 |
| Job demands on Job burnout | .5339 | .0598 | 8.9253 | .0000 | .4163 | .6514 |
| Stress Mindset on Job burnout | -.9057 | .0829 | -10.9217 | .0000 | -1.0686 | -.7427 |
| Job demands*stress mindset on Job burnout | .0259 | .0048 | 5.3503 | .0000 | .0164 | .0355 |
| constant | 32.9983 | .9144 | 36.0855 | .0000 | 31.2013 | 34.7953 |
| Job demands on Subjective wellbeing | -.4563 | .0202 | -22.5736 | .0000 | -.4960 | 34.7953 |
| Job burnout on Subjective wellbeing | -.1722 | .0145 | -11.8497 | .0000 | -.2008 | -.1437 |
| Stress Mindset on Subjective wellbeing | -.0110 | .0290 | -.3800 | .7041 | -.0681 | .0460 |
| Job demands*stress mindset on Subjective wellbeing | -.0128 | .0016 | 8.2192 | .0000 | .0098 | .0159 |

Dependent variable=job burnout; R=.9139, $R^2$=.8352, MSE=9.2274, F=582.6948, df1=4.0000, df2=460.0000, P=.0000
Dependent variable= subjective well-being; R=.7856, $R^2$=.6172, MSE=94.7594, F=247.8069, df1=3.0000, df2=461.0000, P=.0000

According to Table 3, and in parallel with the previous analysis, job demands have a significant positive effect on job burnout and a significant negative effect on subjective well-being, respectively (β =.53, t=8.93, P<.001; β = -.46, t=-22.57, P<.001). Stress mindset has a negative and significant effect on job burnout (β = -.91, t=-10.92, P<.001) and an insignificant effect on subjective well-being (β = -.01, t=-.38, P>.001).



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Further, the interaction effect of job demands and stress mindset on job burnout (β =.03, t=5.35, P<.001) along with the interaction effect of job demands and stress mindset on subjective well-being (β = -.01, t=-8.22, P<.001) have been significant. In order to understand the details about the role of the stress mindset in the model, the effects have been calculated at the three levels of stress mindset: 1 SD below the mean, indicating a more stress-is-debilitating mindset; the mean; and 1 SD above the mean, representing a more stress-is-enhancing mindset, with the results reported in Table 4.

**Table 4**
**Conditional Effects (Direct and Indirect) of Job Demands at Values of the Stress Mindset**

| | Lavels of Mindset | | Direct effects (LLCI, ULCI) | P | t | Indirect effect: Job demands -> Burnout -> Subjective wellbeing (LLCI, ULCI) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Job-burnout | -1SD: -7.4984 | stress-is-debilitating | .3394 (.1783,.5005) | .0000 | 4.1402 | - |
| | Mean: .0000 | - | .5339(.4163, .6514) | .0000 | 8.9253 | - |
| | +1SD: 7.4984 | stress-is-enhancing | .7284(.6193, .8374) | .0000 | 13.1257 | - |
| Subjective well-being | -1SD: -7.4984 | stress-is-debilitating | -.5524(-.6036, -.5012) | .0000 | -21.2044 | -.0584 (-.1027, -.0175) |
| | Mean: .0000 | - | -.4563(-.4960, -.4166) | .0000 | -22.5736 | -.0919 (-.1311, -.0582) |



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| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| +1SD: 7.4984 | stress-is-enhancing | -.3602(-.4001, -.3203) | .0000 | -17.7484 | -.1254 (-.1658, -.0920) |

| Effect1 | Effect2 | Contrast | BootSE | BootLLCI | BootULCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mean: -.0919 | stress-is-debilitating: -.0584 | -.0335 | .0086 | -.0519 | -.0180 |
| stress-is-enhancing: -.1254 | stress-is-debilitating: -.0584 | -.0679 | .0172 | -.1039 | -.0359 |
| stress-is-enhancing: -.1254 | Mean: -.0919 | -.335 | .0086 | -.0519 | -.0180 |

Based on Table 4, all results indicate significant values. It can be stated that in the typical case, the relationship between job demands and job burnout is positive, and for the group whose stress mindset scores are above the average (stress-is-enhancing group), the intensity of this relationship is greater than for the group whose stress mindset scores are at the average level ($\beta_{Mean+1SD} = .73 > \beta_{Mean}=.54$ , t=13.13, P<.001). On the contrary, for the group whose stress mindset scores are below the average (stress-is-debilitating group), the intensity of this relationship is lower than for the group whose stress mindset scores are at the average level ($\beta_{Mean-1SD} =.34< \beta_{Mean}=.54$, t=4.14, P<.001). Consequently, stress mindset is an amplifier for this path.

Furthermore, the relationship between job demands and subjective well-being is negative, and for the group whose stress mindset scores are above the average (stress-is-enhancing group), the intensity of this relationship is lower than for the group whose stress mindset scores are at the average level ($\beta_{Mean+1SD} = -.36 <$



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$\beta_{Mean}$=-.46, t=-17.75, P<.001). Conversely, for the group whose stress mindset scores are below average (stress-is-debilitating group), the intensity of this relationship is greater compared to scores at the average level ($\beta_{Mean-1SD}$ =-.55> $\beta_{Mean}$=-.46, t=-21.20, P<.001), meaning that stress mindset is a moderator in this path.

Eventually, the index of the moderated mediation model was calculated. Accordingly, the index was equal to -.0045 and fell between -.0024 (BootUpper) and -.0069 (BootLower), not covering zero. Thus, the proposed moderated mediation model is confirmed.

As such, the relationship between job demands and burnout as well as subjective well-being varies depending on the type of mindset that people have about stress.

## Discussion

The present research demonstrated that the model of the relationship between job demands due to ERT and subjective well-being, mediated and moderated by burnout and stress mindset respectively, is a valid model; this means that with increasing job demands, the likelihood of experiencing burnout and reduced subjective well-being grows in teachers. However, in the case of respondents whose stress mindset is of an enhancing type, job demands could result in greater experience of job burnout and less experience of reduction in subjective well-being.

In the present study, Job demands influenced subjective well-being directly and indirectly through the mediating role of job burnout. Similar to the current research, Pressley (2021) found that job demands related to ERT and the resulting increase in workload have augmented job burnout. In other words, the workload as an effective stressor (Sokal et al., 2020a), have



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caused teachers to feel stressed, anxious, as well as tired, and have diminished job satisfaction (Cuervo et al., 2018). Other research has shown the relationship between job demands and teacher well-being as well as job burnout (Betoret, 2009; Medzo-M'engone, 2021; Montgomery, Spânu, B˘aban & Panagopoulou, 2015; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Betoret, 2009; Amri, Abidli, Elhamzaoui, Bouzaboul, Rabea, & Ahami, 2020; Baker et al., 2020; Sokal, Trudel, & Babb, 2020b). Time pressure and disciplinary issues have also been linked to teacher stress, emotional exhaustion, low levels of commitment and job satisfaction, low self-efficacy, and motivation to leave the teaching profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015, 2017). Similar to the present study, job demands induce stress and challenges for teachers (Baker et al., 2020; Sahu, 2020; Besser, Lotem, & Zeigler-Hill, 2020; Robosa et al., 2021; Sokal et al., 2020a; Gewertz, 2020; Jelinska & Paradowski, 2021) and so the negative consequences of anxiety and depression, hindering effective teaching (Al Lily, Ismail, Abunasser, & Alhajhoj, 2020); as such, teachers who experienced a high rate of teaching-related problems reported less subjective well-being (Alves et al. ,2020), deprioritized mental health (Pajarianto, Kadir, Galugu, Sari, & Februanti, 2020), and exhaustion (Author, 2021). Accordingly, job demands could have negative effects on well-being directly. Similarly, a study reported that some primary school teachers were suffering from the intensity of the concentration and accumulation of job demands, and at the same time, lack of necessary facilities and equipment; as such, more than half of them were likely to experience burnout (Amri et al., 2020). In another study, teachers reported feelings of strain from workload, psychosomatic problems, and exhaustion (Prado-Gascó, Gómez-



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Domínguez, Soto-Rubio, Díaz-Rodríguez, & Navarro-Mateu, 2020). Moreover, teachers reported that with the experience of high job demands and related stress, the level of their mental health problems increased, making it more challenging for them to teach and deal with these problems (Baker et al., 2020). This signifies that burnout can mediate and explain the negative effects of job demands on well-being.

According to Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli (2001) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model, high levels of job demands are significant predictors of negative work-related stress, followed by emotional exhaustion and diminished well-being. The process states that job strain mediates the relationship between job demands, consequences, and particularly health. In other words, high job demands result in job strain where the two indicators of burnout, namely fatigue and lack of engagement, are different aspects of strain (Taris et al., 2017). In this regard, JD-R (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011) states that high job demands, such as job role conflicts, workload, and job security, lower personal psychological as well as physical resources. This depletion leads to a loss of energy, physical problems, and mental health issues, leading to negative work pressure and job performance (Demerouti et al., 2001). In other words, in line with the process of health impairment in the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), job demands have depleted the physical and psychological resources of employees, causing extreme burnout and loss of well-being.

Furthermore, the present study revealed that stress mindset amplifies the relationship between job demands and job burnout while also moderating the relationship between job demands and subjective well-being. Overall, the results indicated that stress



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mindset could moderate the relationship of job demands with job burnout and subjective wellbeing; in line with Syrek, Kühnel, Vahle-Hinz, & de Bloom (2021), each person perceives stressful situations and stimuli differently. According to the results of the current study, the participants with a stress-is-enhancing mindset and respondents with a debilitating stress mindset have experienced more burnout and less reduction in subjective well-being, along with lower levels of burnout and more reduction in subjective well-being, respectively.

In the present study, the positive relationship between job demands and burnout was greater in those with a stress-is-enhancing mindset than in individuals with a debilitating stress mindset. This finding was inconsistent with the study by Zhao, Jin, and Zhang (2024) in a sample of nurses. This discrepancy may arise from different job samples in the aforementioned study and the current study. Apparently, in the present study, the people in the first group considered the job demands resulting from ERT as challenging opportunities; with the aim of learning and growth, they were more engaged in demanding activities, which in turn resulted in greater fatigue and burnout. On the contrary, in the second group, the demands were perceived not as an opportunity for learning, but as a threat. Thus, this group experienced burnout, less satisfaction, and more stress plus anxiety, together with a decline in well-being by avoiding involvement in activities. In this respect, Hammond's study can be mentioned.

Hammond et al. (2020) studied stress mindset as a moderator of the effects of work–family conflict and enrichment on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. They found that stress-is-enhancing mindset mitigated the effects of work–family conflict



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on job satisfaction and turnover intentions, while strengthening the impact of work-family enrichment on job satisfaction.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, the variable of stress mindset has not been examined in relation to job demands and burnout in the teaching field, and it is not possible to compare the findings. Nevertheless, the present finding can be explained as follows:

Adults with a stress-is-enhancing mindset are eager to handle new, challenging, and even stressful situations. They focus on the tasks as much as possible and try to meet the demands of the responsibilities as well as requirements of learning new things, for example by making new relationships with colleagues, studying, and seeking information on the internet, etc. Meanwhile, spending too much time and energy under stressful, new, and demanding conditions can exhaust them and augment the probability of experiencing job burnout.

On the other hand, since these teachers are satisfied with seeking and absorbing new information as well as having an opportunity to grow, their satisfaction with their job field leads them to experience less reduction in subjective well-being. Despite this, teachers who consider stress as debilitating feel stress and anxiety more than those with a stress-is-enhancing mindset and avoid facing the activities associated with the new and challenging job tasks efficiently. As such, they are more likely to feel less burnout.

In addition, the stress-is-enhancing group had less decline in well-being owing to job demands. Other studies accorded with this finding. Studies of Jiang et al. (2019), Keech et al. (2018), and Kim et al. (2020) have also indicated that believing in enhancing stress and its benefits results in positive health



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experiences. Jiang et al. (2019) found that in stressful life events, the stress-is-enhancing mindset exposes people to less depressive experience compared to the stress-is-debilitating mindset. Research has revealed that the stress-is-enhancing mindset is positively linked to well-being, life satisfaction, reducing depression (Jiang et al., 2019) as well as students' psychological well-being (Keech et al., 2018). Crum, Akinola, Martin, & Fath (2017) reported that positive emotions significantly increased in adults with a stress-is-enhancing mindset under stressful conditions. Further, a stress-is-enhancing mindset reduces distress, depression, and anxiety while boosting energy, job performance, and life satisfaction (Crum et al., 2013). In a research study using moderated linear regression analyses, higher perceived stress was consistently associated with higher mental health concerns, but the risk was greater for those with a stress-is-debilitating mindset (Huebschmann and Sheets, 2020). Then, although teachers in this group are more likely to feel less burnout (apparently, they do not engage in new and challenging tasks as much as the other group does), they are more likely to experience a decline in subjective well-being.

Demerouti and Bakker (2011) explained that if job demands and job/personal resources are at a high level, one might expect employees to be well involved in their work and to realize their potential. According to Demerouti and Bakker (2011), people who report less job stress have positive personal belief systems and a positive assessment of the environment, thus making them more likely to experience job satisfaction and well-being. They would indicate positive workplace outcomes (Collie, Granziera, and Martin, 2018) and are less likely to feel job burnout or exhaustion (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). This is because



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personal resources facilitate the advancement of goals and act in the direction of growth and development of motivation (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014) as well as promote engagement at work (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007).

Stress mindset, which was as a personal resource in the current study, causes an individual to seek information. This is in accordance with his or her dominant beliefs. This selective attention to information affects the individual's actions and reactions (Taylor & Gollwitzer, 1995). In other words, the stress mindset affects the way a person absorbs perceptions as well as interpretations of stressful situations. People with a stress-is-enhancing mindset, on the other hand, focus on positive information about stressors reinforcing their beliefs in the same way. These individuals look at stressful situations as challenging rather than threatening and hence approach the situation more adaptably and with more effective coping strategies without fear of feedback (Crum et al., 2013). People with a stress-is-enhancing mindset are more likely to focus on the positive and challenging aspects of their job demands. Accordingly, when facing new tasks, they seek the skills and knowledge required to master those tasks which result in their professional development. Individuals believing in a stress-is-enhancing mindset have sufficient levels of arousal in a stressful situation to the extent that they can achieve their goals and fulfil the requirements, but not to the extent that their mental health is compromised.

Conversely, if people believe that stress is debilitating, their mindset will focus on negative information about stressors which would reinforce negative beliefs, and the person's behaviors centralizes on the effort to avoid stress. Indeed, individuals with a debilitating stress mindset tend to avoid stress and control it in



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a way that is in harmony with their main motivation, which is to avoid failing outcomes (Crum et al., 2013). Then, it would be stated that when experiencing stress and pressure, people who believe in a stress-is-enhancing mindset tend to accept stress and harness it to manage their goals (Crum et al., 2017), trying to plan and schedule activities when encountered with a workload (Casper, Sonnentag, & Tremmel, 2017). Thus, the beliefs about stress or stress mindset can moderate the relationship between job demands and subjective well-being as well as job demands and job burnout.

One of the limitations of the present study was the cross-sectional nature of the research. The other limitation was the use of self-reported means. Nevertheless, the result of Harman's one-factor tests in the present study revealed that considering these two limitations CMV could not be a problem. However, since longitudinal research provides more information about causal relationships between variables and the moderating as well as mediating effect of variables in the model, it is suggested that future research be conducted longitudinally to explore research relationships, especially regarding the moderating role of the stress mindset.

Considering the second one, according to Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza (2000), the best way to evaluate concepts such as job burnout, subjective well-being, and beliefs about stressful conditions (stress mindset) is self-reported measures. It is suggested to collect more objective information (such as interviewing plus naming personal activities that individuals have done to mitigate job demands related stress).

Given the limited background of the mediating role of the relationship between job demands and burnout, as well as the



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discord between the available literature and the present research, it is suggested that the mediating effect of mindset be examined not only on the total score, but also on Copenhagen burnout inventory dimensions, so that greater information and details can be obtained in this regard.

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